

1. Policy Scope

- 1.1 We are committed to providing safe and well-maintained homes. We recognise the impact of damp, mould, and condensation (DMC) to quality of life and health and are pro-active in our approach to tackling this.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all homes owned and/or managed by Aster Group, except for Freeholders, and Shared Owners who own a house, and are responsible for their own property maintenance. For Leaseholders and Shared Owners who live in a flat, Aster is responsible for the main structure of the building only.
- 1.3 This policy and associated procedure will ensure that we meet our requirements as a landlord and comply with the Decent Home Standard, and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, as well as advice from the Housing Ombudsman.

1.4 Definitions:

Rising Damp

The movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building.

Penetrating Damp

Water or moisture penetrating the external structure of the building, or internal leaks which cause damp, rot and damage to internal walls and structure.

Mould

Black spot mould is a direct effect of condensation. Mould usually appears in areas where there is little air movement and moisture or damp.

Condensation

Condensation happens when moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface, condenses and causes water droplets.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 All customers will be treated fairly, with respect and empathy.
- 2.2 We will investigate all reports of damp, mould, and condensation to diagnose the cause and determine the best course of action.
- 2.3 We will categorise reports of DMC into four levels of severity, We will treat each case according to the severity outlined in the fault code table below.

Level	Definition	Priority	Action	Fault code in ROCC
Level one	Minor mould: Hand sized patches or smaller in one or more rooms, mould area up to 1m ² . Typically, in areas of poor air flow, corners of rooms, behind furniture, on window reveals. Would suggest this be cleaned by the customer using a mould specific cleaner off the supermarket shelf. A Surveyor will inspect to confirm.	i10	Raise an order for a surveyors D&M survey.	Minor mould: Hand sized patches or smaller in one or more rooms, mould area up to 1m ² .
Level two	Moderate mould: Mould in patches larger than hand size up to 5m ² or around the size of a TV, in one or more rooms, total mould area between 1m ² and	i10	Raise an order for a surveyors	Moderate mould: Mould in patches larger than hand size

	3m2. – We would offer a clean on a routine appointment – A surveyor will inspect to confirm. If the customer has a health issue that could be impacted, then mark this clearly at the start of the description, stating **Health Issue Impact** and this job will be treating as urgent by the planning team.		D&M survey	up to 5m2 or around the size of a TV, in one or more rooms, total mould area between 1m2 and 3m2.
Level three	Severe mould: Mould in areas larger than 0.5m2 in multiple rooms, mould covering entire walls, ceilings or belongings-3m2 or more. 100% if one surface – we would offer an urgent clean. A surveyor will inspection to confirm. If the customer has a health issue that could be impacted, then mark this clearly at the start of the description, stating **Health Issue Impact** and this job will be treating as urgent by the planning team.	i10	Raise an order for a surveyors D&M survey	Severe mould: Mould in areas larger than 0.5m2 in multiple rooms, mould covering entire walls, ceilings or belongings-3m2 or more. 100% if one surface.
Level four	Extreme mould – HHSRS Cat 1 – Extensive mould covering entire walls and ceilings, belongings – in one or more rooms. ONLY TO BE RAISED BY A SURVEYOR FOLLOWING AN INSPECTION AND SIGN OFF BY THE PRINCIPLE SURVEYOR.	EME	Surveyors & Task Team manage workflow to remove Cat 1 Hazard.	Extreme mould – HHSRS Cat 1 – Identified following survey.

- 2.4 We will arrange an appointment to visit and survey the whole property. Whenever possible this will be within 10 working days. When the survey has been completed, we will outline what needs to happen to resolve the issue. In most cases, we would expect to receive the survey within 5 working days of the visit to the property.
- 2.5 We will carry out any work that needs to be done, whether that includes visiting the property to carry out specific repairs or discussing the necessary steps to prevent condensation and mould in the future with the customer. For day-to-day repairs, we aim to complete the work within 20 working days following receipt of the survey. Some work may be more complex or require a new installation, in which case we will notify customers.
- 2.6 These are our commitments however there could be a short time period between the survey and scheduling of works and the subsequent communication with the customer.
- 2.7 We will ensure that relevant colleagues are appropriately trained to identify, report, and carry out solutions to damp, mould, and condensation.
- 2.8 We expect customers to allow us access into their home to carry out a survey of the whole property, and then to complete any necessary remedial works.
- 2.9 Customers will be clearly communicated with and kept updated regarding any work we will undertake.
- 2.10 Comprehensive advice, information and support will be provided to customers to help prevent or manage damp, mould, and condensation.
- 2.11 We will be pro-active in our approach by completing a rolling stock condition programme where every property is surveyed to identify future investment where needed.
- 2.12 We will investigate trends and analyse recurring issues within our homes. We will use this information to invest in homes and implement solutions that prevent issues returning.

- 2.13 When a home is due to, or becomes empty, or a mutual exchange is taking place, we will inspect each room for signs of damp, mould, and condensation. If found, we will ensure where needed that remedial works are identified and that customers are informed and advised.
- 2.14 We will support customers in their responsibility for ensuring that appropriate steps are taken to help prevent damp, mould, and condensation in their homes. These responsibilities include:
- Following advice and guidance provided by Aster to manage and control damp, condensation, and mould. For example, making sure the home is properly ventilated and heated, and that air is free flowing around the home; where possible, not drying clothes inside other than by a means where excess moisture is extracted from the home; and wiping down, and removing excess condensation
 - Checking for signs of damp, mould and condensation and reporting this to us as soon as possible
 - Checking for and reporting any leaks, faulty heating, windows, roofs, or extractor fans
 - Maintaining their home in a “tenant like manner” as per their tenancy agreement.
- 2.15 When customers are vulnerable or disabled and need help to manage damp, mould, and condensation, we will work with them to consider what support may be needed on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.16 Overcrowding of a property can contribute to condensation and mould. We will give advice and signpost customers to the local authority to review the most suitable options available.
- 2.17 We will support customers who are experiencing financial hardship or fuel poverty by providing benefit advice and support, through Aster’s financial wellbeing team.
- 2.18 We are committed to inclusivity and accessibility and will endeavour to provide our communication and policies in accessible formats and in other languages when requested or required. In all cases having particular regard to these factors where they affect customers in our care homes.

3. Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 Whilst developing this policy, we have consulted with involved customers who have expressed an interest in giving us their views on customer service policies, as well as colleagues who are involved in the management of our homes.
- 3.2 Policy updates will be delivered to relevant teams to ensure the content and responsibilities are understood.
- 3.3 We will continue to improve our service by:
- Monitoring the number of damp, mould and condensation inspections logged and completed within target
 - Monitoring and learning from cases which are reported to us
 - Learning logs from our complaints team.
- 3.4 The effectiveness of this policy will be continuously monitored, and the embedding of the policy scrutinised after 12 months by the *Operational Scrutiny & Assurance Panel*

3.5 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless business need, regulation or legislation prompts an early review.

4. Related Documents

- ❖ Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- ❖ Damp, Mould and Condensation Procedure
- ❖ Empty Homes Policy
- ❖ Mutual Exchange Procedure
- ❖ Recharge Policy
- ❖ Lettable Standard
- ❖ Health and Safety Policy
- ❖ Property Condition Procedure
- ❖ Further information about how to manage damp, condensation and mould can be found on our website: <https://www.aster.co.uk/advice-hub-home/condensation-and-mould>

5 Governance

Effective From:	05/10/2023	Expires:	05/10/2025
Policy Owner:	Regional Operations Director		
Policy Author:	Policy and Assurance Officer		
Approved by:	<i>Customer Overview Group</i>		
Delegation Matrix Reference:	R094	Version Number:	V1.1