

# How we deal with damp and mould

# Introduction

We're committed to providing high quality, safe, sustainable homes for our customers and this summary of our Damp and Mould Policy sets out the level of service you can expect from First Choice Homes Oldham.

A build-up of moisture in your home can lead to a variety of problems, and we always want to tackle the root cause as early as possible. Working with our Customer Voice Panel we have developed a set of standards which clearly explain what you can expect from us and what we can expect from you.

## Types of damp

**Common types of damp are:**



### Rising damp

This happens when ground water rises up through the walls and floor if the damp proof course isn't working properly.



### Penetrating damp

This occurs when water penetrates into a home from outside to inside causing damage, for example, because of a leaking downpipe.



### Condensing damp

Forms when moisture in the air settles as water droplets on a colder surface like a window or wall, or in parts of the home with little space for air to circulate, for example behind furniture. Causes include cool temperatures, lack of ventilation and high amounts of moisture.

Problems begin when moisture is left on a surface for long enough to start causing damage or mould to grow. [Read our guide](#) to managing moisture in your home.



# Standards

## First Choice Homes Oldham and our contractors...

- Will have an 'eyes wide open' approach when visiting customers' homes to help us proactively spot trends, identify repairs and resolve issues quickly so we can continue to provide great services and homes for you.
- Will always be open minded when dealing with reports of damp and mould and understand that they can have many causes.
- Will listen to your concerns about damp and mould when you report them and decide next steps based on what you tell us.
- Will provide clear information and advice to you about damp and mould, how it may affect your home and tips for managing moisture in your home.
- Will use a range of devices and technologies to monitor moisture levels in your home to help identify and resolve issues.
- Will arrange for a member of our team to inspect your home for signs of damp and mould within ten days from the time you report an issue, if required. From there we can make a plan about how to tackle the issue – including whether repairs are needed.
- Will carry out a follow up inspection within eight weeks of the repairs being completed. The follow up inspection will help us assess if the issue has been fully resolved or if further work is needed.

## Customers...

- Will report signs of damp and mould to us as early as possible.
- Will allow our teams access to your home to carry out our inspections and repairs.

## Leaseholders...

- Will report any damp-related issues to us as early as possible, where there is an impact on a neighbouring FCHO property or a communal area.

# Using technology to help us deal with damp and mould

We will use a variety of devices to help us understand and deal with damp and mould in your home. They include:



**Hygrometers** - designed to show how much moisture is inside your home and how warm or cold your property is. Understanding these things can help you to take action to reduce conditions, which can lead to mould. [Read our handy guide](#) to hygrometers.



**Tiny tags** - monitors which record information about temperature and moisture levels in your home, when hygrometer feedback is inconclusive.



**Switchee** - digital devices to monitor temperature and moisture levels in your home. Real time data can help us proactively identify properties at risk of damp or mould.



**Damp monitors and salt analysis kits** - these enable our team to quickly assess the presence and causes of damp and mould in your home.

## Surveys

As well as us responding to reports of damp and mould, we will proactively use a range of data and planned surveys at your home to help us identify and tackle damp and mould. These surveys are carried out through routine monitoring of property condition, as part of our role as a responsible landlord.

## How to report an issue with damp or mould

You can report an issue with damp or mould by...



Calling our Contact Centre on  
**0161 393 7117**



Emailing  
**websiteenquiries@fcho.co.uk**

# Our repairs categories

We class repairs according to a risk based approach and complete them to agreed timescales, in line with our Repairs & Maintenance Policy. Repairs are completed by the FCHO Property Care team or sometimes we also use specialist contractors to carry out work.



## Emergency repairs

Emergencies are when a defect put the health, safety or security of your home, you or anyone else at immediate risk.

All Emergency repairs will be attended within three hours. We will, as a minimum, make safe and, where possible, we will complete a full repair. If we are unable to do this, we will arrange a new appointment at your convenience.



## Priority repairs

Priority repairs are when there is not an immediate risk but, if not resolved, could result in an Emergency repair. They are also repairs which prevent you from having full use of your property, facilities and services.

Priority repairs will be completed within five working days. This will be delivered within the required timescales at your convenience.



## Routine repairs

Routine repairs do not fall within the Emergency or Priority category and do not pose a risk. These repairs will be fully completed within 20 working days at your convenience.





# Giving you a hand

#NEEDAHAND 

We're here to give you a hand and provide support and advice if you are finding it hard to manage energy costs or facing other financial worries.

Get in touch with our Community Services teams and see how we can help you:



**Visit:**

[www.fcho.co.uk/need-a-hand](http://www.fcho.co.uk/need-a-hand)



**Call:**

0161 393 7117



**Email:**

[CommunityServices@fcho.co.uk](mailto:CommunityServices@fcho.co.uk)

## How to complain

We want you to be happy with our service but if you're not, you can make a complaint so we can put it right. We manage complaints through our Complaints Process, which is in line with the [Housing Ombudsman's Code of Guidance](#).

### You can make a complaint by...



**Filling in the form**

on our website at [www.fcho.co.uk/contact-us/how-to-complain/](http://www.fcho.co.uk/contact-us/how-to-complain/)



**Writing to**

FCHO Tellus, First Place, 22 Union Street, Oldham OL1 1BE



**Emailing**

[tellus@fcho.co.uk](mailto:tellus@fcho.co.uk)



**Visiting**

First Place, 22 Union Street, Oldham OL1 1BE, 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday.



**Calling**

0161 393 7117

## Disrepair claims

If you decide that you wish to make a Disrepair Claim, our Disrepair Manager will work closely with you to reach a resolution and provide you with information about options.