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DAMP & MOULD POLICY

Accountable Director/Manager:	Director of Asset Management and Development
Document Approved By/Date:	EMT
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Document Introduction:	Revised policy to take into consideration Awaab's Law that comes into effect from October 2025
Related Documents:	
Date of Review:	June 2025
Next Review Date:	June 2026

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out how we will manage damp and mould in your home to ensure all our properties are well maintained and thereby ensuring we meet our statutory obligations. This includes the mandatory requirements under Awaab's Law.

1.2 We will do this through having:

- a reactive approach: where you have reported damp or mould. and
- a proactive approach: where our data, customer complaints or staff indicate that damp and mould may exist.

1.3 Where damp or mould is identified in your home we will ensure we communicate with you effectively, provide information in a format appropriate for you and we will work with you to find a long-term solution that resolves the damp or mould in your home and prevents it coming back.

2. Introduction

2.1 We want you to feel proud of where you live in a good quality, safe, home and place. Damp and mould are caused by excess moisture; They can affect your health and wellbeing and cause you and your family distress. We have adopted a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould, and we will act quickly to deal with any cases in your home.

2.2 There can be many different causes of damp or mould that may affect your home, these include:

- Leaking pipes or overflows either within your home or from an adjacent home
- Rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing or penetrating around windows or doors, blocked or damaged gutters and downpipes.
- Structural defects such as a defective damp proof course leading to rising damp.
- Condensation in the air within your property can be caused by poorly ventilated and heated rooms as well as poorly functioning heating or ventilation systems.

2.3 We will be both proactive and reactive in the way we manage all causes of damp or mould, and this policy sets out what we'll do and what you can expect. In the longer term, we aim to reduce the reactive work we need to do on your home because of damp and mould, because we have improved the fabric of buildings and are making the best use of technology to support you.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all the homes we are responsible for, whether you rent your home, are shared ownership (leaseholder) or homeowner. This is because the cause of the damp and mould could be the fabric of the building.

3.2 We will comply with all relevant legislation and manage damp or mould in line with the findings of the Housing Ombudsman in their Spotlight report on damp and mould as far as reasonably practical.

3.3 We have a number of policies that explain how we ensure you are safe in your home. You can find these policies on our website: https://karibu.org.uk/

4. Managing damp and mould

4.1 We know that experiencing damp and mould can be distressing, we will treat you with empathy and kindness and we will never make you feel that you are the cause of it. We will make sure our teams are trained to act quickly and offer immediate advice where appropriate.

4.2 Our staff and contractors will be required to undertake mandatory damp and mould training courses, so that they can provide the right response to any report of damp or mould in your home.

- All Karibu staff will be required to complete our on-line E-learning module - damp and mould. (Name)

- Karibu staff and our contractors who visit your home will have attended a training course to help them identify damp or mould and to undertake a basic assessment of the severity and therefore how we need to respond.

- Karibu and our contractors surveyors will undertake training that enables them to identify the solutions required to prevent damp or mould in your home.

- We will work with our Contractors to develop toolbox talks so that their supervisors and trade staff who visit your home can identify damp or mould.

- We will ensure a process is in place so any damp or mould in your home can be reported to us and we can react accordingly

4.3 There can be many different causes of damp and mould. There are two ways we manage and respond to damp and mould in your home:

- Reactive management: this is when damp and mould has already happened in your home. We will know about it because you have told us, one of our team or contractors has seen the damp and mould while they were visiting your home or we have carried out a home condition survey.

- Proactive management: this is when we use technology and our knowledge of the home you live in to identify whether damp and mould occur before it has. We can then put in place improvements that should reduce the chances of damp and mould occurring.

5. Reactive Management

5.1 You can report damp or mould 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, seven days of the week, in a number of ways:

- By calling us on 0208 8607 7777
- Emailing us: info@karibu.org.uk
- Visiting our offices between 9am – 5pm
- Using your MyKaribu account
- By reporting to any member of staff who visits your home

5.2 Whenever we become aware of damp or mould in your home, we will work with you to establish the severity by asking you to provide photographs or video in the first instance. We will also ask you to disclose health considerations for anyone who lives in the property if you are willing to do so.

5.3 Where you are able to provide photographs or video, we will assess the risk using the categories for assessment of damp or mould as set out in the Housing Health and Safety Risk System

(HHSRS) where category 1 is severe, category 2 is moderate, and category 3 is slight.

5.4 Whether you can or unable to provide photographs or videos, we will arrange a visit within 14 days. The surveyor will provide us with a report which will identify any work that needs to be carried out to your home. We will provide you with a copy of the report and where the damp & mould poses a health & safety risk we will commence work within the specified timeframes.

5.5 Where damp & mould has been reported we will complete the work in line with the following timeframes.

- Investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms emergency hazards, undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable, both within 24 hours of becoming aware of them
- Investigate any potential significant hazards within 10 working days of becoming aware of them
- Produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the named tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation
- Undertake relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard
- Begin, or take steps to begin, any further required works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this must be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks
- Satisfactorily complete works within a reasonable time period
- Secure the provision of suitable alternative accommodation for the household, at the social landlord's expense, if relevant safety work cannot be completed within specified timeframes
- Keep the named tenant updated throughout the process and provide information on how to keep safe

5.6 Where major work is required to your home, we will agree a timescale with you within 5 days of issuing the report:

Major work may include.

- Specialist Damp proof work
- Renewal of part or all of the roof covering
- Installation of new heating or ventilation systems
- Replacement of windows or doors
- Work that affects multiple rooms in your home where we will need to agree a program of work with you.

6. Proactive management

6.1 We will be employing a dedicated contractor to support our management and approach to damp and mould, and they will also be looking to continuously develop innovative, flexible and creative solutions to quickly identify and solve damp and mould in your home.

6.2 We will use the repairs data and complaints information we hold on our systems to identify any trends and learning opportunities to inform our proactive management of damp and mould. A trend may indicate that things such as the location of your home, the type of property and age of property which are like other homes, where we have had reports of damp or mould.

6.3 If we identify that your home has some similarities to other homes where damp or mould has been identified (which indicates there may be a trend), we will contact you through either customer surveys or our home improvement surveyors to gather more information.

6.4 We will contact you to arrange for one of our surveyors to carry out a home improvement survey of your home at least once every 5 years. The purpose of the home improvement survey is to review the condition of your home and establish where we may need to make any improvements.

6.5 When we carry out improvements to your home, we will ensure that we undertake a review of the ventilation and air flow and where necessary we will install improved ventilation to prevent damp or mould.

6.6 If you tell us that you are having difficulty heating your home, we will work with you to identify how we can support you or refer you to outside agencies who may be able to offer support.

6.7 We will undertake a damp and mould survey as part of our empty homes service and ensure your new home does not have damp or mould.

6.8 Where you have swapped your home through our mutual exchange policy and are still our customer, we will undertake a home improvement survey within 3 months of you moving into your new home.

6.9 We are exploring the use of technology that can help to identify homes that may be susceptible to damp and mould**.**

7. Communication

7.1 If we believe through analysis of our data and/or customer complaints that your home may have the characteristics that make damp and mould likely, we will contact you through your preferred method of communication if you have provided us with one.

7.2 Once we become aware of damp or mould in your home, we will ensure that we communicate with you regularly. whilst we put the right solution in place.

7.3 Whether we identify damp or mould in your home through a reactive or proactive approach we will always ensure we have put the right solutions in place through an aftercare process.

- We will call you 12 weeks after we complete the work so that you can tell us if the work we have carried out has resolved the damp or mould in your home.
- We will call you again 6 months after we complete the work to ensure that damp or mould has not re-occurred.

7.4 Where the original damp or mould was severe, we will contact you to arrange an inspection of your home within 6 months after we have completed the work, to ensure your home is still damp or mould free.

7.5 In every case where the damp and mould in your home were severe, we will offer you a digital monitoring solution that could alert when the conditions exist for damp or mould in the future.

7.6 Any information we provide you with about damp or mould will be in a format that is right for you and that is easy to understand.

8. Record Keeping and reporting

8.1 We will keep accurate records of all damp or mould cases that we are aware of. We will use these records to inform us of our proactive approach to managing damp and mould.

8.2 We will have a dedicated damp and mould trade within our system that will allow us to monitor how we perform against the commitments we have made to you in this policy.

8.3 We will continue to develop new performance indicators so that reports of damp and mould are effectively monitored and our performance can be measured.

8.4 The damp and mould performance indicators will be monitored at our monthly performance meetings and reported to the Karibu Board or directors.

9. Compliance with Key Legislation and Regulations

- Housing Act 2004:
- Environmental Protection Act 1990:
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018:
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Decent Homes Standard
- Minimum Level of Energy Efficiency Standard
- Building Regulations 2010
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Awaab's Law