

Damp and mould procedures

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BUILDING FUTURES TOGETHER

Version Control

Issue Number	Issued Date	Author	Main changes listed
1	17/08/23	Diane Thompson, Phil Benson	
1.1	26/10/23	Cat Thomas	Updated branding and LFHA replaced with Leeds Federated

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure is prepared and approved by the Head of Assets, Asset Manager (Planned and Energy) and the Asset Manager (Operational Services).
- 1.2 This procedure to be read in conjunction with the Asset Management Plan and the Responsive Repairs Policy.
- 1.3 The purpose of these procedures is to explain how Leeds Federated manages the damp and mould identified in its properties.
- 1.4 The works will be identified in the following ways
 - reactive – when identified by customers and staff / contractors visiting the property. Also, upon receipt of any claims relating to housing disrepair
 - planned – through post inspections after damp works, data from Switchee installations.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all customer facing staff, including those who visit customers in their property but also staff who engage with customers by other means of communication, for example by telephone or e-mail. It also includes all Operational Managers who manage staff from the Asset Management Team and the Customer Services Team.
- 2.2 The diagram listed below details the scope of these procedures



3.0 IDENTIFYING DAMP & MOULD IN PROPERTIES - REACTIVE

- Customer contacting Leeds Federated and reporting damp and mould through the service centre.
- Leeds Federated staff finding mould on visits when visiting for a different reason.
- Contractors visiting to carry out unrelated repairs.
- Stock Condition Surveys as part of cyclical programme.
- Disrepair notifications.

It would help if any reports of damp and mould include photographic evidence to assist the surveyor in identifying the location and potential cause of the dampness. Customers should be asked to provide photographic evidence if possible.

All orders will have D&M at the start of the description and be booked to the Damp and Condensation budget (34600). This will ensure tracking of all orders when running reports.

3.1 Customer contacting Leeds Federated and reporting damp and mould through the service centre.

Any reports of damp and mould will result in an advisor establishing the extent of the issue and which locations within the property this is affecting. At this time, an inspection will be arranged with the Surveyor (HHSRS) at an agreed appointment time. The appointment should be confirmed with the customer and ideally by their preferred means – this may include by letter, text message or e-mail.

Customers may be given advice as to condensation control, including a condensation leaflet, if appropriate and following an inspection of the property by the Surveyor (HHSRS) subject to their findings and recommendations. Customers may also be signposted to the website to check out the information electronically.

3.2 Leeds Federated staff finding damp and/or mould on visits when visiting for a different reason

If the staff member is non-technical, they will report the incident to the repairs advisors via email – repairs@lfha.co.uk. The incident would be treated as above with the advisor contacting the customer and arranging an inspection.

If the staff member is technical and the diagnosis is that the works are minor and can be diagnosed and ordered the surveyor will order the works directly with the contractor. If the works are deemed to be large and require project managing the staff member will request a further inspection with the Surveyor (HHSRS).

3.3 Contractors visiting to carry out unrelated repairs

Leeds Federated to communicate to contractors that any signs of damp and mould in properties to be relayed back to the repairs advisors via the email - lfha.co.uk. The request would be treated as above with the advisor contacting the customer and arranging an inspection.

3.4 Stock Condition Surveys as part of cyclical programme

After the SCS has been completed, any required follow up works will be ordered directly with the contractor, or a surveyor visit will be booked in. This will be overseen by the Repairs team.

3.5 Disrepair Notifications

Any Damp and Mould works identified on a surveyor's visit regarding a disrepair claim will be ordered and completed as part of the process. All works ordered will have the description D&M at the start of the narrative to enable easy identification. All works will be ordered to the damp and condensation budget (34600)

If the repair is regarding damp from a leak, all jobs will include decorative making good. Hiring of a dehumidifier will also be discretionary depending on the severity of the leak.

4.0 TIMESCALES

- 4.1 A surveyor will aim to attend an appointment to carry out an inspection within 14 days of any request made pursuant to section 3.0 above (also subject to any unforeseen or external factors). If there is a high volume of requests other similarly qualified surveyors will be used to carry out these visits. This will be either a day-to-day surveyor or a project manager (disrepair or planned). This will be checked on a weekly basis and be monitored by the Asset manager – Operational Delivery and additional resources agreed with the Area Managers / Asset Managers.
- 4.2 Any works ordered by a surveyor for washing down and painting will be completed within 28 days (N Priority)
- 4.3 Any works where a further specialist survey is required (i.e., Timberwise) will be completed and issued on a '4' priority.

5.0 REPORTING

- 5.1 On a weekly basis the following will be recorded. This will be reported in Teams
- How many new D&M survey requests have been booked in that week.
 - How many D&M inspections are booked in

- What is the next date a surveyor can attend an appointment
- Overall what is the current amount of live D&M inspections and jobs

5.2 On a monthly basis the following will be recorded. This will be reported in Teams or Clearview

- average number of days to complete an inspection
- % of post inspections of jobs ordered
- % of repeat visits to assess damp and mould over a rolling twelve-month programme.
- budget v spend against the budget code 34600
- number of jobs completed in the month relating to damp and mould as a % of stock.
- average turnaround time of jobs completed for damp and mould
- number of live cases as a snapshot on the first day of the month

6.0 FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

6.1 On a monthly basis reports are produced by the Asset Manager – Operational Services and saved in the Teams' page for the repairs administrator to action all relating to Damp and Mould regarding cancelled visits, no access visits, live works ordered that have not been completed and are out of target time.

Reports include:

- No access for surveyor inspections
- No access for contractors
- Cancelled inspections (customer)
- Cancelled inspections (other)
- Cancelled works (customer)
- Cancelled works (other)
- Live open job orders
- Jobs complete within the month with the value.
- Jobs complete within the last twelve months.
- Average time and range to complete an inspection.
- Average time and range to complete a repair.

6.2 No accesses for surveyor visits are monitored through reporting and customers are contacted to make further arrangements for the visit. Surveyors will leave a not in-card and upload a photograph showing the no access. The Asset Manager Operational Services will produce this report. See attached **Appendix 1** the procedure for no access.

6.3 If Leeds Federated have no access issues on each occasion a letter will be sent to the customer advising that the contractor has tried to access the property on the agreed appointment date and time. After three no accesses this is passed to the housing management team

- 6.4 On a monthly basis the cancelled jobs are checked and any cancelled by the customer are rebooked to ensure access is gained.
- 6.5 A report is also produced that lists all the works complete and the repairs administrator will book in post inspections for this work. The Asset Manager Operational Services will produce this report. This will be 100% for all major work ordered and 10% of clean off and repaint.
- 6.6 The Surveyor (HHSRS) will also check repeat requests from customers regarding damp and mould from reporting and checking repairs history on Origin. If a customer has had more than one visit in twelve months regarding damp and mould repairs a visit will be arranged. This will trigger a post inspection and could ultimately result in a Switchee being installed.

7.0 ONGOING MONITORING

- 7.1 The Asset Manager (Planning and Energy) will make decisions on which properties Switchees are installed and will monitor the data to see if there is any corrective action required. This process may involve discussion with the relevant customer's housing officer.
- 7.2 AICO monitors will be fitted in electric only properties as Switchee is a replacement for the Thermostat
- 7.3 The properties that are selected to have Switchees fitted will be based on the following criteria:
- Properties highlighted at risk from D&M reported reactively (including historic information)
 - Properties identified through HHSRS (Stock Condition)
 - Properties for monitoring due to retrofit works carried out (Monitoring)

8.0 TRAINING

- 8.1 All front-line staff will have HHSRS training – this will include all members of staff who may visit a customer in their home but are not technically trained in repairs and maintenance issues. There will be two levels of training – one for technical staff and one for non-technical staff.
- 8.2 Consideration will be given to specialist Damp and Mould Training (PCA training) for the Surveyor HHSRS and the Disrepair Surveyor.

9.0 REVIEW

- 9.1 The procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix 1 - No Access Procedure

- 1.1. This procedure will apply for appointments where Leeds Federated requires access to a customer's home for the purpose of a damp and mould inspection, any remedial works or improvements that are required following that inspection, and any post inspection(s) of works that have been completed.
- 1.2. Leeds Federated is to allow for a minimum of three appointed access visits to each property. For the initial visit there will usually be at least four days' notice. Each subsequent visit will usually be made on at least three days' notice. All appointments should be made on different days of the week and different times of the day, unless Leeds Federated has reason to believe that this may not be convenient for the customer (for example if it has information about their working patterns). Leeds Federated may give shorter notice at its discretion and in accordance with the tenancy agreement, particularly if the urgency or risks associated with the case require it.
- 1.3. Leeds Federated will contact the customer by way of telephone call or text 24 hours prior to the appointment as a reminder. Any call or text must clearly state the reason for the appointment with clear instructions on what to do if the tenant is unable to meet the appointment.
- 1.4. The details of initial no access will be provided to the repairs administrator within 2 days of no access.
- 1.5. If no access is made at the first appointed time, or an alternative appointment is not made and kept, Leeds Federated will post a first 'no access' notification to the property. This notification will inform the customer:
 - That the surveyor / contractor called at the appointed time and no access was made.
 - The surveyor / contractor will visit again at another date and time, but no earlier than 3 days following the date on which the letter shall be received by the customer.
 - That the customer should contact Leeds Federated to make an alternative appointment if the time and date stated in the letter is not convenient.
 - Again, Leeds Federated will contact the tenant by way of telephone call or text as a reminder within 24 hours of the appointment.
- 1.6. If no access is made on the second visit, the surveyor / contractor will post a second 'no access' notification in accordance with paragraph 1.5 above to make a third appointment.
- 1.7. The surveyor / contractor will inform the repairs administrator within 24 hours (or as soon as possible thereafter) if no access has been made on the second attempt.

- 1.8. All periods between access attempts are subject to adjustment to allow for non-working days. Other adjustments may be made by Leeds Federated to allow for special circumstances, particular client, or customer requests.
- 1.9. The repairs administrator shall aim to issue within 5 working days of notification of a third 'no access' a final notification letter (**Appendix 2**) directly from the association to the customer. This letter states:
 - A summary of attempts to gain access to date.
 - That Leeds Federated will take enforcement action against the customer to ensure that the D&M inspection is undertaken.
 - The date by which the customer must contact Leeds Federated before it will take further enforcement action.
- 1.10. The repairs administrator will distribute on a regular basis (at least monthly) to Neighbourhood Services, Customer Services and Asset Management officers (which shall include the Disrepair Team) a list of those properties that have had a third 'no access' and for which formal enforcement action has been taken. The officers will assist in the course of their duties to arrange access for a D&M inspection or works to these properties. The repairs Administrator will also liaise directly with Supported Housing for access when required.
- 1.11. If the customer has not contacted Leeds Federated by the date specified in the 'no access' final notification letter, then the case may be issued to a solicitor within 5 working days for commencement of proceedings to apply for a court injunction to gain access to the property for the survey / works / post inspection. The solicitor will then inform the tenant in writing of the proposed commencement of proceedings. Leeds Federated will work in conjunction with legal representation to ensure the D&M inspection or works are undertaken in as quickly a timescale as possible.
- 1.12. Leeds Federated will take into consideration any special or exceptional circumstances relating to the process of gaining access to properties. Liaison with Supported Housing services, both internally and externally, will be undertaken to ensure appropriate steps are taken to accommodate the circumstances of vulnerable tenants.
- 1.13. Leeds Federated will take advice, source good practice, and review alternative measures open to it to ensure the effective management of its responsibility to undertake damp and mould works. This may include the repossession of properties where access has not been provided and, for example, if injunction proceedings are not appropriate.

Appendix 2 – No access third letter

IMPORTANT, FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER

Re: Inspection / Works relating to Dampness and Mould

We wrote to you on the following dates to request access to your property in order to carry out an inspection / works relating to dampness and mould in your home:

- **[LIST DATES]**

You have so far not allowed us access for that purpose or contacted us to make any alternative appointment.

Under the terms of your tenancy agreement, you are required to allow us access to your property for the purpose of inspection and/or repair. If you continue not to allow us access to your home, we give you formal notice that we intend to start legal action against you to formally grant us access to your property. This may include an application to Court for an injunction requiring you to allow us access.

The Association will not send any further reminders of this intent.

If you wish to avoid this action, please contact the Association immediately, and by no later than [DATE – 2/3 days] to arrange an appointment for the **(survey / works)** to take place. You must also keep any appointment you make.

You can contact us directly on 0113 386 1000.

These works will be carried out as no cost to you.

Clearly, we wish to avoid these steps, but we regard your safety and that of our property as paramount, so please assist us by calling us immediately and arranging the visit.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.