

policy



Condensation and Damp

Responsible Officer:	Assistant Chief Exec Asset Management
Approved:	By SLT January 2019
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Regulatory Standard:	Home Standard
Version:	2

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy details Incommunities response to reports of damp and condensation for properties within Incommunities portfolio. Damp and condensation can lead to mould growth and also damage to Incommunities assets. Incommunities aim is to manage proactively any report of damp or condensation. This may be through the completion of reactive repairs, or in some cases to provide information and guidance to customers where there is evidence of condensation due to the use and lifestyle of the household residing in the property.
- 1.2 It is important to understand the causation of damp and condensation and the way in which the different causes will be actioned. This includes proactive addressing of reports and providing information and signposting to customers where appropriate.
- 1.3 In addition to providing a safe home environment to our customer, the key objectives of this Policy are to comply with relevant legislation (specifically the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1985, Housing Health and Safety Rating System within the Housing Act 2004 and Decent Homes Guidance).
- 1.4 All references in the Policy to sections and schedules of Acts of Parliament are to be regarded (unless we decide otherwise) as including references to those sections and schedules as amended, varied, replaced or re-enacted from time to time.

2.0 Statement of Intent

- 2.1 The Senior Management Team and the Board of Incommunities acknowledge their moral and legal duty to ensure that the aims of Incommunities are met by:
 - Providing Quality Accommodation, with reference to Section 5 of the Governments Decent Homes Guidance and the standards set by the housing regulator.
 - Having a Cost Effective Repairs and Maintenance Service
 - Having a prudent approach to planned repairs and maintenance, including communal areas and components
 - Fostering and maintaining good working relationships with partner services to provide advice and assistance where there are financial factors affecting the ability of Customers to manage thermal comfort within the property effectively.
 - Ensuring ongoing compliance with all applicable legislation
 - Promoting sustainability.

3.0 Purpose and scope

- 3.1 This Policy has been set out to cover reports of damp and condensation received by customers, or which become apparent to Incommunities staff as part of their daily duties. It is set within the context of the Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Policy. Incommunities will implement arrangements designed to ensure:
- 3.2 The purpose of this Damp and Condensation Policy is to outline how we will:
 - Offer advice and assistance to customers living in our properties, including information on thermal comfort and preventing condensation;
 - Comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

- Implement arrangements designed to ensure:
 - Suitable and sufficient response to initial reports of damp or condensation.
 - Incommunities will identify the cause of damp occurring in its property and order remedial works where required within set repair categories, including advice and assistance to the Customer where there is condensation present.
 - Increased awareness for Customers through communication and information on how to combat condensation
 - Adequate levels of basic damp and condensation awareness and staff competency through effective training programmes.
 - Adequate review of damp and condensation performance information within Incommunities Assets to inform targeted interventions such as information campaigns.
 - Ensure that components installed as part of the responsive repairs and maintenance service are cost effective and meet sustainability and affordability criteria

4.0 Policy (content)

4.1 Landlord Responsibilities

4.1.1 Within legislation Incommunities Ltd as a landlord is responsible for keeping the structure of our assets in good repair in addition to maintaining heating, sanitation and service installations. Incommunities Ltd is responsible for those installations that are fitted by us, or which have been adopted by us as defined in the Permissions Policy and Aids and Adaptations Policies.

4.2 Tenant Responsibilities

4.2.1 The Customer is responsible for ensuring no damage occurs to Incommunities Asset as defined by the Tenancy Agreement for Incommunities customers, which makes specific reference to condensation within a property. Customers will be provided with information and guidance on minimising condensation in their home.

4.3 Process

4.3.1 When a report of damp or condensation is received via Incommunities Customer Contact Centre or upon visit by an Incommunities employee to a customer's home, a series of questions will be asked to diagnose the causation of any damp or mould growth present.

4.3.2 Some obvious causes of damp are easily identifiable, such as leaking gutters or overflows, and these remedial repairs will be reported for action within the appropriate priority timescale.

4.3.3 In other cases the cause of damp or condensation may not be immediately obvious and an operative or Field Manager may need to visit the property to carry out an inspection. It must be noted that the customer allowing access for this inspection is a requirement of the Tenancy Agreement. The purpose of this inspection is to identify whether the issue is damp related (water penetration due to a building defect) or condensation related (linked to the thermal comfort and use of the home by the occupants).

- 4.3.4 Should the issue be identified as condensation-based Incommunities will provide information and guidance to the customer. This will include a discussion on the possible causes of condensation and the solutions that are available. In most cases, once these measures have been in place for a few weeks, the issue will be significantly reduced or completely eliminated.
- 4.3.5 Should building improvement works be identified (such as heating or insulation improvements), these works will be placed on a programme list in conjunction with the prioritisation and budget setting in place.

4.4 Escalation

- 4.4.1 Where there are repeated reports of damp and condensation and/or where there is no resolution, Incommunities Ltd may deploy specialist equipment to identify causation. This includes the use of humidity meters and other industry recognised sample tests. These cases will be overseen by a Senior Voids and Repairs/Maintenance Manager.
- 4.4.2 Similarly, where there are reports of damp and condensation within a geographical area i.e. a 'hot spot', a Stock Condition Survey programme will be requested for a sample of properties to proactively establish if any damp or condensation issues are arising from the property design.
- 4.4.3 A full flow diagram detailed the process is detailed in Appendix 2.

5.0 Compensation

- 5.1 Should a customer submit a claim for compensation, this will be managed within Incommunities Group existing policies and processes. Where self-represented the customers claim will be processed by Insurance Services.
- 5.2 Customers also have recourse under the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1985 and the Housing Act, 2004 to challenge Landlords, and requests under this legislation are outside of this Policy, including requests for recompense.
- 5.3 In both cases information gathered from onsite inspections will be used to assess the validity of the claim.

6.0 Communication

- 6.1 Incommunities will endeavour to communicate with both staff and customers using a variety of methods.
- 6.2 Communication with Customers:
- Through appropriate information and guidance and in conjunction with information gathered from on-site inspections where equipment may be used to identify the causation of damp and mould. In addition Incommunities will use social media, the Incommunities website and @home magazine to update customers.
- 6.3 Communication with Staff:
- Through information and training sessions carried out on a regular basis to ensure that relevant staff have the skills and knowledge to respond to reports of damp or condensation.

7.0 Performance Monitoring

7.1 Recording of Information

7.1.1 Appropriate documentation will be used to record information relating to damp and condensation reports.

7.1.2 Where a Field Manager visits a property, a Property Investigation form will be completed (Detailed in Appendix A) along with any relevant technical readings from equipment used to ascertain causation of damp and condensation.

7.1.3 Measures relating to the reporting of damp and condensation will be included in management information reviewed and monitored by the Asset Management Senior Management Team. This will include:

- Number of damp reports reported, by area and archetype
- Number of damp reports resolved, by area and archetype and length of repair
- Number of damp reports resolved, by operative; field
- Number of properties where 2 plus damp or condensation reports made within a rolling 12 month period

8.0 Related Documents

- Incommunities Compensation Policy
- Incommunities Complaints Policy
- Incommunities Chargeable Repairs Policy
- Incommunities Repairs Policy

9.0 Review

9.1 There will be a review of this policy whenever there is a fundamental change of legislative or regulatory provisions, or when other information becomes available that will impact on the policy, such as the outcome of a service review. Irrespective of this, there will be a review of the policy every three years.

Appendix 1: Property Investigation Form

Building Services Property Investigation

Property Address:	
Contact Name & Number:	
Date:	
Weather Conditions:	
Inspection for:	
Surveyor:	
Job No.:	

Type of Property:	House	Flat	Bedsit	Bungalow	Maisonette
Age of Property:	Band A (Pre 1900)	Band B (1900-1929)	Band C (1930-1949)	Band D (1950-1966)	Band E (1967-1975)
	Band F (1976-1982)	Band G (1983-1990)	Band H (1991-1995)	Band I (1996-2002)	Band J (2003-2006)
	Band K (2007-2011)	Band L (post 2012)			

Flashings	✓	Roof Finish	✓	Eaves Construction	✓	Gutters and Waste Pipes	✓	Facia	✓	Soffits	✓
Cement Filler		Artificial Slate		Flat Roof		Asbestos		Concrete		Aluminium	
Lead		Asbestos Sheet tile		Steel Truss		Cast Iron		Metal		Asbestos Sheet	
Zinc		Asphalt		Timber Truss		Concrete		UPVC		Concrete	
		Clay Tiles		Traditional Timber		Finlock		Timber		Masterboard	
Condition: G / F / P		Concrete Tiles				UPVC				UPVC	
		Felt		Condition: G / F / P		Seamline		Condition: G / F / P		Timber	
		Natural Slate				Steel					
		Stone Slate				Timber				Condition: G / F / P	
						Free from obstruction?	Y N				
		Condition: G / F / P				Condition: G / F / P					



Condition: G – Good
F – Fair
P – Poor

Damp and condensation flow

