Archie Homes

Damp and Mould Policy

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Policy checklist	
Policy owner	Archie Homes
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Archie Homes will provide this policy, on request at no cost, in large print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out Archie Homes' commitment to ensuring that resident homes are free from damp, mould and associated hazards, and to responding promptly, safely and fairly wherever these are reported or identified. It establishes the principles that govern how Archie Homes identifies, assesses, investigates, remedies and learns from damp and mould cases, including full compliance with Awaab's Law and wider health and safety, housing and consumer standards obligations. The detailed operational process for delivering this policy is set out in the accompanying Damp and Mould Procedure.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Archie Homes employees, contractors, managing agents and housing management partners acting on Archie Homes' behalf, and to all residents living in properties owned or managed by Archie Homes. It covers every report or indication of damp, mould or related hazards in a resident's home, however it is received, and applies regardless of tenure type.

3. Policy Statement

- Every resident has the right to a home that is safe, warm and free from damp and mould.
- Archie Homes will treat all reports of damp and mould seriously, investigate them promptly, and never dismiss them as a lifestyle issue without evidence.
- Archie Homes will act within statutory timescales at all times, prioritising resident safety and wellbeing over administrative convenience.

- Archie Homes will identify and address the underlying cause of damp and mould, not just its visible symptoms.
- Archie Homes will communicate clearly, honestly and proactively with residents throughout the life of a case.
- Archie Homes will pay particular attention to residents who may be vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould.
- Archie Homes will learn from cases, complaints and near misses to reduce recurrence and improve its housing stock.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is underpinned by, and must be read alongside, Archie Homes' obligations under the following (as amended from time to time):

- Awaab's Law, as introduced under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and related regulations
- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, section 11 (repairing obligations)
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004
- The Decent Homes Standard and any successor standard
- The Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards, including the Safety and Quality Standard
- The Equality Act 2010
- UK data protection legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

5. Definitions

Damp: the presence of unwanted moisture in a property from any source, including rising damp, penetrating damp and condensation.

Mould: fungal growth that can develop where damp or excess moisture is present, commonly on walls, ceilings, window reveals or behind furniture.

Emergency hazard: an immediate and significant risk to a resident's health or safety arising from damp or mould, requiring investigation and safety action within 24 hours.

Potential significant hazard: a risk to health or safety that is not immediately life threatening, but which requires prompt investigation and remedy within statutory timescales.

Awaab's Law: the statutory requirement for social landlords to investigate and address hazards, including damp and mould, within fixed timescales, named in memory of Awaab Ishak.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board and Executive Team

Hold overall accountability for Archie Homes' compliance with this policy and with Awaab's Law, and ensure that adequate resources, systems and governance arrangements are in place.

6.2 Director of Housing & Support

Owns this policy, ensures the accompanying procedure is followed, and provides assurance to the Board that statutory obligations are being met.

6.3 Housing and Repairs Managers

Ensure staff and contractors understand and apply this policy, monitor statutory deadlines, and escalate emerging risks.

6.4 Housing and Repairs Teams

Receive, record, triage, investigate and resolve reports of damp and mould in line with this policy and the accompanying procedure, and keep residents informed throughout.

6.5 Contractors and Managing Agents

Act promptly and competently when instructed, identify hazards, provide evidence of work undertaken, and report any circumstance that may affect compliance with statutory timescales.

6.6 Residents

Are encouraged to report damp, mould or related concerns as soon as they arise, to provide reasonable access for investigation and repair, and to engage with the advice and support offered by Archie Homes.

7. Compliance with Awaab's Law

Archie Homes is committed to full compliance with Awaab's Law. The table below summarises the key statutory timescales; the accompanying Damp and Mould Procedure sets out the detailed operational steps Archie Homes follows to meet them.

Emergency hazard	Investigate and complete relevant safety work within 24 hours of Archie Homes becoming aware; start supplementary preventative work within 5 working days; secure alternative accommodation if the property cannot be made safe in time.
Potential significant hazard	Investigate within 10 working days; if confirmed, complete safety work within 5 working days and issue a written summary within 3 working days of the investigation concluding; start preventative work within 5 working days, physically beginning within 12 weeks at the latest.

The Awaab's Law clock starts when Archie Homes becomes aware of a potential hazard, not when a case is allocated to a contractor. Routine classification must never be used to avoid these statutory requirements.

8. Resident Communication and Engagement

Residents will be kept informed at every stage of a damp and mould case, in a format that meets their communication needs, and will always be told who to contact if their condition worsens. General advice on ventilation, heating or moisture management may be shared where appropriate, but will never be used to delay an inspection, avoid necessary repairs, or attribute the problem to resident behaviour without evidence.

9. Vulnerability, Support and Alternative Accommodation

Archie Homes will consider whether a resident or household may be particularly vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould and will reflect this in its risk assessment and response. Where a property cannot be made safe within the applicable statutory timeframe, Archie Homes will secure suitable alternative accommodation, having regard to household circumstances, and will maintain this until the hazard has been satisfactorily resolved. Health information will be handled confidentially and shared only where necessary and lawful.

10. Contractor and Partner Standards

All contractors, managing agents and housing management partners acting on Archie Homes' behalf are expected to understand and comply with this policy, Awaab's Law and Archie Homes' escalation processes. Archie Homes will monitor contractor performance and will not accept case closure without adequate evidence that works have been satisfactorily completed.

11. Records, Evidence and Data Protection

Archie Homes will maintain accurate and complete records of every damp and mould case, sufficient to demonstrate compliance with this policy and with statutory obligations. Personal and health-related information will be processed in accordance with Archie Homes' Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

12. Complaints and Legal Claims

A complaint about damp and mould will be handled under Archie Homes' Complaints Handling Policy in parallel with, and never instead of, the operational response required by this policy and the accompanying procedure. Where a case involves a disrepair claim or potential litigation, Archie Homes' statutory duties remain in place, and the relevant legal and complaints teams will be notified promptly.

13. Performance Monitoring, Assurance and Governance

Performance against this policy will be reported regularly to senior management and as appropriate, to the Board, covering case volumes, compliance with statutory timescales, repeat cases, complaints and identified risks. Cases will be periodically audited, and any systemic issue identified will result in an improvement action and, where appropriate, a formal lessons-learned review.

14. Training and Competence

Archie Homes will ensure that all relevant staff and contractors receive appropriate training to understand their responsibilities under this policy, Awaab's Law and related legislation, and to recognise the signs, risks and appropriate response to damp and mould.

15. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Archie Homes will apply this policy fairly and consistently to all residents and will make reasonable adjustments where needed to ensure that residents with additional needs, disabilities or communication requirements are not disadvantaged in reporting or resolving damp and mould issues.

16. Related Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following Archie Homes documents:

- Archie Homes Damp and Mould Procedure

- Complaints Handling Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

17. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner in response to legislative or regulatory change, audit findings, or lessons from complaints or incidents. Review is led by the Director.