

Case Study:

Damp and Condensation mould customer information



Background

When the Housing Ombudsman published their Damp and Mould Spotlight Report in October 2021, work was already underway at Platform to look at the way reports of damp and condensation mould from our customers were handled.

The Housing Ombudsman recommend that 'Together with residents, landlords should review the information, materials and support provided to residents to ensure that these strike the right tone and are effective in helping residents to avoid damp and mould in their properties.'

Customer engagement and feedback was essential to ensure that all of our customer communications, guidance and advice is effective.

Customer Engagement

Our Customer Engagement team worked closely with colleagues and teams from across Platform including Assets, Customer Experience and Programme, on this important customer consultation project.

All customers were invited to take part in one of our online Focus Group sessions, which were advertised on our website. We also sent a targeted email to our involved customers asking them to get involved and have their say.

The Focus Group sessions included a short presentation explaining how:

- Our new process for customers to report any damp and condensation mould concerns.
- It had been designed to ensure that we are meeting the standard set out by the Housing Ombudsman.

Customers that took part in the sessions were then asked to review and feedback on ten new customer information leaflets and six customer letters.



Feedback was sought through online survey forms asking whether the information and guidance provided was:

- Clear
- Useful
- Easy to understand and contained enough information to enable customers to identify damp and avoid condensation mould
- Written in the right tone of voice
- Plainly setting out how to report a problem
- Missing content that should be included

Customer Feedback

Website Content

Question	% Agreed
Do you think that we have identified all reasonable steps that Platform as a Landlord could take to support the customer with condensation mould where no property repairs are required?	87.5% Yes
Do you think the information, materials and support provided to customers is written in the right tone of voice?	100% Yes
Do you think the information, materials and support provided to customers is effective in helping them to identify damp and avoid condensation mould in their properties?	100% Yes
Do you think that our initial response to reports of damp and mould automatically apports blame or uses language that leaves customers feeling blamed?	100% No
Do you think that through the information and guidance we have provided we are treating customers reporting damp and condensation mould with respect and empathy?	100% Yes

Letters

Question	% Agreed
Do you think the letters are written in the right tone of voice?	100% Yes
Based on the language used in the letters do you think that our initial response to reports of damp and mould automatically apports blame or uses language that leaves customers feeling blamed?	100% No



Do you think that the letters provided will clearly and regularly communicate with customers the actions taken or otherwise to resolve reports of damp and condensation mould?	87.5% Yes
Do you think that through the information and guidance we have provided we are treating customers reporting damp and condensation mould with respect and empathy?	100% Yes

Guidance Documents (Leaflets)

Question	% Agreed
Do you think that we have identified all reasonable steps that Platform as a Landlord could take to support the customer with condensation mould where no property repairs are required?	100% Yes
Do you think the information in the leaflets is written in the right tone of voice?	87.5% Yes
Do you think the information in the leaflets is effective in helping them to identify damp and avoid condensation mould in their properties?	87.5% Yes
Do you think that our initial response to reports of damp and mould automatically apportions blame or uses language that leaves customers feeling blamed?	87.5% No
Do you think the information in the leaflets is effective in helping customers to manage damp and condensation mould in their properties?	100% Yes
Do the leaflets explain clearly enough why it is important for customers to manage the conditions in their homes to reduce the likelihood of condensation mould?	87.5% Yes
Do you think that through the information and guidance we have provided we are treating customers reporting damp and condensation mould with respect and empathy?	100% Yes



Outcomes

As a direct result of customer feedback, we:

- Changed wording and phrases to make the information clearer.
- Added new content to the customer letters, including:
 - Contact methods
 - Details about the information being available on our website
- Added images and graphics to illustrate and help customers identify damp and condensation mould issues.
- Created a new leaflet providing information about Night Storage Heaters and how to use them efficiently.

