Appendix 1

Report To:	Performance Monitoring Panel
Date:	20 May 2025
Subject:	Housing Landlord Service – Performance of damp, condensation and mould case management
Purpose:	To consider how the Housing Landlord Service is performing in its response to damp, condensation and mould for 2024/25.
Key Decision:	No
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Tracey Carter, Portfolio Holder of Strategic and Operational Housing
Report Of:	Jason King, Director of Communities
Report Author:	Chris Mycock, Housing and Property Services Manager
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Exempt Report:	No

Summary

Maintaining good quality, safe, warm and sustainable Council homes is a key priority for South Holland District Council. Everyone deserves to live in a home that is decent, safe and secure. Resolving cases of Damp, Condensation and Mould is a priority to ensure our tenants are safe in their homes.

Whilst this remains a challenging area, not only for South Holland District Council but across the sector as whole, this report provides an update and seeks to give assurance to Members on the Housing Landlord Service's performance in managing damp, condensation and mould cases.

Recommendations

1. That Performance Monitoring Panel considers the Housing Landlord Service's performance in managing cases of damp, condensation and mould and provides feedback to Cabinet.

2. That the Key Performance Indicators reported to Performance Monitoring Panel on damp, condensation and mould are revised for 2025/26 to the following:

    - Number of damp, condensation and mould cases reported in the last quarter
    - Number of live damp and mould cases as a percentage of stock
    - Average number of days to fix damp and mould issues
    - Percentage of inspections carried out within 14 working days.

Reasons for Recommendations

The purpose of this report is to provide assurance and confidence to Members that tenants are living in safe homes and that arrangements for managing cases of damp, condensation and mould are robust, with regular reviews and improvements implemented.

It is recommended that Key Performance Indicators reported to Performance Monitoring Panel regarding damp, condensation and mould are revised to allow benchmarking to be provided, to support the scrutiny of performance.

Other Options Considered

1. **Do nothing**. To not consider information presented regarding the performance in managing cases of damp, condensation and mould. This option is not recommended.
2. **Not to revise key performance indicators***.* To continue to not consider performance with benchmarking. This option is not recommended.

1. Background

1.1 On 12 March 2025, a report on Housing Landlord Service Compliance Assurance was presented to the Performance Monitoring Panel, this report included a section on our year-to-date performance on managing damp, condensation and mould cases. It was recognised at that meeting that this area is a complex challenge for the Service, it was agreed therefore that a separate paper reporting on year-end performance would be brought forward to Members for scrutiny.

1.2 Following on from the report to March PMP, this report draws out the key areas of performance of the management of DCM cases for Members' attention and scrutiny.

1.3 Reports of DCM are received into the service in two ways:

- Proactively – via our stock condition survey that is currently underway
- Reactively – via calls from tenants, or reported by staff and contractors on site

1.4. The proactive cases that we received from our Stock Condition Survey, which include photographs, are submitted to us via a weekly report generated by the Stock Condition Surveyors. These cases are sent directly to our DCM team to be assessed for remedial actions to be arranged where needed.

1.5. Reactive reports of damp and mould that we receive generally come from our tenants calling us directly but also from housing officers carrying out site visits or other contractors on site that report it through to us. All these cases are assessed in line with our current policy and triage process by our dedicated DCM team.

1.6. A report will be brought to Members in July 2025 on the preparations towards delivering Awaab's Law, which will shape our approach to managing future Damp and Mould Cases. The Council's Housing Damp, Condensation and Mould policy will be updated to reflect the changes proposed within Awaab's Law. The proposed performance indicators set out within the recommendation align with the current proposals within Awaab's Law.

2 **Performance of managing proactive cases of damp, condensation and mould.**

2.1 As of 31 March 2025, our Stock Condition Survey had reported a total of 555 cases of DCM to us. This has increased from the 381 cases reported to March PMP (as of 31 Jan 2025). This increase is reflective of the continued volume of Stock Condition Surveys being processed.

2.2 Each case is then triaged against our policy to enable tenant information to be included in prioritising the case, and remedial works are raised where required, our performance on the stock condition reports is below:

NUMBER OF CASES OF DCM IDENTIFIED FROM STOCK CONDTION SURVEY AS OF 31 MARCH 2025						
Total Cases	Triaged	No response	Further home surveys required	Work in Progress	Works in progress overdue (over 56 days)	Cases Closed
555	441	114	23	283	41	135

2.3 Where a case has no response from the tenant, it is entered into our no access process where continued phone call attempts are made, and letters are sent to the tenant to explain the need for us to follow up on the case and assist them.

3. Performance of managing reactive cases of damp, condensation and mould as of as at 31/3/2025.

3.1 During 24/25, 190 properties were reported to us by our tenants as having damp, condensation and mould. The table below sets out the progress the service has made in managing these cases.

NUMBER OF REACTIVE CASES OF REPORTED TO THE SERVICE AS OF 31 MARCH 2025							
Total Cases	Triaged	No response	No at Survey Stage	Work in Progress	Work in Progress overdue (56 days)	Cases under monitoring	Works Completed

190	178	12	22	24	3	9	123

3.2 Cases that exceed the 56-day target fall into two themes, either:

- The remedial works required are identified as major, for example roofing works, drainage works or lowering external ground levels or;
- Cases where we have raised the remedial work and there has been no access for contractors or operatives or appointments have needed to be rearranged with tenants.

3.3 In all our no access cases, we work closely with both the tenant and Housing Services Team to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to undertake the work.

3.4 As per the recommendation within this report, the proposal is to add the following four KPIs to the statistical report for scrutiny at PMP on a quarterly basis:

- Number of damp, condensation and mould cases reported in the last quarter
- Number of live damp and mould cases as a percentage of stock
- Average number of days to fix damp and mould issues
- Percentage of inspections carried out within 14 working days.

3.5 To enable Members to gauge initial performance against these four indicators the table below sets out the performance as at 31/3/25.

DCM CASES REPORTED BETWEEN AS AT 31/3/25			
Number of DCM cases in last quarter	Number of live DCM cases as a % of the stock	Average Number of days to fix damp and mould issues	Percentage of cases inspected within target of 14 days
90	3.9%	30.9	84.6%

4.0 Benchmarking performance

4.1 The Council is a member of Housemark, the leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector. The table below summarises our position with benchmarking as at 31/3/25. Benchmarking data is not supplied for 24/25 until July 2025, however 23/24 benchmarking data has been included to provide an indication.

SHDC PERFORMANCE OF DAMP, CONDENSATION AND MOULD AS AT 31/3/2025 WITH BENCHMARKING			
Key performance indicator	SHDC 24/25	Housemark median **23/24**	Variance
Percentage of live damp and mould cases as a percentage of stock	3.9%	2.68%	+1.22%
Average number of days to fix damp and mould issues	30.9 days	32 days	-1.1 days
Recurring damp and mould cases as a percentage of stock.	0.77%	0.88%	-0.11%

5. Conclusion

5.1. Tackling damp and mould remains a key priority for the service, the introduction of additional resources to enable us to react appropriately to the reports we receive, both reactive and proactive, highlights our commitment to strengthen our process and ensure resilience within the team to maintain and improve our performance in this area. The service will continue to focus on learning and improving and in ensuring it meets the requirements of Awaab's Law as the changes are announced.

5.2. The service will also continue to identify opportunities to improve through learning from complaints and satisfaction surveys and engaging with tenants as the new Tenant Forum is established.

5.3. A report will be brought to Members in July 2025 on the preparations towards delivering Awaab's Law. The Council's Housing Damp, Condensation and Mould policy will be updated to reflect the changes in approach. It is anticipated that ongoing reviews of this policy will be required until the final detail of Awaab's law is published.

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

This report provides assurance that South Holland District Council takes its responsibility as a landlord seriously and will mitigate against any potential reputational damage or negative impacts to tenants.

Corporate Priorities

This report will support the following South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-Regional Strategy priorities:

- Healthy Lives – Safe housing will lead to the better health of our tenants and everyone that stays or visits the properties.
- Safe and Resilient – Providing community confidence that our homes are well maintained.

Staffing

None.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

As a social housing landlord, we are required to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing in accordance with the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

The forthcoming legislation (Awaab's Law) will set clearer and stronger laws requiring social landlords to investigate and repair hazards within specified timescales to ensure that tenants are living in safe homes. Although there are no firm details known yet, it is understood that if a landlord fails to meet the requirements of Awaab's Law, that the tenant can enforce this through their tenancy agreement.

Data Protection

None.

Financial

The financial position of the HRA is monitored through regular budget meetings, formally reported to Members through quarterly outturn reports. The Portfolio Holder receives updates at the Governance Clinic.

Due to the volume of cases identified by stock condition surveys, additional resources have been temporarily secured to support with assessing cases, surveying properties and ordering works, these resources have been costed and funded from within existing HRA budgets.

Risk Management

Managing DCM is a complex challenge for the Service. A risk has been added to the Risk Register regarding the Council's ability to deliver the requirements of Awaab's Law. In response to this, a separate paper will be brought forward to Members on the Council's preparedness to deliver Awaab's Law.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

The Portfolio Holder - Strategic and Operational Housing, the Director for Communities, Monitoring Officer and the S151 Officer have been consulted.

Reputation

Presenting an annual performance report to Members significantly enhances the Council's reputation by demonstrating a commitment to transparency and accountability. By openly sharing our compliance status, we build trust with stakeholders, including tenants and Members. This proactive approach reassures Members that potential risks are being managed effectively, boosting confidence in our operations. Additionally, demonstrating our adherence to regulations and ethical standards reinforces that we are a responsible social landlord.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

It is important for Housing Providers to ensure that statutory safety work is carried out to a high standard. Poorly performing landlords can be fined or prosecuted for failing to take the necessary measures to protect tenants and employees.

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

The Council is required to consider what adjustments it can reasonably make when carrying out work within a tenant's home to deal with disabilities or other issues arising. Such adjustments are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Council is committed to making necessary adjustments such as providing additional assistance to meet the diverse needs of our tenants including when accessing their homes to complete repairs. This underscores the dedication of the Council to inclusivity and safety ensuring all tenants feel supported whilst essential safety work is carried out in their homes.

Health and Wellbeing

Registered providers are required to publish Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) data, which includes compliance data. By clearly communicating our compliance with safety regulations, we ensure that tenants feel secure and confident in their homes.

All cases of damp, condensation and mould have been prioritised based on the severity of DCM in the property and household vulnerabilities, including the risk that DCM poses.

Officers are in regular contact with residents in their homes and can sometimes be first to identify damp and mould in a property. All Housing staff completed various levels of training regarding identifying DCM during 2023. Training was also held for new starters during 2024 along with the completion of Housing Ombudsman e-learning on DCM by all Officers during 2024.

Where tenants have concerns about heating their home and/or can't afford to do so, the Council's Cost of Living Support Team can offer support in accessing cheaper utility tariffs and budgeting assistance. In extenuating circumstances, Officers also have access to a Tenant Hardship Fund to help with clearing debt on meters (in conjunction with engaging with on-going support).

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not undertaken.

Acronyms

TSM – Tenant Satisfaction Measures
DCM – Damp Condensation and Mould
RSH – Regulator of Social Housing

Appendices

Appendix 1A – Summary of Damp, condensation and mould performance for tenants.
Appendix 1B – Summary of approach to handling damp, condensation and mould

Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
SHDC – Landlord Strategy 2024 -2026 and Transformation Programme for 2024-2026	SHDC_Housing_Landlord_Strategy_2024-2026.pdf
Regulator of Social Housing - Safety and Quality Standard	April_2024_-Safety_and_Quality_Standard_FINAL.pdf
SHDC Housing Damp, Condensation and Mould policy	https://www.sholland.gov.uk/Housing-policies

Chronological History of this Report
A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body

Report Approval

Report author:	Chris Mycock, Housing Repairs and Property Services Manager cmycock@sholland.gov.uk
Signed off by:	Jason King, Director of Communities Jasonking@sholland.gov.uk
Approved for publication:	Cllr Tracey Carter – Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing

Appendix 1A

SHDC HOUSING LANDLORD SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25: DAMP, CONDENSATION AND MOULD

Background
Maintaining good quality, safe, warm and sustainable Council homes is a key priority for South Holland District Council. Everyone deserves to live in a home that is decent, safe and secure.

In 2024, the Council adopted a new policy on responding to damp, condensation and mould in SHDC properties. A copy of the policy is available on our website at https://www.sholland.gov.uk/Housing-policies

Performance
The table below sets out how the Council performs on managing cases of damp, condensation and mould.

SHDC PERFORMANCE OF DAMP, CONDENSATION AND MOULD AS AT 31/3/2025	
Key performance indicator	SHDC
Percentage of open cases where we are investigating/repairing properties with damp, condensation and mould.	3.9%
Average number of days to fix the issue causing damp, condensation and mould.	30.9
Percentage of the council's homes where damp and mould has returned after the repair was completed.	0.77%

Continuously improving our performance
Due to the number of cases identified in 2024/2025, our focus has been on fixing damp and mould in individual properties. In 2025/2026, officers will use the data to find trends and themes of damp. To support us preventing it from happening.

We will review our arrangements during summer 2025 to ensure that we are meeting changes in legislation around damp, condensation and mould. Known as Awaab's law, phase one of the new changes comes into force in October, focussed on how we respond to emergency cases of damp, condensation and mould. Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/government/news/awaabs-law-to-force-landlords-to-fix-dangerous-homes

If you have damp or mould in your home

- Call 01775 761161. Phone lines are open Monday to Friday from 9am - 5pm.
- Email dcm@sholland.gov.uk providing as much information as possible (such as your name, address, contact telephone number and size and location of the damp or mould)

Please contact us as soon as possible.

Appendix 1B

1. Background information to responding to Damp, Condensation and Mould

1.4 The Council has a dedicated DCM Coordinator focussed on triage of all reports of damp, condensation and mould. Provision is made within the Housing Repairs Team, supported by procured contracts, to carry out all remedial works. Cases are logged on NEC housing and monitored by the DCM Coordinator. Each damp and mould case is monitored for a period of six months following completion of identified remedial works. Once work is completed an inspection is carried out to at the home to ensure the works have been carried out satisfactorily and the resident is happy with the works completed, it is explained that should there be a reoccurrence the tenant is to contact us immediately, we then diarise for a follow on call six months after the completion of the works to check with the tenant that everything is still OK.

1.5 The Housing Repairs team are responsible for ensuring any works required are completed in a timely manner, including mould washes, specialist ventilation and repairs. Repairs for all works required are to be completed within 56 days of the works being authorised except for extensive repairs where the case will remain open and monitored until it reaches conclusion

1.6 All reactive reports of damp and mould that we receive are assessed into response time frames within 2 working days of any DCM report being made. The Council initially assesses DCM under the following categories:

- **Emergency -** Emergency visit for physical inspection within 24 hours to follow up initial telephone triage.
- **Urgent** - Urgent response for physical inspection within three working days.
- **Routine –** Routine response for physical inspection within five working days.
- **Monitor –** Routine response for physical inspection within five working days but upon inspection there are no signs of DCM or no visible likely cause

1.5 In addition to the reactive process the Council has procured a contractor (MLCS3) to conduct stock condition surveys on all residential dwellings managed by the Council. Included within the Stock Condition Survey was an assessment of hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessments which include reports of DCM.

1.6 Due to the volume of cases identified by stock surveys, additional resources have been secured to support with assessing cases, surveying properties and ordering works. The following process has been adopted for case management, allowing the introduction of stock survey data cases into the programme of works:

- Severe cases reported by MLCS3
- Triaging of new cases reported direct to the Council by tenants
- Moderate cases reported by MLCS3, prioritised by tenant vulnerability and date of survey.
- Notable cases reported by MLCS3, prioritised by tenant vulnerability and date of survey – note that further analysis is required of these cases, as some cases have been reported as the ‘potential’ of DCM, rather than

presence of DCM.

1.7 We record these cases separately from the reactive cases to enable us to effectively monitor the outputs from the HHSRS element of the Stock Condition Survey. The survey reports the presence of DCM to us within the three categories:

CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS DETERMINED BY MLCS3	
Severe	Excessive damp or mould noted to one or more rooms
Moderate	Minor damp or mould noted in more than one room
Slight	Minor damp or mould noted in one room

1.8 Cases that are identified as Severe as part of the survey are reported to us immediately, on the day of survey, for us to take appropriate action. The cases that are reported as moderate or slight then receive a further triage call in order for us to assess and assign an appropriate priority.

1.9 The resources within the DCM team were increased in March 2025 to enable us to undertake the triage and remedial works from the stock condition outputs.

1.10 Each case receives a triage call which examines the information provided from the stock condition survey and assesses this against the circumstances of the tenants in respect of vulnerabilities or health issues. This enables us to assign a priority to the case and take appropriate action. The table below details the outcomes to date of the cases identified via the Stock Condition Survey split by the two workstreams

3. Systemic analysis of the causes of damp, condensation and mould

3.1. Due to the volume of cases identified during 24/25, the focus has been on remedying the damp and mould in individual properties. The response to damp, condensation and mould is a complex matter of which varies between age of property, archetype, heating source, household composition and location. Officers intend to conduct systemic analysis of the data during 25/26 to identify trends to enable further proactive management.

4. Continuous Improvement in responding to and identifying damp, condensation and mould

4.1. A report will be brought to Members in July 2025 on the preparations towards delivering Awaab's Law. The Council's Housing Damp, Condensation and Mould policy will be updated to reflect the changes in approach. It is anticipated that ongoing reviews of this policy will be required until the final detail of Awaab's law is published.

4.2. Registered providers should assess the condition of homes frequently enough and in sufficient depth to maintain assurance on their quality and safety. The Council recognises that up-to-date stock information is an essential foundation of being a responsible landlord. The current surveying programme will provide a complete snapshot at a point in time. However, the Council recognises that some homes will need to be surveyed more frequently than the minimum 5 yearly requirement set by the Regulator of Social Housing. Once analysis of archetypes is complete, a future surveying programme will be established. Factors such as a higher prevalence of

damp, condensation and mould will be factors in identifying homes which may need to be surveyed more frequently.

5. Tenant feedback

5.1. During 24/25, the Council received 36 complaints regarding damp, condensation and mould. All complaints were handled through our complaints process and responded to accordingly. An analysis of themes identified that quality of service was the main reason for a complaint, secondary was a lack of satisfaction with the quality of work undertaken.

5.2. For each complaint a lessons learned document is completed and fed back to the appropriate officer or contractor, where complaints have arisen as a result of action or inaction from a contractor these are raised immediately with the contractor in question and also discussed at the prevailing monthly contractor meetings.

6. Keeping tenants informed

6.1. Tenants are kept informed about the safety of their home in a variety of ways including:

- Annual report providing an overall position on health and safety (Tenant Satisfaction Measures)
- Quarterly compliance performance statistics published on the tenant's section of the website www.sholland.gov.uk/about-your-landlord
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures published with national benchmarking at www.sholland.gov.uk/about-your-landlord

6.2. The Council is currently consulting tenants on a Tenant Engagement and Influence Strategy. We aim to develop a variety of engagement and influence opportunities during 2025/26 including establishing a Tenant Influence Panel to scrutinise our performance.