



SHDC Housing Landlord Service: Damp, Condensation and Mould Policy 2026

Access for All Statement:

We can provide this information in other languages and formats including large print, Braille, audio recording. Please contact us to request this:

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Visiting our Council offices, Priory Road, Spalding, PE11 2XE.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the Council's approach to addressing the risks of damp, condensation or mould (DCM) within our properties and communal areas and how we will respond to reports of DCM from our tenants, staff, agencies or by any other means.

We will:

- Manage our homes and train our staff to ensure that we proactively identify and react to instances of damp, condensation or mould. We have procured a specialist contractors service to assist with surveys and repairs.
- Risk assess our assets and the potential impact of works on our customers, especially where vulnerabilities are present. See risk assessment sheet at appendix A.
- Respond, inspect and report on all cases of DCM brought to our attention and use intelligence to identify property types at risk.
- Treat tenants reporting DCM with empathy and respect, without any prejudice and communicate with tenants clearly and regularly regarding any actions we plan to take and any actions our tenants are advised to take.
- Ensure that investigations are conducted by competent individuals and appropriately qualified contractors of whom possess the necessary skills and experience to assess whether the home is subject to significant or emergency hazards. We will engage suitably qualified specialists for investigations when relevant.
- We will implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp and mould, including controlling condensation.
- Ensure that customers have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive support, advice and guidance on managing and controlling DCM and reduce the risk of it re-occurring.
- Be supportive and responsive to customer vulnerabilities to ensure all customer needs are considered, addressed and solutions are agreed with customers.
- Comply with statutory requirements and good practice relating to DCM including Awaab's law.
- Protect the fabric of the property from deterioration and damage resulting from DCM
- Work with staff and contractors, together with our tenants to deliver this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy available at <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/Housing-policies>. This policy will be reviewed as each stage of Awaab's law is implemented.

Policy Scope

This policy explains how we will respond, inspect and report on DCM, including but not limited to:

1. Who the policy applies to:
 - Tenants who rent their home under a tenancy agreement.
 - Customers in alternative tenure where SHDC has a repairing obligation.
 - All property communal areas.
 - Emergency or temporary accommodation.
2. How we will work with our tenants, staff and contractors to manage and eradicate DCM. This includes:
 - Proactively identifying property types at highest risk of DCM so that we can

undertake proactive measures to eliminate DCM before it becomes a problem for our customers.

- Interrogating data and reports of DCM to understand trends and investigate those similar property types where no reports have been received.
- Risk assessing the vulnerabilities and needs of the household, implementing reasonable adjustments within our process to support them.
- Risk assessing the severity of the DCM along with the household vulnerabilities to identify acceptable response times.
- Identifying the types of DCM and remedies to eradicate these.
- Delivering clear lines of communication and plans to tenants to remedy any issues
- Following up completed repair works within six months completion to check there are no issues.

Legislation and Associated Policies

The policy is aligned with the Consumer Standards proposed by the Regulator of Social Housing, specifically: - Safety and Quality Standard, registered providers shall: ensure that customers' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Governments Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard.

The policy is also aligned to the follow legislation:

- Housing Act 2004 Part 1 – Housing Condition
- Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (Awaabs Law)
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) (Amendment) Regulations 1994
- Building Regulations 2010
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- Regulator of Social Housing – Safety and Quality Standard 2024
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

The following Policies may impact and inform the delivery service set out in this Policy:

- Tenancy Management Policy
- SHDC Housing Landlord Service: Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy September 2025
- Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Responsibilities

The Council will work with tenants where damp and/or mould is present and identify solutions and actions to resolve the problem, some of these will need to be undertaken by the Council and some will be for residents to implement.

Landlord Responsibilities

The Council is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the structure, exterior and communal parts of its properties, as well as internal repairs, in accordance with

Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Tenancy Agreement. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Investigation and completion of remedial works to treat leaks, damp, mould and/or condensation.
- Investigation and completion of remedial works to treat leaks, damp, mould and/or condensation in properties involved in the mutual exchange process.
- Accurate diagnosis of the root cause of damp and implementation of effective long-term solutions, not just treatment of symptoms.
- Employment of competent, qualified and skilled contractors to carry out all required works.
- Clear and timely communication with tenants, including details of identified works, expected timelines and next steps.
- Making reasonable adjustments where households include vulnerable members.
- Make good internal surfaces following remedial works, including repairing plaster, preparing surfaces, and carrying out any necessary local redecoration to restore the affected area to a reasonable matched finish.
- Arranging suitable temporary alternative accommodation where works mean a property is temporarily unsafe for occupation.

Tenant Responsibilities

- Immediately report any evidence of rising damp, penetrating damp, or any faults that may affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home, including issues with extractor fans, windows that cannot be opened, or heating system failures.
- Not tamper with, disable, or interfere with any specialist equipment installed by the Council to assist in controlling damp, condensation and mould.
- Allow access for inspections and for all remedial works required to address damp, condensation or mould, in accordance with their tenancy agreement.
- Seek advice and obtain written permission from the Council before carrying out any alterations to the property, including combining rooms, adding extensions, or converting non-habitable spaces into habitable rooms, to ensure such changes do not contribute to damp, condensation or mould and comply with planning and building control requirements.
- Where possible and appropriate, use the heating system and extractor fans provided to help ensure the property is suitably heated and ventilated.

Definitions of Damp, Condensation and Mould

Condensation Damp

Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

The conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are:

- Lack of ventilation within the property
- Inadequate heating or draught proofing
- Inadequate loft insulation.
- High humidity
- Overcrowding
- Poor building design construction, cold areas (bridging) which are integral with the building construction.
- Moisture from the construction stage in new build properties.

Penetrating Damp (including internal leaks)

Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.

Rising Damp

Rising damp occurs when moisture from the ground travels upwards through building components in contact with the ground, such as walls and floors. This issue is commonly found in older properties.

Traumatic Damp

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding

Mould

Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

It is important to recognise that not all damp and mould presents the same level of risk to our tenants. The most immediate risk relates to severe mould growth of certain types of mould which may cause airborne toxicity and is therefore especially dangerous to some of our vulnerable tenants. We will not undertake any tests to identify specific mould types but deal with all mould types and remove the hazard.

Definitions of Awaabs Law

Part 1, Regulation 3 of Awaab's Law sets out definitions for key terms including "significant hazard," "significant risk of harm," "emergency hazard," and "imminent and significant risk of harm." These definitions apply not only to tenants but extend protection to all occupiers of the social home.

Emergency hazard

A hazard that poses 'an imminent and significant risk of harm' to the health or safety of an occupier in the social home. An 'imminent and significant risk of harm' is defined as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable social landlord with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe within 24 hours.

Significant hazard

A hazard that poses a 'significant risk of harm' to the health or safety of an occupier of the social home. A 'significant risk of harm' is defined as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make

safe as a matter of urgency’.

Action

Any follow up investigations, relevant safety work, supplementary preventative works and provision of temporary alternative accommodation in circumstances where relevant safety work cannot be completed to timeframes.

The Councils Housing Stock

Poor thermal performance is a contributing factor in the occurrence in damp and mould, which can create difficulties for tenants to provide sufficient heating and ventilation, creating ideal conditions for condensation and mould growth.

Building ‘defects’ can also be a problem e.g., leaking pipes or roofs, blocked gutters, or down pipes, defective damp courses, etc and this type of repair is designated as responsive repairs and generally carried out by the repairs service.

The Council has a council housing portfolio of just over 3,800 homes. Through our Asset Management Strategy, we are committed to maintaining our properties to the Decent Homes standard and providing homes that are ‘fit for human habitation’ both at the start and during any tenancy. As part of this, addressing damp and mould issues is a priority for the Council and we have been fundamentally reviewing our response so that there is a stronger relationship between what we know is required to address damp and mould on a day-to-day basis alongside identifying where this has a structural or capital investment led requirement to prevent damp and mould occurring long term.

The HRA Business plan has set aside significant investment over the next 30 years for improvement works with investment requirements reviewed on an annual basis. This includes work to bring properties up to a minimum EPC level C. Additionally, we use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to assess the condition of our stock and identify existing hazards that need addressing

Scale and Scope of DCM

All homes are affected by condensation at some point, however certain activities can increase the problem and good practices can eliminate this from becoming a bigger problem. It is also important to recognise that DCM presents different risks to different customers, with more severe cases of damp and mould especially in living areas presenting more of a risk. Minor instances of mould, such as around window frames and in silicone is a lower risk than mould appearing on ceilings, walls and soft furnishings.

To respond appropriately and effectively with all reports the severity of the DCM needs to be established, as quickly as possible. This is done using the risk assessment tool at appendix A which includes detailing any vulnerabilities of the occupants of the household.

Vulnerability Factors – Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

Those who are most vulnerable to the effects of instances of DCM are those:

- Who suffer or are susceptible to allergies.
- With immune suppression diseases – (e.g. cancer, HIV)
- With underlying lung disease
- With chronic respiratory disease – (e.g. COPD, Asbestosis)
- With asthma

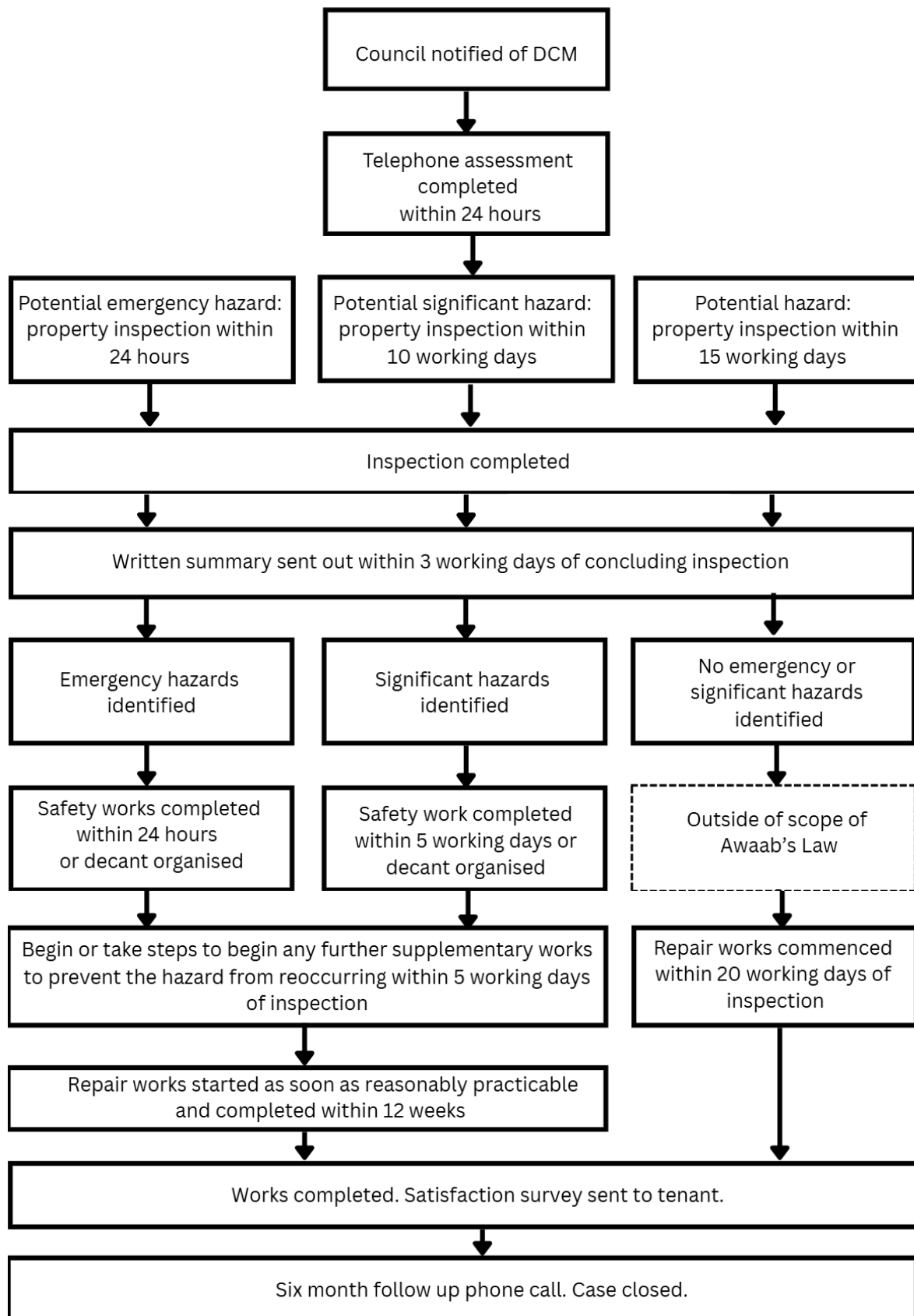
- Young children – under the age of 5
- Older people – over the age of 70
- Pregnant women

Those who may need additional help and support when experiencing DCM are those:

- Who are living with mental illness conditions, especially autism, asperger's, dementia, psychosis.
- Older people who are not able to respond to some of the recommendations.
- Those with disabilities such as sight impairments or physical disabilities that could restrict any cleaning required.

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Summary of response



Assessment of hazards

All reports of damp and mould will be assessed using our risk assessment tool and categorised into response time frames **within 24 hours** of the DCM report being made. (Assessments are conducted during and outside of office hours).

As part of this assessment, the Council will factor in individual circumstances, including the age and physical and mental health of the household to assess the likelihood of harm materialising and the potential severity of that harm in the specific circumstances. The assessment will also consider whether any reasonable adjustments are required, for example relating to languages or support needs.

A tenant (or their household) does not necessarily have to have a specific vulnerability for a hazard to be deemed a significant hazard: some hazards can pose a danger to anyone. A tenant does not need to provide medical evidence, however the Council will take this into account if it is provided.

If the risk assessment indicates and emergency response is required, a physical inspection will be carried out within 24 hours to establish the extent of the DCM.

Potential Emergency Hazard(s)	<p>Description: Extensive damp and mould in multiple living areas, highly vulnerable residents, very young or elderly with chronic health and/or vulnerability factors. Prevalent damp and/or mould that is having a material impact on a tenant’s health, for example their ability to breathe.</p> <p>Response: Physical inspection carried out within 24 hours of the assessment to investigate and take action to make the property safe.</p>
Potential significant Hazard(s)	<p>Description: multiple areas of extensive damp and/or mould growth in main living areas of bedrooms, living rooms, bathroom mould growth, and/or dampness highly visible on surfaces, levels of vulnerability present, young or elderly residents with known vulnerabilities that exacerbate risk.</p> <p>Response: Physical inspection carried out within 10 working days.</p>
Potential hazard(s)	<p>Description: multiple areas of damp isolated by area and location (e.g., under stair cupboard i.e., non-habitable space.) Customer risk factor such as very young or elderly with no specific vulnerabilities may exist.</p> <p>Response: Physical inspection carried out within 15 working days.</p>

Investigations

Investigations will:

- be physical inspections, conducted on site, with photos taken;

- confirm whether or not there is a significant or emergency hazard;
- identify the required work to make a property safe and prevent the hazard from recurring.

While physical inspections are preferred by the Council, it may conduct remote inspections if convenient for all parties.

Emergency Hazard(s) identified	<p>A hazard that poses ‘an imminent and significant risk of harm’ to the health or safety of an occupier in the social home. An ‘imminent and significant risk of harm’ is defined as ‘a risk of harm to the occupier’s health or safety that a reasonable social landlord with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe within 24 hours’.</p> <p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 24 hours, the Council will take action to make the property safe. • Within 5 working days, the Council begin or take steps to begin any further supplementary works to prevent the hazard from reoccurring. <p>If the property cannot be made safe, alternative accommodation will be arranged as per the Council’s Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy until the required safety works are completed.</p> <p>Where the property is attended to out of hours, a follow up investigation appointment may be required to identify the required work to prevent the hazard from recurring. The tenant will be contacted the next working day.</p>
Significant hazard(s) identified	<p>A hazard that poses a ‘significant risk of harm’ to the health or safety of an occupier of the social home. A ‘significant risk of harm’ is defined as ‘a risk of harm to the occupier’s health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency’.</p> <p>Response: Within 5 working days, the Council will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete safety works; and • begin or take steps to begin any further supplementary works to prevent the hazard from reoccurring. <p>If further supplementary works are required and the Council is unable to begin them within 5 working days, the works will commence as soon as reasonably practicable and within 12 weeks of the investigating concluding.</p> <p>If the property cannot be made safe, alternative accommodation will be arranged as per the Council’s Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy until the required safety works are completed.</p>

Hazards identified	<p>No emergency or significant hazards identified. Outside of scope of Awaabs Law.</p> <p>Response: Repairs will be completed as per the Council's Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy, completed where practicable within 20 working days.</p>
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There may be circumstances where the investigation is unable to determine the extent of, or underlying cause of, DCM. In this circumstance a further investigation such as a structural survey will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable to determine what work is required to make the property safe and prevent the hazard from reoccurring.

If a tenant later reports a material change relating to the hazard, or the Council becomes aware of a material change through other routes it will complete a further inspection within **10 working days**. (A material change could include a change to the severity of the hazard or a change to the effect it is having on the tenant's health. For example, if a tenant reports new symptoms or worsening symptoms that may be associated with the hazard, or if they report that the hazard has worsened since the time of investigating.)

We will keep accurate records of communication with tenants and ensure tenants are aware of the next steps and kept informed during the repair process.

Making the property safe

Where emergency or significant hazards are identified, the Council will conduct works to make the property safe. Safety work is likely to include undertaking a mould wash to remove the immediate hazard and completed within **24 hours** for emergencies and **5 working days** for significant hazards. After the relevant safety work is completed, the Council will ensure that the property remains in its safe current condition until relevant supplementary preventative work is completed.

Supplementary preventative works

If the investigation concludes repairs are required, the Council will begin relevant supplementary preventative works to prevent the hazard from recurring as far as possible within **5 working days** of the investigation concluding.

Where it is not reasonably practicable to begin the relevant supplementary preventative work within **5 working days**, the Council will take steps to arrange the completion of the relevant supplementary preventative works as soon as reasonably practicable and **within 12 weeks**. For example, by securing an appointment for further specialist investigation or securing specialist contractors for works. As soon as reasonably practicable means that action must be taken as quickly as it reasonably can be, taking into account relevant circumstances such as the availability of materials and labour.

All cases of DCM are followed up six months after completion of works to ensure issues have been fully resolved.

Works Assigned to Contractors

The Council acknowledges that it retains full responsibility for ensuring compliance with Awaabs Law and any other legal obligations when assigning works to contractors.

Inspections

Where surveys are assigned to a contractor, the Property Services team will ensure that physical inspections are carried out within the contracted timescales.

Reports

All reports completed by contractors are to be returned by the contractor to the Housing Compliance team within 3 working days of the appointment date.

Remedials

All remedial works assigned to a contractor will be monitored by the Property Services team.

Monitoring Our Performance

All reports of damp and mould will be logged at an individual property level, recorded on NEC Housing.

We report against two sets of KPIs: the nationally standardised Housemark indicators used for external benchmarking, and our own internal Awaab's Law KPIs which provide a more detailed view of operational compliance with the new legal requirements. While some indicators cover similar stages of the process, they serve different purposes

The following KPIs will be reported at:

- Housing Compliance and Performance Clinic (monthly)
- Senior Leadership Team (quarterly)
- Scrutiny - Performance Monitoring Panel (quarterly).
- Tenant Influence Panel (Quarterly)
- Tenants Complaints and Performance Focus Group (2 monthly)

Performance information will be uploaded to the tenant webpage on a quarterly basis and published in the annual report. In addition, performance updates will be shared regularly at Property Focus Groups through face-to-face sessions to ensure accessibility for tenants who prefer non-digital engagement.

HouseMark

- New 'Emergency Hazards' reported per 1,000 properties (All emergency hazards including Damp Condensation and Mould)
- New 'Significant Damp and Mould Hazards' reported per 1,000 properties
- % Emergency hazards resolved within 24 Hours
- % of Significant Damp & Mould hazards investigated within 10 working days
- % of Significant Damp & Mould repairs initiated within 5 working days

Landlords own KPIS

- AWAAB01 - Total AWAABS cases ('DCM' & 'Other Emergencies')
- AWAAB02 - Number and % of 'Emergency cases made safe within 24 hours
- AWAAB03 - Number and % of 'Potential Significant' Cases inspected within 10

working days

- AWAAB04 - Number and % of 'Potential Hazards' Cases inspected within 15 working days
- AWAAB05 - Number and % of Damp & Mould cases made safe within 5 days
- AWAAB06 - Number and % of Written Summaries Sent within 3 working days
- AWAAB07 - Number and % of Damp & Mould cases completed (Soft close)
- AWAAB08 - Number and % of Damp & Mould cases closed after 6-Month follow up
- AWAAB09 - Number and % of cases prior to AWAABs law closed

Communications Strategy

Written summary following investigation

Following the conclusion of an investigation, the Council will produce a written summary of its findings and issue this to the named tenant within **3 working days**. Day one of the timeline is the day after the investigation concludes. Where multiple investigations are required for one issue, the Council will issue a written summary after each investigation.

The written summary will be in the name of the tenant and include the following information:

- whether or not the investigation identified a significant or emergency hazard, and what the hazard is
- if action is required: the summary will specify
 - the action required; and
 - a target timeframe for beginning and completing that action.
- if no action is required: the written summary will specify
 - that there is no action required; and
 - the reasons why there is no action required.
- information on how to contact the Council and the Housing Ombudsman.

Awaab's law defines 'Action' as any follow up investigations, relevant safety work, supplementary preventative works and provision of temporary alternative accommodation in circumstances where relevant safety work cannot be completed to timeframes.

Written summaries will be sent to the named tenant within **3 working days** in one of the following ways:

- hand delivered to the home
- sent by first class post; or
- being sent electronically.

Note that the timeframe is for the summary to be sent by the Council, rather than received by the tenant.

As part of the assessment of damp, the Council will record the diverse needs of tenants, including accessibility and/or language needs of the tenant. This information will be factored into ensuring that the summary of findings can be understood.

Keeping the tenant updated

At initial triage, tenants will be informed of the relevant Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for their case, including timeframes for inspection, safety works, and supplementary works, so expectations are clear from the outset. Tenants will be informed of the Damp Condensation

and Mould Policy and how to access it.

We will maintain contact with tenants with an open case at agreed intervals. We will also work with other council departments and agencies to ensure that the tenant is kept safe and informed during any works that need to take place:

- If it is unsafe for the occupants to remain in the property while the works are carried out, alternative accommodation arrangements will be made. See the Council's Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy for more information.
- In some cases, it may be necessary to re-house a family on a permanent basis if a medical professional advises that re-housing is the most suitable option. This will be considered in accordance with SHDC Allocations Policy and local arrangements.
- Where a tenant has been assessed as having vulnerability factors that could affect how they react to damp and mould the Property Services team will work with the tenant to ensure that the tenant gets all the help and support required to eradicate the DCM.

The Council will provide updates at the following stages of the DCM process:

- When the case is logged and triaged
- When a survey is booked
- After the survey, confirming findings and works raised
- When works are scheduled and confirmed
- When works are completed
- At the six-month follow-up

Tenant Communication Preferences:

At first contact, the Council will record the tenant's preferred communication method (phone call, email, letter) and endeavour to use this for updates where possible. Where phone calls are requested, the Council will attempt direct contact and record outcomes of the calls.

This approach is in addition to, and does not replace, the legislative requirement for the Council to issue a written summary. All statutory written notifications will continue to be provided in writing.

Access Issues

Regulation 20 of Awaab's Law introduces an implied covenant within social housing tenancy agreements, requiring tenants to permit access to their homes when necessary.

Where DCM has been identified either by a tenant or by SHDC or a property has been assessed as high risk through SHDC data insight, tenants will be required to allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of remedial works (in accordance with their tenancy agreement). All attempts and contact are recorded.

Where access issues arise, the Council will work together with tenants to agree on a suitable time for access to the property. Tenants are expected to actively engage with the Council to arrange a convenient appointment. The Council will clearly communicate that any delays in gaining access may lead to delays in completing the necessary safety work.

SHDC do consider this to be a health and safety concern for tenants and will consider alternative methods of gaining access, such as seeking an injunction where access is refused.

All properties identified as hard to access or refusal of access will be managed through the Council's standard "no access" process. See the Council's Repairs and Fitness for Habitation Policy for more information.

Guidance to Tenants

We will offer the following advice and information to all tenants via our website, leaflets, social media and annual report to help them reduce the conditions that lead to condensation dampness:

- Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside (where possible), where it is safe to do so, keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- Adequately heating rooms – The World Health Organisation recommends 18°C. Any tenant who is experiencing fuel poverty or debt related problems will be referred to our Cost of Living Response Officers (COLRO) to help support them with these issues.
- Keeping the house well-ventilated e.g., opening windows during cooking/bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed in their home is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open and allowing air to circulate around furniture.
- Following all advice and guidance issued by us on managing humidity and moisture in the home which can lead to condensation. This information can also be found on the SHDC website.

If all reasonable efforts have been made to manage and control the presence of condensation and mould and there is still an issue, then the tenant should contact SHDC immediately to report the problem.

The tenancy agreement, licenses and long leases recommends that the tenant arranges adequate household contents insurance for the home that they occupy.

Complaints

If a tenant is not satisfied by the way in which our approach to DCM has been dealt with, or in the way in which the work has been carried out, a formal complaint may be raised in line with our Complaints Policy.

The written summary will include reference to the Housing Ombudsman and how to contact them.

Monitoring

SHDC will use a range of mechanisms to monitor and scrutinise performance, these could include the following:

- Reviewing Tenant feedback and identify areas for service improvement on a continuous basis in order to improve performance and to prioritise our work.
- We will ensure our Housing Landlord Board are provided with updates on the delivery of this policy on a quarterly basis and invite them to scrutinise performance.
- Inviting Tenants to scrutinise the performance of this policy.

Review

The Policy will be reviewed every three years and also in response to:

- Legislative Changes
- Regulatory Changes
- Government strategy or policy changes.

From time to time the council may invite tenants to scrutinise performance of this policy.

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