

Updated self assessment against the HOS Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould



Theme: Reactive to Proactive			
No.	HOS Recommendation	Links	Actions Delivered
1	Landlords to adopt zero tolerance approach to D&M interventions. Llds to review current strategy and consider whether approach will achieve this.	LL Factor 7 (Know Your Homes);	<p>Camden adopts a zero tolerance approach and put in place dedicated resources in January 2021 that were added to in 2022/23. The Council has reviewed its self assessment and developed a specific policy document in advance of stakeholder review in early 2024.</p> <p>The dedicated D&M resources that were established January 2021 were put in place to proactively support residents in response to increased reports during the Covid-19 pandemic when most people were working / schooling from home. Over time Camden has updated and expanded its approach with more resources added to the dedicated D&M Team in September 2021, and again in December 2022 as we proactively communicated our approach by writing to over 23,000 tenants as well as licensees in Camden managed temporary accommodation. Where details were held, messages were sent by text message and email to encourage D&M reporting.</p> <p>Revised D&M procedures were implemented Nov/Dec 2022 in response to the Ombudsman Reports and Prevention of Future Deaths Report following death of Awaab Ishak (Nov 2022). A range of communications with informaton on D&M, advice and guidance provided to residents and staff in late 2022/23 and 2023/24.</p>
2	Landlords to consider whether they require overall framework or policy to address D&M which would cover each area where landlord would be required to act. Would include any proactive interventions, approach to diagnosis, actions appropriate in different circumstances, effective communication & aftercare	LL Factor 2 (Proactive Comms Strategy); LL Factor 9 (Empower Staff);	<p>A new, specific, D&M policy was developed in Dec 2023 ahead of stakeholder review, this taking into account practice to date, changes in guidance and the current operational context. Operationally the Council has a specific D&M Team and designated officers delivering damp and mould diagnostic and repairs service. Independent surveyors are used where required to identify root cause and remedial works.</p> <p>As part of our longer term asset strategy, archetypes and/or particular blocks are being identified which are more likely to develop D&M based on age and construction, location, resident informaton, repairs reports and use. The Council is also commissioning internal surveys to cover properties not covered by its usual cyclical survey. These additional internal surveys will take place over the next two years and will use the Housing, Health & Safety Rating System to identify Category 1 & 2 hazards.</p> <p>Policy, procedure, proactive interventions, approach to diagnosis, works delivery, monitoring and communications are all kept under constant review by the dedicated staff in our Property Customer Services and Engagement team.</p> <p>Once damp or mould works have completed - residents are advised to report again if it reoccurs or there are still symptoms e.g. damp smell. After 6 months residents are contacted to check if D&M has reoccured using a customer feedback data capture form (10% response rate). Camden surveys residents twice, first when the job is closed and in addition after a period of 3 to 6 months to capture any insights on overall work delivery.</p>

3	Landlords to review accessibility and use of their systems for reporting repairs and making complaints to 'find their silence'.	LL Factor 1 (Find Your Silence); LL Factor 2 (Proactive Comms Strategy); LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping); LL Factor 10 (Use the Complaints System to Learn);	<p>The Council is leading the way in offering various options for residents to report a repair. As well as the traditional telephone reporting, where we have a dedicated phone option and team to support Damp and Mould, we also have in place many omnichannel options. You can log repairs via the Camden account, our live chat service, WhatsApp, SMS and video calling. The video calling service can allow a deaf or hard of hearing resident to join a call with us, including their translator. These other channels also offer multi-language options and a full transcript of the conversation can be provided upon request. The contact methods in place go beyond the usual telephone email provision and we are seeing a significant increase in WhatsApp reporting which allows videos and pictures to be uploaded. This helps us better prioritise cases. A range of proactive comms has been delivered. Complaints can be made using an online webform, by telephone, post, email, sign video (BSL) tool for deaf residents. If complainant is blind or partially sighted they can navigate the website using Browsealoud tool, which can read contents aloud. The webform proactively asks if any reasonable adjustments are needed for the resident to navigate the complaints process. Find their silence: An intensive door knocking tenant engagement project having conversations with residents across all of Camden's estates, blocks and street properties has completed across 20 estates. Of the 1,090 residents who engaged, 7.6% (83 residents) referred to D&M repairs. We will be overlaying this data with the formal complaints & repairs data for the financial years from 2022/23 and 23/24 to identify people who tend not to come forward to complain or report D&M which may be due to vulnerability, literacy or those who may tolerate conditions without reporting. Some residents may be more comfortable speaking to someone face to face informally. Overall, across all channels, since December 2022, we have acted upon and closed over 6,000 customer damp and mould requests.</p>
4	Landlords to identify opportunities for extending scope of their diagnosis within buildings, for example by examining neighbouring properties, to ensure the response early on is as effective as possible.	LL Factor 7 (Know Your Homes); LL Factor 8 (Dedicated Damp & Mould Strategy);	<p>Camden has built an asset performance model that uses stock condition and repairs data to inform investment priorities. It is extending this approach to look at property archetypes and known household composition to establish a risk based profile and identify D&M trends. In the meantime, the dedicated damp and mould team looks at the reports and referrals made to identify clusters of cases and what the underlying causes are. Also, where the source of D&M is not immediately identifiable operatives, or surveyors if required, will inspect neighbouring properties. D&M is also part of the voids assessment and properties are checked prior to mutual exchange. Digital monitoring equipment is being explored to measure conditions within building as part of the Council's wider work on retrofit at scale.</p>
5	Landlords to implement a data driven, risk-based approach with respect to damp and mould. This will reduce over reliance on residents to report issues, help landlords identify hidden issues and support landlords to anticipate and prioritise interventions before a complaint or disrepair claim is made	LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	<p>The Council is using stock condition surveys, resident feedback, and repairs reports to provide a data driven approach to condensation, damp and mould. Data helps the Council understand where there are reoccurring problems or to identify multiple cases. To support this analysis, over the next two years, the Council will be undertaking internal surveys of all tenanted homes where data has not been recently gathered. This will help inform programme setting processes including targeted works can prevent D&M. The Council's stock condition surveys use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to identify Category 1 & 2 hazards, and any damp and mould hazards identified are actioned and tracked through to completion.</p> <p>D&M repairs reports are triaged according to priority, risk to health and severity using a diagnostic script including groups that are particularly more vulnerable to more severe health impacts.</p> <p>As part of its outreach work, the Council proactively contacted 745 vulnerable residents to ask if they had damp or mould in their homes. The high-priority groups identified were those who were severely overcrowded and with children under 5 years of age, enhanced tenants, over 85s, and tenants with respiratory conditions. There was a follow up of the same group of residents after 6 months, and 593 interviews were carried out to confirm if mould was still persisting.</p>

6	Where properties are identified for future disposal or are within an area marked for regeneration, landlords to proactively satisfy themselves that residents do not receive a poorer standard of service or lower living conditions, that steps are taken to avoid homes degrading to an unacceptable condition and that they regularly engage and communicate with these residents.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	For regeneration projects, a detailed procedure is followed for all properties to ensure regular communication with residents. There are dedicated consultation and engagement resources who work with residents and the relevant property management teams to make sure any issues are addressed. There is no change to the repairs policy for blocks scheduled for demolition and the D&M procedures still apply. Major capital works are not generally programmed where demolition is due but repairing obligations should be met.
7	Landlords to avoid taking actions that solely place the onus on the resident. They should evaluate what mitigations they can put in place to support residents in cases where structural interventions are not appropriate and satisfy themselves they are taking all reasonable steps.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly);	<p>The Council and its dedicated damp and mould team will always look at the whole property as well as how the property is used. It has carried out a wide range of repairs to help prevent the causes of damp and mould following inspections generated by its proactive survey and communications programme. The Council also uses internal and external surveyors where the cause of the damp and mould needs to be investigated.</p> <p>The Council provides a range of awareness raising leaflets, a booklet and 'How to prevent condensation, damp and mould video' for residents and has disseminated a range of communications including housing news articles and a letter sent to all Camden schools on 3 March 2023 from the CEO advising on who to contact if damp and mould is identified across all forms of tenure. The Council recognises that some tenants will have affordability challenges to heat their homes sufficiently to help manage moisture levels and prevent damp and mould. It provides cost of living support including advice and guidance on fuel poverty: https://www.camden.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support</p>
8	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.	LL Factor 2 (Proactive Comms Strategy); LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly);	Camden shares publications and webpages with its Housing Residents Panel for sign-off before distributing them to the wider population. At the suggestion of this group, the Council commissioned a video specifically on how to identify and tackle damp and mould. This video is in five languages including BSL and has had 1000s of views already. https://www.camden.gov.uk/home-repair-videos
9	Landlords to be more transparent with residents involved in mutual exchanges and make the most of every opportunity to identify and address damp and mould, including visits and void periods.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 8 (Dedicated Damp & Mould Strategy);	<p>Inspections are carried out prior to mutual exchanges taking place. The Voids Team assesses damp and mould where identified as part of a void inspection. The Council has raised awareness across its teams in relation to damp and mould. This needs to be an ongoing process of awareness raising ensuring that policies and practice enable the detection of damp and mould.</p> <p>Any long term or new voids with damp and mould are immediately reported to the Damp and Mould Team.</p>

10	Landlords to ensure their strategy for delivering net zero carbon homes considers and plans for how they can identify and respond to potential unintended consequences around damp and mould.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 6 (Check Net Zero Plans); LL Factor 7 (Know Your Homes); LL Factor 8 (Dedicated Damp & Mould Strategy); LL Factor 9 (Empower Staff);	The Council has developed a 'Road Map to Net Zero' which prioritises our least energy efficient homes first. The pilot phase is completing a small batch of full and partial retrofits. This will allow us better understand how we can fit in the current best practice standard to retrofits (PAS2035/PAS2030) eventually into our everyday works. The PAS2035/30 standard already incorporates modelled risk analysis which can identify a condensation risk, which we can then engineer out of the project. At handover stage of our net zero retrofit projects we ensure our residents understand how the measures installed interact with each other, especially the new ventilation strategy. For some of our deeper retrofits, such as where we upgraded from single to double glazing, and installed wall insulation, we will be installing temperature humidity sensors in random different archetypes to further monitor the indoor environment. A new Home Energy Advice Team has recently expanded from 1 to 3 officers. The team targets homes which are at risk of fuel poverty provide free home visits for council tenants in which they offer support on saving money on energy bills. A visit includes home energy advice, fuel debt support and the installation of some small energy efficiency measures such as draught proofing and dehumidifiers. Whilst on home visits, the Home Energy Advice Officer also surveys the property and takes photos of any damp and mould issues or disrepair. They then raise these issues with the relevant departments to get them resolved. After 6 weeks, the resident receives a call back from the team to check on progress.
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Theme: From inferring blame to taking responsibility

No.	HOS Recommendation	Links	Actions Delivered
11	Landlords to review, alongside residents, their initial response to reports of damp and mould to ensure they avoid automatically apportioning blame or using language that leaves residents feeling blamed	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly);	Training is provided to our call handlers and front-line D&M inspector staff via toolbox talks on empathy, language and support rather than apportioning any blame with the resident for mould. Camden shares publications and webpages with the Housing Residents Panel for sign-off before distributing them to the wider population.
12	Landlords to consider their current approach to record keeping and satisfy themselves it is sufficiently accurate and robust. We would encourage landlords to go further and consider whether their record keeping systems and processes support a risk-based approach to damp and mould.	LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	D&M reports and repairs completions are monitored using a daily tracker and cases are recorded centrally on the 'Rapid' system. Cases remain open and are monitored by a central team until all issues are closed out. As set out earlier in this assessment the team is also looking at clusters of cases. More widely the Council is using its stock condition and repairs data as part of its risk based approach.
13	Landlords to ensure that their responses to reports of damp and mould are timely and reflect the urgency of the issue.	LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	A procedure with priorities according to risk to life, health and property timescales was created in December 2022. Triage priorities were reviewed in December 2023 in alignment with the Government's report on ' <i>Understanding and addressing health risks of damp and mould in the home</i> ' (Sept 2023) which highlighted groups that are particularly vulnerable to more severe health impacts. This guidance has helped the team update its standardised set of questions to determine the prioritisation of cases. Our damp and mould procedures are reviewed every 6 months and we constantly check our diary wait times and caseloads to inform our resource planning. Complex cases are managed by dedicated resources in the major repairs team.
14	Landlords to review the number of missed appointments in relation to damp and mould cases and, depending on the outcome of any review, consider what steps may be required to reduce them.	LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	There is continued proactive engagement with residents through ongoing outbound calls where there are missed appointments. Where there is no further contact following an initial report of mould, or there have been two no-access attempts, then a letter will be sent to the resident advising them that as we have not heard from them, their case will be closed and request they contact us again.
15	Landlords to ensure that their staff, whether in-house or contractors, have the ability to identify and report early signs of damp and mould.	LL Factor 9 (Empower Staff);	Training has been provided to key staff and contractors on rising damp, penetrating damp, mould and condensation and how to identify with potential solutions. Delivered via a range of methods fortnightly toolbox talks, formal training session, 'how to video', slide deck, online articles, studies, toolkits and reports. Technical training session delivered to Property Management staff on 23 Feb 2023 by "QODA" with Professor Mike Parrett on preventing & solving D&M. Any contractor who identifies D&M in a home they are working in should report this to the Damp and Mould Repairs Team. Learning continues and Camden representatives attended the Baily Garner toolkit launch in November 2023 setting out good practice approaches to identification and solutions, asset strategy, risks across property archetypes that have propensity to develop D&M and cultural considerations. In 2024 we will be rolling out a refresher campaign for all staff and contractors working in our homes.

16	Landlords to take steps to identify and resolve any skills gaps they may have, ensuring their staff and contractors have appropriate expertise to properly diagnose and respond to reports of damp and mould.	LL Factor 9 (Empower Staff);	<p>Toolbox talks are held fortnightly with our frontline D&M team. Empathetic language training is provided e.g. refer to either damp or mould (not both), in addition to mental health awareness training.</p> <p>One to ones are held when required with staff who need additional support and for managers to understand their feedback on how procedures are working on the frontline. For example discuss causes of damp and mould, how design and construction can be the cause of damp and mould and potential solutions. Also issue advice and guidance to support residents to reduce moisture. Booklet provided with information that operatives read and present to residents following mould wash or inspection visits. Operatives are trained to ensure that translation or interpreting service including BSL will be provided where residents require it and they know how to access this. Inspections summaries are shared with residents.</p>
17	Landlords to ensure that they clearly and regularly communicate with their residents regarding actions taken or otherwise to resolve reports of D&M. Landlords should review and update any associated processes and policies accordingly.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	<p>A range of standardised letters and texts are used at each stage to communicate next steps to residents.</p> <p>During 2023 the Council changed its approach to its initial appointments. Instead of carrying out an inspection and arranging a further visit to carry out the mould wash, we made diary changes to allow the inspection and any mould wash to be completed on the first visit as result of resident feedback. This slightly extended appointment time from 45 minutes to 1 hour means we can reduce the need for further appointments, eliminate the mould during the first visit and hopefully improve customer satisfaction with the service. We recognise that, in some cases, mould removal may not be achieved in 1 hour. We are developing a plan to deal with severe cases more quickly than the current working method. In order to offer a better service for our residents, Saturday working is now in place. When an appointment is made the resident will receive a text to confirm on the day, a reminder a week before, and a text at 7am on the day.</p> <p>Inspection checklists/summaries and surveys are shared with the resident to they understand what has been investigated, findings and they are notified of next steps and timescales for completion, where date is known.</p>
18	Landlords must ensure there is effective internal communication between their teams and departments, and ensure that one individual or team has overall responsibility for ensuring complaints or reports are resolved, including follow up or aftercare.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 4 (Improve Record Keeping);	<p>There are 8 staff involved in back-office functions, including call handling, online support, planning, and scheduling, all dedicated to D&M. This team work very closely with case management, who handles all complaints. A casework team which sits within the Property Customer Service & Engagement Team is responsible for ensuring responses are provided to timescale, and chasing follow up actions for both the Property Management & Housing Management services. A twice-monthly call comprising of multiple services with representatives from property, housing and the corporate complaints team discuss current complaints and Ombudsman cases to identify any issues, trends and lessons learned to inform service improvement. By working across departments, we aim to identify better lessons learned that need to be adopted. This work is fully tracked.</p> <p>A recent service improvement change involves diarising follow up calls to ensure works are completed for complaints and ombudsman cases.</p>
19	Landlords should ensure that their complaints policy is effective and in line with the Complaint Handling Code, with clear compensation and redress guidance. Remedies should be commensurate to the distress and inconvenience caused to the resident, whilst recognising that each case is individual and should be considered on its own merits.	LL Factor 10 (Use the Complaints System to Learn);	The Council is fully compliant with complaints handling code.

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Theme: From Disrepair Claims to Resolution

No.	HOS Recommendation	Links	Actions Delivered
20	Landlords to ensure they can identify complex cases at an early stage, and have a strategy for keeping residents informed and effective resolution	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly);	<p>The Council has dedicated resources within its major repairs team to proactively manage complex cases, with major managers specifically assigned to damp and mould and disrepair works. The major repair managers are required to proactively manage the work and co-ordinate with residents, surveyors and contractors.</p> <p>When handling stage 1 complaints, any follow-up action is now diarised to ensure the agreed works are taking place and the works are carried out. A daily team call is taking place to discuss current complaints, identify issues and offer support where needed. If a case reaches stage 2, no independent survey has been requested, where appropriate it will be requested to ensure all potential causes and solutions have been explored.</p> <p>Making sure there is consistent communication with residents while cases are in progress is an area we are looking at following recent case reviews, and a communication protocol is to be developed in 2024.</p>
21	Landlords to identify where an independent, mutually agreed and suitably qualified surveyor should be used, share the outcomes of all surveys and inspections with residents to help them understand the findings and be clear on next steps. Landlords should then act on accepted survey recommendations in a timely manner.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly);	A front line operative will inspect, complete a checklist survey and complete a mould wash where required. Where a Repairs Supervisor or D&M Manager cannot identify the cause or remedial works required, an independent D&M survey will be commissioned. Checklist summaries and surveys will be shared with residents with translation options available as required.
22	Where extensive works may be required, landlords should consider the individual circumstances of the household, including any vulnerabilities, and whether or not it is appropriate to move resident(s) out of their home at an early stage	LL Factor 5 (Know Your Residents);	Our teams meet regularly to discuss individual cases including any known vulnerabilities and if an emergency decant is required. While we aim to decant into our own stock there are times when we may have to use commercial hotels in an emergency.
23	Landlords should promote the benefits of their complaints process and the Ombudsman to their residents as an appropriate and effective route to resolving disputes.	LL Factor 3 (Treat Residents Fairly); LL Factor 5 (Know Your Residents);	In the past 18 months, we have actively been promoting our complaints and the Ombudsman process. This has been via Housing news and via a link on our website under the repairs section - https://www.camden.gov.uk/housing-repairs

24	<p>Landlords should continue to use the complaints procedure when the pre-action protocol has commenced and until legal proceedings have been issued to maximise the opportunities to resolve disputes outside of court. Landlords to ensure their approach is consistent with our jurisdiction guidance and their legal and complaint teams work together effectively where an issue is being pursued through the complaints process and protocol.</p>	<p>LL Factor 10 (Use the Complaints System to Learn);</p>	<p>The complaints process is promoted and encouraged and the process followed even where pre-action protocols are issued. This ensures residents are able to pursue a complaint until a claim form is filed at court.</p>
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Theme: From complaints to a learning culture

No.	HOS Recommendation	Links	Actions Delivered
25	Landlords to consider how best to share learning from complaints and the positive impact of changes made as a result within the organisation and externally. Systems should allow the landlord to analyse their complaints data effectively and identify themes, trends and learning opportunities.	LL Factor 1 (Find Your Silence); LL Factor 10 (Use the Complaints System to Learn);	Over 1,000 pieces of customer feedback every month is collated by engaging with our tenants after a repair has been carried out. There is either an SMS or an outbound call and feedback is shared with the organisation. After every complaint is handled a data capture form is completed and lessons learned are recorded and shared with the wider organisation. A new Resident Complaints Oversight Panel is being introduced and recruitment is underway and we aim to have the panel established by the end of January 2024. Fully supported by the wider Property Customer Services and Engagement Team, the panel of up to 5 members will meet at least bi-monthly to review the current level of stage one, stage two, and ombudsman cases and review the trends that have been identified. The Panel will carry out a lessons-learned approach and will meet with Senior Managers to report on improvements to avoid repeated issues. The work of the Complaints Oversight Panel will be fully tracked and shared with relevant Directors, Heads of Service and governance bodies. The panel will produce regular lessons learned reports, including a quarterly portfolio outcomes report. Where possible, the output of this work will be made available on our website. We include residents in the subject areas that directly affect them and continue to be more open and honest about the decisions we make and how it helps improve overall customer satisfaction. Ensuring the root cause is dealt with will be a key objective for this panel.
26	Landlords to ensure they treat residents reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy. The distress and inconvenience experienced by residents in this area is some of the most profound we have seen, and this needs to be reflected in the tone and approach of the complaint handling	LL Factor 10 (Use the Complaints System to Learn);	Complaints responses are quality-checked, and support and advice are provided. During 2023, we had 18 cases recorded by the Ombudsman primarily related to damp and mould. In most cases, respect and empathy have not been highlighted as a concern. Generally, the main issues recorded are the wait times for appointments and mould washes. However, continued training will be provided to the complaints team to ensure these cases are handled in a solution-based way. As set out above, the Council has also put in place processes to learn from complaints and case reviews carried out following Ombudsman determinations.

Self assessment against the 10 Landlord Factors for a Successful Action Plan



[One year on follow up report: Spotlight on damp and mould – it's not lifestyle \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

No.	Landlord Factors	Links	Actions Delivered
1	Find your silence – who's not using your complaints system and why? Some landlords see high complaints as a bad thing, but high complaints about damp and mould can be a sign that you are open and transparent, and people feel they can complain.	HOS Recc. 3	<p>Complaints can be made using an online webform, by telephone, post, email, sign video (BSL) tool for deaf residents. The complaints policy is available in different languages on request. Support can be provided to those with disabilities. The complaints policy is available on Council website and Housing related web pages with stages and timeframes for response, explanation & signposting to Housing Ombudsman. If complainant is blind or partially sighted they can navigate the website using our Browsealoud tool, which can read contents aloud. Housing News and flyers have been distributed on complaints and ombudsman, also featured in Tenants Guide, rent charges & statements.</p> <p>Camden received 113 damp and mould complaints in 2022/23 and 110 damp and mould complaints from 1st April 2023 to 21st December 2023, which is a positive sign that Camden is open and transparent and people feel they can complain. It has reviewed accessibility and use of systems for reporting repairs and making complaints. An intensive door knocking tenant engagement project having conversations with residents across all of Camden's estates, blocks and street properties has completed its first phase. As part of this 1,090 residents participated across 20 estates. Of these 7.6% (83 counts) referred to D&M repairs. We will be overlaying this data with the formal complaints & repairs data for the financial years from 2022/23 and 23/24 to identify people who tend not to come forward to complain or report D&M which may be due to issues such as vulnerability, literacy or those may who tend to tolerate conditions without reporting. Some residents may be more comfortable speaking to someone face to face informally.</p>
2	Proactive communications strategy – Damp and mould cases are out there, and you need to engage with that. But our call for evidence also highlighted that landlords are often doing quite a lot in this space and their residents have no idea. Don't patronise, don't be obscure and make sure you use every day terms – the advice needs to be helpful and understandable	HOS Recc. 8 HOS Recc. 20 HOS Recc. 21 HOS Recc. 23 HOS Recc. 24	<p>Proactive communications have been delivered to all of our tenants and licensees in Camden managed temporary accommodation through phone calls, 'Housing News' articles, letters, email, leaflets, councillor briefings, Housing Scrutiny panel and Resident District Monitoring Panel reports and updates. There are dedicated D&M webpages updated for social housing and private sector housing tenants and home owners. Camden proactively contacted 745 vulnerable social housing residents to ask if they had damp or mould in their homes. The high-priority groups identified were those who were severely overcrowded and with children under 5 years of age, enhanced tenants, over 85yrs, and tenants with respiratory conditions. There was a follow up of the same group of residents after 6 months, and 593 interviews were carried out to confirm if mould was still persisting. Camden shares publications and webpages with the Housing Residents Panel for sign-off before distributing them to the wider population. As a result of a suggestion from this group, a video on how to identify and prevent condensation, damp and mould was created available on the website. This video is available in 5 languages including BSL and has had 1000s of views. A letter was emailed to Camden schools from the CEO across all tenures signposting to appropriate contacts for reporting damp and mould in Feb 2023.</p>

3	<p>Treat residents fairly – It isn't their fault they are in a home unsuitable for living or currently in a property that is marked for regeneration/demolition.</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 6 HOS Recc. 11</p>	<p>For all regeneration projects, a detailed procedure is followed for all properties to ensure regular communication with residents, and dedicated engagement resources are in place. Repairs policies are maintained and works undertaken in line with landlord obligations.</p> <p>Communications to residents are empathetic and do not blame residents for damp, mould or condensation. Where the source of mould is identified as use and occupation after first eliminating design and construction and any defects, the resident is provided with a mould wash to remove any spores, verbal and written advice and guidance on how to prevent reoccurrence, and a damp and mould booklet/leaflet available for translation where required. A humidifier can be offered to help remove moisture from the air and further ventilation measures can be considered, in addition to opening windows, e.g. mechanical ventilation.</p> <p>Camden has an Essential Repairs Transfer procedure where a tenant move is considered necessary due to the disruption level caused by required works and/or a property's impact on resident health. Where the estimated time taken to complete repairs is less than 2 months, a direct temporary offer to Camden's stock can be made with return to home once works are completed. No points are awarded under the allocations scheme to bid. If repairs are estimated to take longer than 2 months the tenant has a choice whether to move permanently or temporarily and is eligible to get points under the allocations scheme and bid for a home.</p>
4	<p>Improve record keeping – How can you adopt an intelligence-based front foot if you have no data on what you're dealing with? How can you ensure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing if nothing is recorded? We'll soon be releasing a Spotlight report on this issue for you to engage with.</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 3 HOS Recc. 5 HOS Recc. 12 HOS Recc. 13 HOS Recc. 14</p>	<p>The Council created new processes in December 2022 which included case management recording from the point of report to completion with one repairs report using follow up orders instead of creating separate case reports for each element of work. This is so the case history can be followed throughout the journey.</p> <p>The Council also created monitoring requirements before a case is closed to check for reoccurrence. Severe/moderate cases will be reattended in 12 weeks or earlier until confident that D&M has been resolved. Non-severe cases are closed on completion.</p> <p>As set out in the self assessment document, the Council is also looking at how it uses stock condition and repairs data to look for trends and clusters of cases across its stock.</p>

5	<p>Know your residents – Occupancy factors may include overcrowding and the availability and use of heating and ventilation systems. They also include individual circumstances such as disability, financial hardship, and health conditions.</p>	HOS Recc. 22	<p>Occupancy: Neighbourhood Housing Officers identify vulnerable residents and overcrowding, and signpost to information, advice, guidance and support, e.g. health services, repairs, fuel poverty support services. Last year we have undertaken over 1,800 visits and door knocks engaging with our residents, enabling us to identify any concerns and make sure the information we hold is relevant and up to date so that we can personalise our service. This face-to-face contact has helped us to identify damp and mould in homes with our Neighbourhood Housing Officers making direct referrals to our D&M Repairs Team on behalf of a tenant. Tenants and household members have been identified with disabilities, health conditions, hoarders, overcrowding etc.- groups that are particularly more vulnerable to severe health impacts of damp and mould.</p> <p>Intensive engagement: During 2023, we have embarked on a series of estate engagement events across the Borough. These events were focused on coming together as a Council to support people and have one conversation. We'll be bringing in other council services in one place and connecting and bringing neighbours together in new ways.</p> <p>We want to have a different conversation with tenants. One that is honest about the challenges Camden is facing, but that we're committed to working together. Pop-ups (estate action days) will encourage people to share their ideas and Council or citizen-led action will be supported.</p> <p>Engagement and participation approaches will be tailored to the specific area and will build on existing strengths in communities. We are developing estate and neighbourhood profiles, mapped against service local intelligence to be informed of the issues affecting residents before talking to them. To date, we have visited 20 estates.</p> <p>Overcrowding: If overcrowding is identified as a contributory factor where there are insufficient bedrooms for the number of occupants, the Repairs Service will consider additional measures where appropriate for example, additional ventilation/heating or showing a resident how to use the existing system correctly if no one has demonstrated this, providing a humidifier, and also refer to the Neighbourhood Housing Officer to provide advice and guidance to the tenant on the process for moving to a</p>
6	<p>Check net zero plans – Electric heating costs more than gas. If you're net zero strategy is pushing people into hardship, need to make sure you're making mitigations.</p>	HOS Recc. 10	<p>Camden Council has developed a 'Road Map to Net Zero' which prioritises our least energy efficient homes first. Currently we are in the pilot phase of this road map, this the initial phase is our learning stage where we would complete a small batch of full and partial retrofits. This will allow us better understand how we can fit in the current best practice standard to retrofits (PAS2035/PAS2030) eventually into our everyday works. The PAS2035/30 standard already incorporates modelled risk analysis which can identify a condensation risk, which we can then engineer out of the project. At handover stage of our net zero retrofit projects we ensure our residents understand how the measures installed interact with each other, especially the new ventilation strategy. For some of our deeper retrofits, such as where we upgraded from single to double glazing, and installed wall insulation, we will be installing temperature humidity sensors in random different architypes to further monitor the indoor environment.</p> <p>Camden has a range of publications proactively reaching out to residents to provide support and signposting to help with fuel bills and staying warm over the winter period. Capital Works and Repairs staff going into residents homes signpost to services. Camden tenants can contact the Energy Advice Team for advice or a 'warm and well' home visit by contacting 0207 974 4444 option 9 or emailing energyefficiencyhomeadvice@camden.gov.uk. There is a free Money Advice Service for help with money worries and debt: camden.gov.uk/MoneyAdviceService, the benefits better off calculator: camden.gov.uk/BetterOff, info on council tax reductions: camden.gov.uk/CTS, and the Cost of Living Crisis Fund and/or government funded Household Support Fund: camden.gov.uk/COLCFund and camden.gov.uk/HSF</p> <p>The Council is also working with a company called Sero on a retrofit at scale project and this includes the use of sensors within energy inefficient properties to monitor temparature and humidity. Pilot applications of this technology will be reviewed in Quarter 4 2023/24.</p>

7	<p>Know your homes – Structural factors include property age, design, and modifications. For example, certain types of properties such as converted street properties, buildings of concrete construction or traditional solid type construction are more susceptible to damp and mould than others.</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 1 HOS Recc. 2 HOS Recc. 5</p>	<p>The Council is using stock condition surveys, resident feedback, and repairs reports to provide a data driven approach to condensation, damp and mould. Data helps the Council understand where there are reoccurring problems or to identify multiple cases. To support this analysis, over the next two years, the Council will be undertaking internal surveys of all tenanted homes where data has not been recently gathered. This will help inform programme setting processes including targeted works can prevent D&M. The Council's stock condition surveys use the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to identify Category 1 & 2 hazards, and any damp and mould hazards identified are actioned and tracked through to completion. The additional stock condition data, plus information on known household characteristics will form part of the the expanded asset performance model that the Council is developing.</p> <p>D&M repairs reports are triaged according to priority, risk to health and severity using a diagnostic script including groups that are particularly more vulnerable to more severe health impacts.</p>
8	<p>Dedicated damp and mould strategy – Create one by looking wider than the individual cases. Use your void periods and mutual exchanges too.</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 1 HOS Recc. 2 HOS Recc. 5 HOS Recc. 6</p>	<p>The Council takes a proactive approach to managing damp and mould, using stock condition surveys, customer feedback, and repairs reports. As part of its revised asset strategy which is being developed in early 2024, the Council will use data to understand where there is a reoccurring problem or to identify multiple cases, caused either by property archetype and construction, property defects, use and occupation or a combination of all three. This data will be used to help prioritise the capital programme and inform stock options appraisals. Operationally the dedicated team already looks at clusters of cases and trends to be addressed in a particular block.</p> <p>All voids are assessed for damp and mould and are remedied before re let, where we have hard to let homes periodic void inspections will be in place to ensure the home remains free of damp and mould, when a mutual exchange has been requested the home is inspected and any identified damp & mould works are remedied before the mutual exchange completes.</p>
9	<p>Empower staff – if they're in a property for something else, help them clock the signs. We encourage landlords to consider the Chartered Institute of Housing's Professional Standards if they have not already done so</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 15 HOS Recc. 16</p>	<p>Council wide communications have raised awareness about D&M and how to report if they visit a resident's home and requesting support to assist/advocate where appropriate. Contractors and the in house repairs team will report damp and mould if they find it on a visit to a property, or if they find it as part of their repair work.</p> <p>Further to prior correspondence, learning and awareness raising will be disseminated to referral organisations e.g. GPs, health visitors, midwives, schools and social workers, who may come into contact with residents who have damp and mould in their homes to help identify and report it.</p> <p>The Council will be reviewing its training programme for staff taking into account the new Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the proposed professional standards in 2024.</p>
10	<p>Use the complaints system to learn – Be robust in using the complaints process until such time as proceedings are filed.</p>	<p>HOS Recc. 25 HOS Recc. 26</p>	<p>Fortnightly cross service review meetings identify outstanding actions for delivery and lessons learned from complaints/ombudsman decisions. In addition there are service level improvement meetings reviewing what can be improved relating to customer feedback. The complaints process is promoted and encouraged and the process followed even where pre-action protocols are issued. This ensures residents are able to pursue a complaint until a claim form is filed at court. .</p>