



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 18 June 2024	Matter for Information and Decision
--	------------------------------	--

Report Title: **Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy (2024)**

Report Author(s): **Chris Eyre (Housing Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	To seek the Committee’s approval to adopt and bring into effect a new Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy.
Report Summary:	This Policy outlines the Council’s approach to the prevention, management, and rectification of instances of damp, mould and condensation in council owned homes. The aim of this policy is to underpin a zero-tolerance approach and to amplify that tenants will be treated in a fair and consistent way and provided with a safe and healthy internal environment to live in.
Recommendation(s):	That the Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy (as set out at Appendix 1 to this report) be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) 0116 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of The Build Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Chris Eyre (Housing Manager) (0116) 257 2726 chris.eyre@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Sunny Basran (Strategy and Performance Officer) (0116) 257 2853 sunny.basran@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs, but they can also affect the eyes and skin. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. Private and social landlords must adhere to several regulations related to damp and mould. A lack of compliance can place a landlord at risk of prosecution or financial penalties.

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. Initial EA Screening (See Appendices)
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leadership Team • Members • OBWC Staff • OBWC Tenants, Leaseholders and Residents • Local MP • Helping Hands
Background Papers:	Housing Ombudsman Service – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy 2024 2. Equality Assessment Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard which adds value to the homes and their surroundings. Maintaining high quality, secure homes can improve the lives of our customers and achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. The Council's homes give people the space and security to create meaningful lives and the foundation to build the best possible life.
- 1.2 This policy attached as Appendix 1 has been written to ensure that wherever possible, tenants are not adversely affected by the causes of damp and mould and drives forward an agenda of proactive action to tackle/manage the causes of damp and mould.
- 1.3 This policy and associated procedure will take into account recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – Oct 2021.

2. Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy

- 2.1 The tragic case of Awaab Ishak, who died in 2020 of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home, focussed attention on the responsibility of all social housing providers to ensure that the homes they provide are well-maintained and of a decent standard.
- 2.2 In 2021, the Housing Ombudsman Service published a Spotlight report on Damp and Mould, which highlighted the potential serious health issues for residents living in homes with damp and mould as they are more likely to have respiratory problems, allergies, asthma and other conditions that impact on their immune system. The report set out 26 recommendations that housing providers should consider in their response to damp and mould.

- 2.3 The Council's policy sets out our approach to dealing with reports of damp, mould and condensation within a council owned home or associated building.
- 2.4 The policy has been developed to ensure we encompass the renewed focus on the 26 recommendations identified within the Housing Ombudsman Service Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould.
- 2.5 Key points of the policy are:
- that tenants will be treated in a fair and consistent way
 - a partnership approach with our tenants to ensure safe and healthy internal environments
 - Housing Officers managing reports of damp and mould in homes will undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp
 - customers have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation
 - The Housing team will seek to enhance the Council's understanding of the stock in relation to damp and mould through annual inspections and periodic stock condition surveys.
 - Housing officers will be trained to identify issues of damp, mould and condensation and the team will procure the services of appropriately qualified contractors to deliver solutions and remedies to eradicate damp, mould and condensation in the Council's housing stock.
- 2.6 Induction and refresher training will be provided for all housing staff and contractors to make sure that they are aware of this policy.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 As part of the Council's duty as a landlord the policy has been circulated for consultation.
- The Consultation opened on the 15th February 2024.
- 3.2 The purpose of the consultation was to include tenants in the proposals and to ensure their voice, opinions and views were taken into account in framing the policy. The consultation ended on the 13th March 2024. There were no issues raised as a result of the consultation and no significant amendments to the policy were required.