

Rugby Borough Council Damp and Mould Procedure

Adopted	October 2024
Review Date	October 2027
Responsible Officer	Asset Maintenance Manager
Responsible Department	Communities & Homes
Version 1 reviewed By	RBC Property Repairs Service RBC Housing Services RBC Leadership Team RBC Tenants Panel
Version 1 approved by	Asset Maintenance Manager
Policy/Procedure Links	The Lettable Standard The Decant Policy Tenants Handbook

This procedure outlines Rugby Borough Council's approach to preventing, managing and controlling reports of damp and mould in our homes.

Key elements of this procedure include:

- **Risk Assessment:** Conducting a thorough risk assessment for every report of damp and mould.
- **Action Planning:** Developing a clear and effective action plan to address issues related to damp, mould, and condensation.
- **Tenant Communication:** Providing clear and timely communication with affected tenants, including detailed explanations of the actions being taken and the expected timelines.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintaining accurate and comprehensive records of all reported cases of damp and mould.
- **Support and Education:** Assisting residents in maintaining a healthy living environment by offering advice and education on preventing mould and managing condensation.
- **Monitoring Cases of Damp & Mould:**

This procedure aims to address and mitigate damp, mould, and condensation by preventing their occurrence and promptly addressing any issues that arise.

Rugby Borough Council will:

- Proactively identify and address instances of damp and mould in our homes.
- Ensure all visiting staff can recognise damp and mould concerns, understand how to report these and support the tenant and their household.
- Conduct risk assessments on homes, considering the impact of work on tenants, especially those with vulnerabilities.
- Work with tenants to ensure our homes remain safe and healthy.
- Conduct thorough investigations and implement effective remedial actions to eliminate and prevent the recurrence of damp and mould.
- Provide tenants with comprehensive support, advice, and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.
- Respond to tenant vulnerabilities, such as age and medical conditions, ensuring solutions are tailored to their needs.
- Comply with statutory requirements and best practices.
- Deal with disrepairs and personal injury claims in line with our disrepair process.
- Protect the fabric of our homes from deterioration and damage caused by damp and condensation.
- Ensure our asset management strategy and responsive repairs safeguard our homes against conditions that could lead to damp and mould.

Statutory, Legal and Regulatory Framework

This procedure aligns with the Safety and Quality Standard of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)






Landlords must ensure tenants' homes meet and maintain the Decent Homes Standard as outlined in Section 5 of the Decent Homes Guidance.

This procedure is aligned to the following legislation

Housing Act 2004 Part 1 Housing Condition
Housing Act 2004 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
Building Regulation 2010 (where applicable)
Decent Homes Standard
The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (including the provisions of Awaab's Law)
Relevant Pre Action-Protocols of the Justice Department

This procedure takes into account the recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report: *Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – Oct 2021*.

Rugby Borough Council acknowledges the diversity of its staff and tenants, recognising their varied backgrounds, experiences, and needs. The Council is dedicated to promoting equity, fairness, and combating discrimination, principles embodied in their CAN-DO values:

	<p>Customers First</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We put our customers at the heart of everything we do ■ We are polite and approachable ■ We listen to our customers, respond to them and keep them informed about what is happening ■ We see things from the customer's point of view
	<p>Act with Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We are friendly towards, listen to and respect each other ■ We act with openness, integrity, honesty and trust ■ We share ideas and knowledge with each other ■ We welcome challenge and take account of alternative opinions and the wider picture
	<p>Nurture People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We are all champions of our organisation ■ We value our employees, invest in their development and provide equal opportunities for growth and progression ■ We give our people encouragement, authority and support to be creative and flexible in how they deliver services ■ Together we approach each day with passion, enthusiasm and tenacity
	<p>Drive Excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We work towards a common goal through cooperation and teamwork ■ We work together to support the Council's priorities ■ We do what is right, not merely what is expected ■ We constantly look to improve our processes, value for money and effectiveness
	<p>Own It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We take personal responsibility for our actions ■ We admit to our mistakes and put things right, asking for help when it's needed ■ We look after our assets as though they are our own ■ We are committed to sustainability and to working in an environmentally friendly way

Delivery of the Procedure

Rugby Borough Council will:

- Proactively review all SAP energy ratings of D and below within our homes to identify those at risk of damp, mould, and condensation.
- Use our data to identify and prioritise those homes at highest risk, as well as identify damp, mould, and condensation issues during Tenancy Health Checks.
- Use the risk assessment process contained within this procedure to determine our response to each report of damp and mould.
- Risk assess the potential for harm to tenants and their household in every report of damp and mould.
- Risk assess tenant vulnerabilities and needs, creating reasonable adjustments within our processes to support each household.
- Ensure that we support tenants through the provision of advice and guidance.
- Expect tenants and their household to work proactively with Rugby Borough Council and the advice provided and to enable inspections and remedial works to take place as required.
- Ensure that where there is no structural damp present, and all ventilation and heating devices are working correctly but condensation and mould issues persist, we will provide technology that can monitor humidity, temperature, and

air quality in the home and work with our tenants to reduce environmental impacts that could be causing this.

- Ensure that we adequately mitigate the effect of work on our tenant and their household. If we cannot adequately mitigate the impact of the works on the tenant, we will offer a temporary decant while we do the required works.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment matrix detailed here aligns with the HHSRS assessment criteria and describes our response to reports of damp and mould.

On receiving a report of damp and mould an initial inspection will be scheduled, the initial inspection will take place in **14 days or less**. Following our initial inspection the case will be rated in line with the risk assessment below.

Please note: Days = calendar days, not working days.

Extremely Severe	<p>Housing Maintenance & Voids Surveyor to attend to inspect. The surveyor will determine if a move to temporary alternative accommodation (decant) is required. The decant will be managed by the housing officer.</p> <p>Within 48 hours of the inspection the Surveyor will report to the tenant using Appendix 1 of this procedure that sets out what hazards are present, what our response will be to those hazards, our timescales for undertaking necessary work and how we will mitigate the impact on the tenant and their household.</p> <p>Remedial work will start within 7 days of the inspection and emergency repairs will take place within 24 hours of the inspection.</p> <p>Description: This reaction applies to cases of extensive damp and mould affecting multiple living areas, particularly when tenants are highly vulnerable. Vulnerabilities include pregnant women and their unborn babies, very young babies and children, older people, and those with reported medical conditions such as asthma, allergies, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other lung diseases, cardiovascular disease, chronic</p>
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	<p>health issues, additional learning needs, or poor mental health, people with mobility issues.</p>
<p>Severe/Serious</p>	<p>Housing Maintenance & Voids Surveyor to attend to inspect. The surveyor will determine if a move to temporary alternative accommodation (decant) is required. The decant will be managed by the housing officer.</p> <p>Within 48 hours of the inspection the Surveyor will report to the tenant using Appendix 1 of this procedure that sets out what hazards are present, what our response will be to those hazards, our timescales for undertaking necessary work and how we will mitigate the impact on the tenant and their household.</p> <p>Remedial work will start within 7 days of the inspection and emergency repairs will take place within 24 hours of the inspection</p> <p>Description: This reaction applies to cases with multiple areas of damp and/or mould growth in main living areas and/or highly visible dampness on surfaces. It is particularly relevant when tenants are highly vulnerable, including pregnant women and their unborn babies, very young babies and children, older people, and those with reported medical conditions such as asthma, allergies, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other lung diseases, cardiovascular disease, chronic health issues, additional learning needs, or poor mental health, people with mobility issues</p>
<p>Serious/Moderate</p>	<p>Housing Maintenance & Voids Surveyor to attend to inspect. The surveyor will determine if a move to temporary alternative accommodation (decant) is required. The decant will be managed by the housing officer.</p> <p>Within 48 hours of the inspection the Surveyor will report to the tenant using Appendix 1 of this procedure that sets out what hazards are present, what our response will be to those hazards, our timescales for undertaking</p>

	<p>necessary work and how we will mitigate the impact on the tenant and their household.</p> <p>Remedial work will start within 7 days of the inspection and emergency repairs will take place within 24 hours of the inspection.</p> <p>Description: This reaction applies to cases where multiple areas of damp have been identified, but the affected areas are limited in scope and location (e.g., an understairs cupboard rather than main living areas). There may be some level of tenant vulnerability, such as young babies/children or older people.</p>
<p>Moderate/Low</p>	<p>Housing Maintenance & Voids Surveyor to attend to inspect.</p> <p>If hazards are identified the Surveyor will report to the tenant, within 48 hours of the inspection using Appendix 1 of this procedure that sets out what hazards are present, what our response will be to those hazards, our timescales for undertaking necessary work and how we will mitigate the impact on the tenant and their household.</p> <p>If no hazards are identified the Surveyor will report to the tenant, within 48 hours of the inspection using Appendix 2 of this procedure that sets out our written summary of investigation findings, where no hazard is found.</p> <p>If remedial work is required, it will start within 7 days of the inspection and emergency repairs will take place within 24 hours of the inspection.</p> <p>Description: This reaction applies to minor damp and mould issues around windows, with no identified tenant vulnerabilities.</p>

- **Categorisation and Recording:** All reports of damp, mould, and condensation will be categorised using the risk matrix and recorded in Total Mobile.
- **Response Protocol:** Rugby Borough Council will respond to cases of damp & mould in accordance with the risk matrix outlined above.
- **Diagnosis and Solutions:** Rugby Borough Council will diagnose the cause of damp, mould, and condensation and provide a range of appropriate solutions. These solutions will address the underlying issues and support our tenants.

Action Planning

The Housing Maintenance and Voids Surveyor will produce a written summary of their investigation that will:

- Identify possible causes of damp, mould, and condensation
- Recommendations for effective solutions
- Details of necessary remedial works, actions, and enhancements
- How the impact of the work on the tenant and their household will be mitigated (this may include a temporary move to alternative accommodation)
- Timescales for any required works

Repairs and remedial works arising from the initial inspection will be scheduled based on urgency and timescales for such work are:

- **Emergency (making safe):** Response within 4 hours
- **Urgent:** Response within 5 working days
- **Routine:** Response within 20 working days

Should the work required be complex, it may take more than 20 days. A clear action plan, with timescales will be provided to the tenant (using the template attached at Appendix 1)

If the inspection identifies that no hazard is present, we will report this to the tenant (Using the template attached at Appendix 2)

Tenant Communications

Within 48 hours of the inspection the Housing Maintenance and Voids Surveyor will provide a written summary of their findings using the template attached as Appendix

1. This summary will include:

- Their name & job role
- An assessment of the severity of the damp & mould
- An assessment of whether the hazard poses a significant risk to the tenant's health and safety
- What temporary measures are needed to make the property safe until the problem can be permanently rectified
- What Rugby Borough Council will do to permanently rectify the problem and the likely timescales for this
- How to contact Rugby Borough Council with any queries or questions and who to contact.

If the damp and mould has been assessed as extremely severe or severe/serious the main point of contact for the tenant will be their housing officer who will co-ordinate any necessary action with the tenant including any move to alternative accommodation and referrals to any appropriate agencies including our tenancy coaches.

If Rugby Borough Council are not at this stage (48 hours after inspection) able to provide a full schedule of works, we will provide a date by which our tenant can expect the full schedule of works, and a summary of immediate actions will be agreed with the tenant.

A review of the case will be undertaken 6 weeks from the date of the initial report and a written record of the review provided to the tenant.

Record Keeping

Full records will be kept of all of our interactions with tenants including notes of telephone calls, attempts to contact, successful or not, appointment letters, records of visits, records of failure to gain access to homes, schedules of required works, correspondence with tenants including the results of our inspections (set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of this procedure)

When tenants report vulnerabilities or health conditions to us, we will record them and use the information in our risk assessments and to make reasonable adjustments in our processes.

We will keep photographs of the damp and mould, to assist the identification of root causes and to track progress of remedial works.

A monthly audit will take place of case records.

Support and Education

If conditions such as overcrowding or hoarding are negatively impacting health and wellbeing or obstructing inspections or remedial works, Rugby Borough Council will provide support through the tenants' Housing Officer.

This support will include:

- Reviewing the tenant's housing and support needs
- Working collaboratively with the tenant to enable the required inspections and remedial works.
- Working with the tenant to identify small reasonable adjustments that they can make to mitigate damp and mould.

Refusal of Access to a Property

If damp and mould have been reported, or if a property has been identified as high risk through our data (e.g., proximity to a home with damp and mould or an EPC rating of D or below), tenants are required to allow access for inspections and remedial works as stipulated in their tenancy agreement.

- Rugby Borough Council will make at least 3 attempts to contact the tenant (or their representative) and arrange a mutually convenient time to access the property
- Rugby Borough Council will work with residents to arrange a suitable time to visit the property. We will offer timeslots for tenants to choose from and will take into consideration the residents' needs (for example their working pattern, caring responsibilities) when offering timeslots to visit the property.
- If the Rugby Borough Council is unable to access the property within the agreed timeslot, we will leave the resident a notice stating that an attempt was made and providing contact details. We will contact the tenant and offer an alternative slot.

If access is refused:

- Rugby Borough Council will explore and implement alternative methods to gain access, which may include seeking an injunction as a last resort.

Monitoring Damp & Mould

All works associated with damp & mould will be reviewed 6 months from the date of report to ensure they have been effective, and that further action is not required.

Monitoring will take place using the indicators below and this data will be reported to the relevant Chief Officers (Communities and Homes and Operations and Trading Services)

No	Performance Indicator (PI)	Frequency	Reporting Officer
PI 1	Total number of damp & mould cases (broken down by RA category)	Monthly	Property Repairs Manager
PI 2	Total number of new damp/mould related reports in month (broken down by RA Category as determined by inspection)	Monthly	Property Repairs Manager
PI 3	% of inspections carried out within 14 days of the report of damp & mould.	Monthly	Property Repairs Manager
PI 4	% of inspection reports provided to tenants within the required (48 hour) timescale	Monthly	Property Repair Manager
PI 5	Where works are required (as identified through inspection) % started within 7-day timescale.	Monthly	Property Repairs Manager
PI 6	% of damp & mould cases reviewed at 6 month stage.	Monthly	Property Repairs Manager

Shortage of labour and/or materials

Should this apply Rugby Borough Council will keep tenants updated on any delays and keep a record of that correspondence. We will also keep a record of our attempts to source workers/contractors and/or materials.

Rugby Borough Council will put in place measures to ensure that the property is safe. If we cannot begin repair works to a hazard that poses a significant risk to the health or safety of our tenant within 7 days, and we are also unable to put in place temporary measures to make the property safe within 7 days, we will offer to arrange for the tenant(s) to stay in suitable alternative accommodation until it is safe to return.

1. Professional Qualifications and Competence

Rugby Borough Council will ensure staff in Asset Management and PRS possess the necessary professional qualifications and competencies to accurately diagnose and identify appropriate remedial actions for damp, mould, and condensation issues.

All contractors engaged will have appropriately qualified staff to handle these issues effectively.

2. Regular Training Sessions

Rugby Borough Council conducts bi-annual training for all staff who enter tenants' homes. This training covers how to identify and report damp and mould appropriately.

Communications

1. Encouraging Reporting

Rugby Borough Council promotes the importance of reporting damp and mould issues through multiple channels:

- **Website:** Provide a dedicated section for reporting issues.
- **Fb:** Includes reminders/information and tips for reporting
- **Tenants' Newsletter:** Include reminders/information and tips for reporting.
- **Tenants' Handbook:** Clearly outlines the process for reporting and the importance of timely communication.
- **Preventing Damp & Mould in your Home**
https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/preventing-damp-and-mould-in-your-home?p_l_back_url=%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DDamp%2B%2526%2BMould