



# Cabinet

8<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Report of:** Councillor Ronan Browne -  
Portfolio Holder for Housing and  
Landlord Services

## Damp and Mould Policy and Update

<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Providing high quality Council homes and landlord services
<b>Relevant Ward Member(s):</b>	All Wards
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Subject to Call In</b>	No

### 1 Summary

- 1.1 As Landlords and as Strategic Housing Authorities, Councils have an important role to play in keeping tenants in rented accommodation safe, including taking action to address hazards that occur and seeking to prevent hazards where possible. The tragic death of Awabb Ishak as a result of damp and mould in his home has understandably raised the profile of damp and mould as a housing and health risk within both the social housing sector and private rented sector.
- 1.2 This report provides Cabinet members with assurance of the Council's approach and response to damp and mould across the rented sector, and as a local authority landlord. It also provides details of the information and assurance provided to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Regulator of Social Housing and the subsequent analysis of damp and mould in social housing from the Housing Ombudsman.
- 1.3 This report also sets out details of actions being progressed to further strengthen the Council's approach and response and seeks Cabinet approval of a specific damp and mould policy for Council homes.

## 2 Recommendation(s)

### That Cabinet:

- 2.1 **Notes the approach to preventing, assessing, and responding to damp and mould in the rented sector and action plan to further strengthen this approach**
- 2.2 **Notes the positive compliance position in relation to damp and mould in Council Homes**
- 2.3 **Approves the damp and mould policy for Council Homes**

## 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Melton Borough Council has an important role to play in keeping tenants safe, including taking action to address hazards that occur and seeking to prevent hazards where possible. It is important that the Council is proactive and is transparent in its approach, and that as a local authority landlord and strategic housing authority, can demonstrate that the highest housing standards can be met. Scrutiny is an important part of this. Scrutiny committee comments and feedback are welcome to further develop work on damp and mould.
- 3.2 The Council has submitted formal responses to provide information and assurance to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 3.3 The Council's Scrutiny Committee considered a report on damp and mould in January 2023. Feedback from this meeting has been shared with Cabinet and has helped to shape a specific damp and mould policy for council homes. This policy is recommended for approval by Cabinet.

## 4 Background

- 4.1 As Landlords and as Strategic Housing Authorities, Councils have an important role to play in keeping tenants in rented accommodation safe, including taking action to address hazards that occur and seeking to prevent hazards where possible. The tragic death of Awabb Ishak as a result of damp and mould in his home has understandably raised the profile of damp and mould as a housing and health risk within both the social housing sector and private rented sector.
- 4.2 This report provides Cabinet members with assurance of the Council's approach and response to damp and mould across the rented sector, and as a local authority landlord. It also provides details of the information and assurance provided to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Regulator of Social Housing and the subsequent analysis of damp and mould in social housing from the Housing Ombudsman.
- 4.3 This report also sets out details of actions being progressed to further strengthen the Council's approach and response and seeks Cabinet approval of a specific damp and mould policy for Council homes.

## 5 Main Considerations

### 5.1 Damp and Mould – Rented Properties

5.2 The Council’s Environmental Health Team has responsibility for assessing, advising and taking action where required to ensure housing standards are maintained in the rented sector (focused particularly on the private rented sector).

5.3 Tenants of rented properties can raise concerns about the condition of their homes by telephone or email. There are standardised inspection and assessment forms in place (HHSRS) and inspections are carried out by HHSRS qualified staff.

5.4 The following data covers the last three 12-month reporting periods and has been extracted from the Environmental health case management system in relation to the private rented sector:

Damp and mould hazards remediated	4 Note: some ongoing
Enforcement action taken to remedy damp and mould hazards and the form this has taken	1 hazard awareness notice 3 improvement notices
Civil penalty notices issued for non-compliance	0
Prosecutions	0

5.5 A summary of these cases is shown below:

5.5.1 **Hazard Awareness Notice**, December 2021, included damp and mould category 2 hazard.

Reasons: Flat had a leaking roof in rainstorms which was leading to extra condensation and water staining in flat interior. Management company in place by Freehold landlord; so, notice was served on the Management company and Freeholder Landlord.

Outcome: Response by Management company to comply with hazard awareness notice included works to reline the roofing felt with waterproof paints and to seal holes in felting.

5.5.2 **Improvement Notice**, January 2022, included a category 1 damp and mould hazard.

Reasons: Flat was excessively cold due to lack of working radiators leading to damp walls and ceiling. Walls were saturated with damp as plaster was peeling. Mould detected in kitchen around exterior walls.

Outcome: Improvement notice served due to Category 1 damp and mould. Landlord was not identified as having a legal address in the UK to serve the notice. Having overcome this issue, Environmental Health Team engaged with landlord/family to improve the property. Landlord confirmed works completed at property

5.5.3 **Improvement Notice**, September 2022, included category 2 damp and mould hazard.

Reasons: Damp and mould detected around walls and ceiling join in bedroom at the rear of the property. Mould detected around window frames to property (bedroom and kitchen). Extractor fan in bathroom not working.

Outcome: Improvement notice was served regarding the structural integrity of roof line as evidenced by damp and mould along the interior roof line of rear bedroom. Required an investigation in the suitability of windows and frames in the property as whether sufficiently sealed. Compliance with notice ongoing.

#### 5.5.4 **Improvement Notice**, October 2022

Reasons: Damp and mould on exterior walls and ceiling line of front bedroom. Damp and mould in ceiling of outhouse extension downstairs. Mould present on window frames of most rooms. No working heating boiler so excessively cold.

Outcome: Improvement notice served for investigation into structural integrity of roof line and windows, and requirement for boiler to be repaired. Compliance with notice ongoing.

5.6 The lead Environmental Health practitioner has not identified any patterns or trends, based on the cases detailed above. Opportunities to take a more proactive approach to raising awareness of damp and mould in rented properties are captured within an action plan, detailed at section 5 of this report.

#### 5.7 **Damp and Mould - Council Homes**

5.8 In November 2022, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) wrote to all social landlords, including Melton Borough Council, to seek information and assurance relating to identifying, assessing and remedying damp and mould in tenants' homes. The RSH specifically requested information on:

- a) The approach taken to assess the extent of damp and mould issues affecting our tenants' homes, including how the prevalence of category 1 and category 2 damp and mould hazards is assessed
- b) Details of the most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in our homes, including the prevalence of category 1 and category 2 hazards
- c) The action being taken to remedy any issues and hazards, and to ensure that our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- d) How individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents

5.9 Melton Borough Council submitted its response to the RSH on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The recent improvements in housing including services improvements, stock condition survey (inclusive of a HHSRS assessment for each property), HRA Business Plan and HRA Asset Management Plan have enabled a robust and confident response, as well as identification of areas where the Council's response could be further strengthened.

5.10 The Council's HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Plan are clear that tenant safety is an absolute priority for the Council and will always remain so. The Council can demonstrate a detailed understanding of the prevalence of damp and mould hazards in tenants' homes and can demonstrate a robust response whilst also ensuring that future stock investment plans help us to tackle some of the known causes of damp and mould in our properties.

- 5.11 A summary of the Council's response to the Regulator of Social Housing is set out below.
- 5.12 **The approach taken to assess the extent of damp and mould issues affecting our tenants' homes, including how the prevalence of category 1 and category 2 damp and mould hazards is assessed**
- The Council's Asset Management System (NEC) includes a field that allows Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards to be recorded. HHSRS bandings are used to assess the extent of damp and mould issues affecting council properties and to identify category 1 and 2 hazards.
  - Between September 2021 and August 2022, a stock condition survey of 90.45% council homes was undertaken (including a HHSRS assessment) meaning that data is current and can be relied upon. This survey gathered data relating to decent homes compliance, energy (RdSAP) and HHSRS hazards. The survey was carried out by Michael Dyson Associates, using appropriately trained surveyors and the data was uploaded directly into the asset management system.
  - The Council has committed to continue a cyclical programme of stock condition surveys, which will ensure 20% stock is surveyed each year over a five-year cycle. This is included within the Asset Management Plan. The stock condition surveys in 2023 will focus initially on the remaining 9.55% properties that have not so far been accessed or assessed. Enhanced tenant engagement will be required to support this, as gaining access to properties is key.
  - The Council also receives reports of damp and mould in properties from tenants. Reports of damp and mould are monitored by managers to ensure inspection timescales are met and remedial actions undertaken.
  - Reports are also monitored to better understand damp and mould prevalence and issues across our stock. Analytical reports include house type, location and causes of damp and mould
  - Officers do not currently carry out in-house assessments based on the HHSRS. Training is scheduled for staff (included within the associated action plan).
- 5.13 **Details of the most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in our homes, including the prevalence of category 1 and category 2 hazards**
- The recent stock condition survey identified that 11 properties out of the 1619 surveyed had HHSRS hazards related to damp and mould. 2 properties had category 1 hazards (immediately followed up) and 9 had category 2 hazards.
  - In 2022, 104 properties were inspected by officers further to reports of damp and mould.
- 5.14 **The action being taking to remedy any issues and hazards, and to ensure that our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard**
- Damp and mould hazards identified through a stock condition survey are logged on the asset management system and a visit to the property from surveyor (officer) is arranged. They will diagnose the cause of the problem and place an order for work to be completed. This is logged on the asset management system, along with timescales for completion of works.

- Further to a recommendation from the team, the Council has committed to installing additional ventilation if it is required for any council home where damp and mould is reported.
- The recent stock condition survey identified 2 properties with category 1 hazards. These were immediately followed up and remedial work undertaken. A follow up visit has also been arranged to check that the risk has been reduced satisfactorily in both cases. A review of the 9 properties with category 2 hazards identified is currently being undertaken to ensure that appropriate inspection arrangements are in place and / or orders placed to ensure remedial works. The Council will also arrange for a follow up inspection of all of these properties, to that the work carried out has resolved the underlying issues leading to damp and mould.
- The council will implement a process of following up on damp and mould cases as a matter of course, to ensure that remedial works have been successful.
- The Council recently approved a HRA 30-year business plan and a five-year asset management plan / action plan. These plans demonstrate a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach to damp and mould in tenants' homes. For example, data from the stock condition surveys and tenant reports will be used to identify where there are particular ongoing issues or risk factors with damp and mould, to inform detailed surveys of these properties and options to create a planned maintenance programme that puts things in place to reduce the risk of damp and mould appearing at all. This will allow officers to work proactively, deal with the root cause of the problem and address the issue before it appears.
- Tenant safety is a key part of the Council's Asset Management Plan, and we are committed to continuing to review our service and to implement procedure changes as a result of any learning. A specific damp and mould policy is in development to ensure clarity for tenants on the Council's approach and response to damp and mould.
- The Asset Management Plan also covers the Council's approach to meeting the Decent Homes Standard. Stock condition survey data has enabled the development of a thirty-year programme of investment that focusses on Decent Homes improvements. Budgets have been set and contractors resourced to meet the requirements. The plan also reflects on the proposed changes and allows capacity to adapt to meet the enhanced standards.
- Within its Asset Management Plan, the Council has made some key commitments to address damp and mould, including replacement of aluminium windows that can increase the risk of mould due to cold surface, efficient heating systems that tenants find more affordable, extraction in all new kitchens and bathrooms and a plan to review energy efficiency and explore insulation upgrades.
- As a landlord we expect to be held account for the highest standards in housing. The Council's Scrutiny Committee considered a [report](#) on our approach to damp and mould in January 2023. [Feedback](#) was shared with Cabinet in January 2023.

#### 5.15 **How individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents**

- Advice and guidance is detailed on the Council's website. This has recently been updated and includes details of who to contact for advice and support (Council tenants, other social housing tenants, private sector tenants). See: [Preventing damp, mould and condensation – Melton Borough Council](#)

- A leaflet on damp and mould in homes has also been updated. The guidance is designed to help tenants to manage condensation, but also make it clear that they can and should report any issues with ongoing damp and mould to us. This is distributed to residents as part of their welcome packs, but also through contact with the tenancy services team, repairs team and other customer facing teams and stakeholders. The information has recently been shared with GP's, parish councils and voluntary sector organisations and has been shared on the Council's social media channels.
- Regular meetings are held with the Council's tenant representative group (Your Choice), where key issues are discussed, and views / feedback sought. At the most recent meeting, damp and mould was a key focus including the Council's approach to individual cases. The leaflet was updated as a result of this discussion, to ensure wording was clear in relation to the use of tumble dryers.
- The Council has a process in place to respond to reports of damp and mould in a tenant's home:
  - i) Report received from stock condition survey or tenant is logged on our repairs system
  - ii) Timescale allocated based on the severity / urgency (maximum of 28 days for routine inspections and 7 days for more urgent cases).
  - iii) A Void Response Repairs Officer (VRRO) visits the property within those timescales to assess the situation. They will identify the cause of the damp and mould. The results are logged on the system.
  - iv) Schedule of work is identified and sent to contractor for completion. Again, a timescale will be allocated to the repair based on the severity (maximum of 28 days).
  - v) A further step has recently been implemented. Officers will arrange a follow up call or visit six months after the work is completed, and the outcome recorded. This is to ensure that remedial works have addressed the damp and mould satisfactorily and it has not reoccurred.
- Officers produce a weekly report of all inspections raised to VRROs. This allows managers to monitor all inspection timescales, with a particular focus on any that relate to health and safety, particularly mould. Action is taken if any exceed the designated timescales.
- The Housing Leadership Team takes any complaints relating to damp and mould seriously. A full review of the history and situation is always undertaken and learning embedded into day-to-day procedures. It is a review of complaint that has led to more proactive monitoring of inspections and analysis of underlying issues.
- A visit to a small number of properties that have previously experienced damp and mould was undertaken in December 2022 by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services and Housing Asset Manager to ensure that required works had been completed. Feedback from these visits has been positive. Reports of damp and mould are welcomed, to enable swift assessment and remedial action to be undertaken as required.
- An external review of the Council's draft Housing Asset Management Plan by Savills has led to a recommendation for the Council to develop a specific damp and mould policy to provide absolute clarity on our policy position, commitments and processes. This policy can be found at **Appendix A** and is recommended for approval by Cabinet.

## 5.16 Action Plan and Next Steps – All Tenures

5.16.1 The death of Awaab Ishak is tragic and we agree wholeheartedly that the housing sector should do all that it can to reduce and prevent the risk of households experiencing poor health caused by damp and mould. We are resolute in our commitment to ensure that tenant lifestyle is not blamed.

5.16.2 The Council can demonstrate good practice across all tenures, however, the need for increased awareness raising and proactivity has been identified as an important opportunity to strengthen the Council's response. To oversee this, the Council formed a cross departmental **damp and mould project group** to ensure that we could fully review our approach and processes across all tenures and jointly coordinate delivery of an **action plan**. This group has now been stood down, with remaining actions embedded into business-as-usual activities.

5.16.3 Three key areas for increased focus were identified and actions completed or underway:

- **A more proactive approach to raising tenant awareness of damp and mould, and the support available**
- **A more proactive approach to raising landlord awareness of damp and mould, HHSRS / housing and health and associated responsibilities**
- **Operating transparently, and to be accountable as a landlord whilst also holding other landlords to account**

5.17 The following actions were agreed / progressed:

### 1. **A more proactive approach to raising tenant awareness of damp and mould, and the support available:**

- The Council already has literature in place, which is provided to Council tenants at the point of tenancy sign up. It is now being provided to customer services, housing options and environmental health colleagues. Copies will also be made available to all elected members, parish councils and key stakeholders.
- This leaflet has been uploaded to the Council's website and information made available and clearly accessible on the website. The leaflet has been discussed with and made available to the Council's tenant engagement panel, to seek feedback. The published leaflet can be found here: [Damp, Mould and Condensation \(melton.gov.uk\)](https://www.melton.gov.uk/damp-mould-and-condensation)
- The Council will continue to issue more social media communication, to raise awareness of damp and mould and how to access advice and support. We recognise that this will increase reports and complaints regarding damp and mould. Our teams are briefed (customer services, housing, housing options, environmental health) and are responding proactively to any concerns about damp and mould.
- Specific damp and mould policy (Council Homes) has been developed and will be published once approved

## 2. **A more proactive approach to raising landlord awareness of damp and mould, HHSRS / housing and health and associated responsibilities:**

- In addition to the improved communications outlined above, the Council will also arrange and host a landlord forum in May 2023, in partnership with a neighbouring authority. This will include information, advice, and guidance on:
  - Damp and mould, and landlord responsibilities
  - Housing and Health / HHSRS, and landlord responsibilities
  - Cost of Living – information, support and referral pathways
  - Energy efficiency

## 3. **We know how important it is to operate transparently, and to be accountable as a landlord whilst also holding other landlords to account. We will enhance our actions by:**

- The Council's Scrutiny Committee considered a report on damp and mould in January 2023. Feedback from this meeting has been shared with Cabinet and has helped to shape a specific damp and mould policy for council homes. This policy is recommended for approval by Cabinet.
- There are other Registered Providers who and landlords in the Borough. Each of them will be required to respond to the Regulator of Social Housing on their assessment, approach and response. The Council will write to Registered Providers to seek assurance that the social housing being provided by other landlords is safe, and that the Council understand any actions or improvements required.
- We already have HHSRS trained practitioners in the Council across housing and environmental health teams. However, we have agreed to increase HHSRS knowledge and awareness and will support more staff members in being trained, alongside the more specialist damp and mould training being arranged for staff within the Council's landlord services.
- For Council properties, the Portfolio Holder and Asset Manager have visited properties where damp and mould has been reported previously to follow up on the actions taken.
- A review of disrepair cases has been undertaken, to ensure that prompt and effective action is being taken to remedy any hazards within council homes
- The Council has updated its Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy. It ensures compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code

### 5.18 **Damp and Mould Policy (Council Homes)**

5.19 This Policy explains the activities and responsibilities involved in the control of Damp and Mould within Melton Borough Council's Housing stock. It sets out the Council's reactive and proactive approach, and how it will communicate with and support tenants.

5.20 The Policy is included at **Appendix A** and is recommended for approval by Cabinet.

5.21 The principles of this policy are to:

- Provide dry, warm, and healthy homes for tenants.
- Establish a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould in our homes.
- Demonstrate a robust, reactive, response to reports of damp and mould in our tenants' homes.
- Use data to develop a proactive approach to dealing with the root cause of damp and mould.
- Ensure that we clearly communicate and engage with our tenants and leaseholders

## **6 Options Considered**

- 6.1 None. The Council is committed to ensuring excellent homes and landlord services and has statutory duties to ensure that tenant safety is not compromised in rented accommodation. As a local authority landlord, the Council should be transparent about its approach to ensuring the highest standards of housing, and that it takes every opportunity to review and improve where necessary.
- 6.2 The Council has taken the opportunity to review its approach to damp and mould and identified three areas that would benefit from further focus and attention. These are set out in Section 5 of this report.

## **7 Consultation**

- 7.1 Engagement and consultation on the following has helped to inform the Council's response to damp and mould. This includes:
- 7.1.1 Discussion with the tenant group (Your Choice) on damp and mould, including the customer leaflet
  - 7.1.2 Visits to properties where damp and mould have previously been reported
  - 7.1.3 Consultation on tenant priorities, informing HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Plan
  - 7.1.4 Engagement with the Scrutiny Committee is an important part of shaping the Council's approach to damp and mould
  - 7.1.5 External validation of the HRA business plan and asset management plan

## **8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication**

- 8.1 Tenant safety is already embedded as a key priority. The Council has progressed key actions to ensure a robust and effective response.
- 8.2 The HRA Asset Management Plan has been approved and actions are being implemented including those that will proactively tackle underlying causes of damp and mould.
- 8.3 Publish specific damp and mould policy for Council Homes
- 8.4 Landlord Forum

## **9 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The Council has already considered and approved the HRA Business Plan 2022-2053 and HRA Asset Management

Plan 2023-2028. The associated capital programme is included within the budget proposals for 2023/24. It is important that the Council takes a proactive approach to addressing and preventing damp and mould in tenants homes. Failure to do so can result in service and / or disrepair complaints which may require financial redress. There are costs associated with taking action against private sector landlords, on a case-by-case basis, however this forms part of the council's statutory duties. The action plan identifies some additional training needs, and the housing service will ensure there is sufficient budget provision to enable training to take place.

9.2 Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

## 10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 This report is intended to provide the Cabinet with a position update on the Council's response to damp and mould in rented properties. The Council has already considered and approved key policy documents that form the basis of the response and assurances in place (HRA Business Plan and HRA Asset Management Plan). A specific damp and mould policy will be an operational policy and will be considered by Cabinet.

10.2 The Council has a legal duty to refer to the Regulator of Social Housing if it finds that it has breached its legal duties as a landlord. The Council has been able to provide detailed and comprehensive data and assurances to the Regulator.

10.3 The Council has a legal duty to take action including enforcement action to remedy serious hazards in rented properties. Officers carrying out HHSRS inspections and taking such action must be qualified to do so.

10.4 The Council's legal team will continue to provide legal support and advice in all cases as required.

10.5 The following legislation, standards and statutory guidance apply:

- Section 10 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 requires a privately rented home must be fit to live in. It gives a checklist of factors to consider that are issues for landlords to address which include damp and mould
- The Housing Act 2004 provides provisions about housing conditions to regulate houses in multiple occupation and certain other residential accommodation
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) - The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the [Housing Act 2004](#) and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.
- Decent Homes Standard 2006 – the definition of what a decent home was updated to reflect the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) which replaced the Housing Fitness Standard in April 2006. A decent home must meet four criteria:
  - It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
  - It is in a reasonable state of repair
  - It has reasonably modern facilities and services
  - It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 creates a new right for tenants where their landlords have failed to maintain their home to the appropriate standard in an attempt to improve housing conditions for tenants

## Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer

### 11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 The Authority must comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in S149 of the Equality Act. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for the HRA Business Plan and has been reviewed by the Council’s Check and Challenge Group. It can be found on the Council’s website [here](#). Investment in decent and safe homes will positively impact the safety and wellbeing of council tenants.

### 12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 None arising directly from this report.

### 13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

None arising directly from this report. There is a risk that the rising cost of energy leads to more people being unable to heat their homes, which could increase the risk of damp and mould. Advice, guidance and support is available to support households experiencing damp and mould and to support households who are struggling with rising energy costs.

### 14 Other Implications

- 14.1 **Health and Wellbeing Implications:** Damp and mould can create serious health and wellbeing complications, particularly through prolonged exposure. This report seeks to provide information and assurance on the steps in place to reduce the risk of damp and mould as a hazard in rented accommodation across the borough.

### 15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Failure to respond to RSH request for information on damp and mould assessment, approach and response in Council homes	Very Low	Critical	Low
2	Failure to respond to DLUHC request and directive for information on damp and mould assessment, approach and response in rented accommodation	Very Low	Critical	Low

3	Inability to provide information on damp and mould hazards in council homes	Very Low	Marginal	Low
4	Evidence of damp and mould issues in council homes, and inability to demonstrate clear plan to remedy issues satisfactorily	Low	Critical	Medium
5	Damp and mould complaints increase as a result of increased awareness and focus	Significant	Marginal	Medium
6	Lack of appropriate advice and guidance to tenants and landlords	Significant	Marginal	Medium
7	Lack of staff knowledge, capability and capacity	Low	Critical	Medium

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant		5, 6		
	3 Low			3, 4, 7	
	2 Very Low			1, 2	
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Response submitted, signed off by Senior Leadership Team and Portfolio Holder
2	Initial response submitted, signed off by Senior Leadership Team and Portfolio Holder. Follow up response to be overseen by project group, sign off arrangements in place. Action plan in place.
3	Stock condition survey, HRA Business Plan, HRA Asset Management Plan and increasingly proactive approach to raise awareness all significant factors in reducing this risk. Cyclical stock conditions surveys key to maintaining data integrity.
4	Stock condition survey, HRA Business Plan, HRA Asset Management Plan and increasingly proactive approach to raise awareness all significant factors in reducing this risk. Cyclical stock conditions surveys key to maintaining data integrity. Process improvements in place. Damp and mould policy required to ensure clarity and transparency for staff, stakeholders and tenants.

5	An increased in complaints as a result of increased awareness must be seen as a positive. The Council must monitor complaints and service requests and if necessary, adjust resourcing arrangements. There must be an effective response if households contact the council for advice. Customer services team briefed, website information updated.
6	Website and leaflet updated, information shared with key stakeholders, members and parish councils. Awareness is key and the Council must respond proactively if ay gaps in awareness are identified. Landlord forum is a key action to engage directly with private sector landlords. Appropriately trained staff.
7	Increased staff training, relevant to individual role profiles. To be accelerated to ensure sufficient capacity and capability to diagnose and remedy damp and mould hazards effectively. Stock condition survey already has HHSRS element which adds mitigation (90% properties surveyed with plan to access and survey remainder in 2023)

## 16 Background Papers

- 16.1 Letter to Local Authorities from Rt Hon Michael Gove MP dated 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022 / Letter to Local Authorities from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022 [20221116 LA direction letter on standards \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/2022/11/16/la-direction-letter-on-standards)
- 16.2 Letter to Social Landlords from the Regulator of Social Housing, November 2022 [Letters to registered providers about damp and mould - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letters-to-registered-providers-about-damp-and-mould)
- 16.3 Housing Ombudsman spotlight on damp and mould, October 2021 [Housing Ombudsman Spotlight report on damp and mould \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/spotlight-report-on-damp-and-mould)
- 16.4 Melton Borough Council [Housing Revenue Account \(HRA\) Business Plan 2022-2052 \(melton.gov.uk\)](https://www.melton.gov.uk/business-plan-2022-2052)
- 16.5 Melton Borough Council [Housing Asset Management Plan 2023-2028](https://www.melton.gov.uk/housing-asset-management-plan-2023-2028)
- 16.6 [Scrutiny Report - 11th January 2023](https://www.melton.gov.uk/scrutiny-report-11th-january-2023)
- 16.7 [Scrutiny Feedback to Cabinet - Damp and Mould – 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023](https://www.melton.gov.uk/scrutiny-feedback-to-cabinet-damp-and-mould-25th-january-2023)
- 16.8 [Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy](https://www.melton.gov.uk/customer-feedback-and-complaints-policy)
- 16.9 [Complaints Handling Code, Self-Assessment](https://www.melton.gov.uk/complaints-handling-code-self-assessment)
- 16.10 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/damp-and-mould-in-social-housing-initial-findings/damp-and-mould-in-social-housing-initial-findings-accessible-version>

## 17 Appendices

- 17.1 Appendix A: Damp and Mould Policy

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