

Hillingdon Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Definitions	3
3. Background	4
4. Aims	5
5. Scope	8
6. Areas of Responsibility	10
7. Reviewing our Policy	10
8. Performance Reporting	11
9. Associated Documents and Links to Further Information	11
Appendix 1 DMC Process Chart	13
Appendix 2 Awaab's Law Triaging Calculator	14

1. Introduction

This Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Policy sets out the actions the council will take to address DMC in the homes that it owns and manages. The Policy has been updated to take account of Section 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, commonly known as Awaab's Law. A diagram showing the key process elements for dealing with DMC is included at Appendix 1.

This document explains how the council will prevent, identify and respond to damp, mould and condensation. It outlines our approach to diagnosis, when independent expertise may be used, what actions we take in different situations, expected timescales, how we communicate with residents, and the support provided after works are completed. This aims to give tenants, leaseholders and staff clear and consistent information.

A triage calculator providing a risk based scoring for both the extent of DMC and the vulnerability of residents is included at appendix 2. Staff will use this to assist in the case by case assessment of whether it is within the scope of Awaab's Law and if it is to be treated as an Emergency or a Significant Hazard. Use of the calculator will help ensure consistency and fairness.

To ensure a shared understanding and approach towards DMC across different teams within the council, this document was developed in consultation with officers from Business Performance, Customer Access, Housing, and Operational Assets.

The DMC policy should be read in conjunction with our DMC Operational Practice Note and our Emergency and Urgent Works Policy and associated Operational Practice Note.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Awaab's Law - is a UK law being introduced from October 2025 that requires social landlords (such as councils and housing associations) to carry out repairs within strict legal time limits, especially for issues like damp and mould in order to protect tenants' health and safety. Awaab's applies to all emergency hazards not just those relating to damp and mould.

Disrepair – when a property is in a state of disrepair, there has been deterioration of the structure, exterior, or essential installations (water, gas, heating, etc.) that the landlord is legally obliged to maintain. The lack of repair makes the property unfit for human habitation.

Leaseholder – any person that has a property lease agreement with Camden Council for a Council home

Tenant – any person with a tenancy agreement with Camden Council for a Council home.

Vulnerability - means a situation where a resident or household faces barriers to accessing our housing and property service, which could lead to disadvantage. Vulnerability may not be a fixed state. Through collaboration and inclusion, we aim to reduce vulnerability and enable residents to thrive in a safe, supportive, and resilient housing community.

3. Background

Awaab's Law mandates that social landlords must address all emergency hazards within strict timeframes. The regulations came into force for damp, mould, condensation and all other emergency hazards from October 2025¹. In 2026, the regulations will be extended to the following hazards where they present a significant risk of harm:

- Excess cold and excess heat
- Falls associated with baths etc., on level surfaces, on stairs and between levels
- Structural collapse, and explosions
- Fire and electrical hazards
- Domestic and personal hygiene and food safety

From 2027, the regulations extend to all remaining HHSRS hazards (excluding overcrowding) where there is a significant risk of harm.

Statutory guidance has been published which outlining compliance deadlines, reporting protocols and good practice.²

This guidance also explains how landlords should communicate with residents and meet required timescales.

In 2025, an estimated 6 million homes in England (25%) reported DMC issues³. The most common problems were related to condensation and mould, followed by penetrating and rising damp⁴. Damp remains most prevalent in the private rented sector (10% of homes), compared to 7% of local authority homes and 4% of housing association properties⁵. Older and lower-income owner-occupiers also experience damp-related issues.

Damp and mouldy homes pose serious health risks, including respiratory problems, asthma, allergies, and mental health challenges. Damp can also affect children's development, learning and long-term opportunities, highlighting the need for early action.

Common causes of damp and mould include:

- Poor ventilation
- Leaks
- Structural defects

¹ [Hazards in Social Housing \(Prescribed Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#)

² [Awaab's Law: Guidance for social landlords - Timeframes for repairs in the social rented sector](#)

³ [Homes | The State of Ageing 2025 | Centre for Ageing Better](#)

⁴ [5% of dwellings in England had a problem with damp in 2023, higher than in any of the last 5 years \(3-4%\)](#)

⁵ [Written questions and answers - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

- Condensation
- Overcrowded homes

Because these issues often overlap, a whole-home assessment is needed to identify the root cause.

The DMC policy has been reviewed to take account of Awaab's Law 2025 and reaffirms our zero-tolerance stance on DMC in council homes. We aim to prevent issues wherever possible and resolve them quickly when they arise.

4. Aims

The table below details the key aims of our DMC Policy, as well as the actions we will take to achieve these aims:

Key aims	How we will achieve these aims
To comply with relevant legislation, regulations, and standards, including the following: • Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 • Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11) • Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) introduced under the Housing Act 2004 • Decent Homes Standard – June 2006 update • Consumer Regulatory Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing • Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023	Following legal requirements and adopting recognised best practice to deliver an effective DMC service.
To ensure that our tenants and leaseholders are living in dry, warm, healthy homes that are free from DMC.	Prioritising DMC issues and acting early wherever possible, using both preventative and responsive measures. Provide after-care support and prevention for DMC issues. Provide follow-up support to help prevent the issue returning.
To protect our properties from deterioration and damage resulting from DMC.	Provide a prompt, efficient and cost-effective repairs service that responds quickly and appropriately to all DMC reports.
To adopt a strategic approach to tackle DMC that is clear, reasoned, data-led and proactive and identify high risk areas within the council's housing stock.	We will use data, property characteristics and resident information to identify high-risk homes, work across teams when issues overlap, and use this

Hillingdon Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

	insight to shape planned maintenance programmes.
To take account of increased risk of health impacts of damp and mould exposure.	Understanding how health or age-related vulnerabilities, reduced ability to report issues, or living in poorer-quality housing can increase risks. Using this knowledge to prioritise support for residents who may be more vulnerable to the effects of damp and mould.
To promote understanding of the council's responsibilities in relation to DMC and ensure that our residents are provided with clear and comprehensive advice on managing and controlling DMC.	Publicising guidance on DMC on our website, including information on causes, effects, prevention, treatment, and areas of responsibility. Distributing advisory leaflets/information to residents, including information relevant to how homes are used. Ensuring all guidance is easy to understand and accessible.
To foster communication with our tenants and leaseholders that is clear, effective, straightforward, and fulfils their expectations.	Engaging regularly with tenants and leaseholders, adapting our communication methods where needed and ensuring clear and open dialogue.
To work in partnership with our residents, colleagues, and contractors, establishing and maintaining good working relationships that are based on trust and reliability.	Agreeing shared aims and outcomes, delivery arrangements and responsibilities Carry out quality assurance checks, including on works completed by contractors.
To ensure that our operational staff have sufficient knowledge and the skills required to identify, locate, and treat DMC.	Supporting staff to identify and address DMC issues effectively, including through relevant training and access to the right tools and equipment.
To make effective and efficient use of financial resources.	Planning and assigning appropriately, including increasing resources at times of higher demand (e.g., winter) Ensuring cost-effective and sustainable components are used. Evaluating the most cost-effective measures including early identification and prevention. DMC issues will be taken into account when formulating planned works programmes.

	Using financial resources in a way that delivers long-term value and prevents issues from recurring.
To provide all tenants with equal access to our repairs and maintenance service and ensure that they are treated fairly, consistently and without discrimination, including those affected by regeneration programmes.	We will treat tenants reporting DMC with empathy and respect and will not prejudice the reason for any issue. Complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) by having due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.
To continuously improve our services in relation to dealing with DMC.	Continuing to review and develop services through supervision, tenants and leaseholder feedback, and maintaining effective complaints processes. Using learning from cases and feedback to make ongoing improvements.

5. Scope

This DMC Policy applies specifically to the council's own social housing stock and to council owned temporary and supported accommodation provided under a tenancy agreement.

The Policy is designed to provide the council with an overall framework to addressing DMC in council homes.

Types of damp

- Condensation damp – caused when a property cannot manage normal moisture levels due to poor insulation, heating or ventilation.
- Penetrating damp – caused when water enters the building fabric through defects.
- Rising damp – caused when moisture from the ground rises through walls or floors.

The response to DMC will fall within the scope of Awaab's law if there is a significant or urgent hazard. Awaab's Law applies only to social tenants which for the purpose of this policy is Hillingdon Council tenants only. Awaab's Law does not apply to leasehold homes, owner-occupied properties, shared ownership units, or private rented sector tenants at this time. Awaab's Law sets out specific time frames in which social landlords must respond.

While the Policy applies primarily to Hillingdon Council tenants, it also applies to our leaseholders where it concerns the building fabric and/or shared areas in leasehold dwellings/buildings in council ownership. This will be a standard DMC response; however, the requirements of Awaab's Law will not apply.

Leaseholders in Hillingdon have different obligations and should refer to their lease. The council's website also offers further advice for leaseholders, including information on buildings insurance and alterations, as well as a leaseholder's information booklet. The council remains responsible for structural repairs, including rising or penetrating damp. Leaseholders who sublet take on additional responsibilities as landlords.

This document will be made widely available to all employees and contractors to ensure consistent understanding and response to DMC.

Under Awaab's Law:

- Emergency hazards must be investigated and made safe within 24 hours.
- Significant damp and mould hazards within your council home must be investigated within 10 working days of being reported and must be made safe within 5 working days of the investigation being finished.
- The council must provide a written summary of what they found and how they will make your council home safe within 3 working days after the investigation is finished.
- If more work is needed to stop the hazard coming back, the council must commence the work or make plans for the work to begin within 5 working days of the investigation finishing. All work must begin within 12 weeks at the latest.
- If your council home cannot be made safe in time, somewhere else to stay for free must be provided while the works are done to make the home safe to return to.
- Council tenants must be kept up to date throughout the process and given advice on how to stay safe while repairs are being made.

6. Areas of Responsibility

The Council's Responsibilities

- It is Hillingdon Council's responsibility to provide tenants with the information they need to operate their heating and hot water systems efficiently; along with information to help them to minimise condensation
- Provide budgeting and associated advice and support to ensure that incomes are maximized, utilities are connected, and financial commitments are met
- Promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage damp and condensation
- The council is responsible for maintaining tenant's homes to avoid penetrating and rising damp and for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.

- The council will make reasonable attempts to access the property to inspect and carry out the works. The council will respond without delay to a report of DMC. We will ask initial questions to understand the likely cause and arrange any required inspection within Awaab's Law timeframes. We may also provide information and guidance which we will ask tenants to follow.
- Awaab's Law requires the council to assess the risk of a hazard, to determine if it is an emergency or a significant hazard and to assess the risk of harm. The household's individual circumstances and vulnerabilities will be taken into account to make these judgements. Investigations and repairs will be prioritised as a result of these judgements.
- If a resident's needs fall within Awaab's Law scope, inspections for significant hazards must be arranged within 10 working days, with repairs initiated within 5 working days of the inspection report. Emergency hazards must be addressed within 24 hours. Where necessary, earlier inspections will be arranged, especially where there is a history of damp or mould. The council will ensure effective triage between emergency and significant hazards and apply a case-by-case approach where required.
- The council will diagnose the cause of damp accurately, assess any risk of harm and deliver effective solutions based on addressing the root cause rather than the symptom. Independent expertise will be used where required.
- The council will ensure that relevant staff are trained, understand their roles, and know how to deliver the service in line with this policy. This includes raising awareness about DMC, how to report problems and providing training for both housing and non-housing staff.
- Building confidence and trust is important in maintaining good relationships with our tenants and leaseholders. Communication about DMC will be clear, empathetic and accessible. The council will ensure particularly effective communication where vulnerabilities are identified. Written summaries will be provided to tenants as required by Awaab's Law.
- The council will ensure that staff and contractors understand the potential health risks of Damp and mould and recognise circumstances where risks may be elevated, requiring swift action.
- The council will undertake improvement works to help manage and control of DMC, for example installing mechanical extractor fans, fresh air vents or improving insulation.
- When carrying out remedial work, the council will only patch the area affected, not a full floor-to-ceiling section.
- If an existing tenant requests plaster repairs when decorating, we will inspect but will only carry out any repairs if there is a defect in the structure or plaster finish. (See tenants' right to repair and decorations responsibilities.)
- If plaster or decorations are damaged by another issue (e.g., burst pipe or roof leak), we will repair the damaged plaster and apply a mist coat of paint. Further decorating is the tenant's responsibility unless the damage is due to council negligence. Tenants may be able to claim through household insurance.
- The completion of remedial works will take place within a reasonable timescale, dependent on the severity, urgency and complexity of the solution.
- If it is unsafe for the occupants at home while works are carried out, alternative accommodation will be arranged. This may be on day-by-day basis or in

exceptional circumstances, a temporary move to another property. Tenants will be supported throughout this process.

- A proactive approach to remedying DMC will be taken. Operatives and contractors visiting for other reasons will also check for signs of damp or mould. strategic approach to DMC will be adopted when planning works programmes and making decisions regarding about regeneration.
- Proactive housing inspections will include checks for potential DMC issues, with information passed on for appropriate action
- Aftercare will include checking that issues with DMC have been resolved and taking further action where needed.
- We will regularly review this DMC policy and the related practice note, monitor our performance and introduce improvements as necessary. We will also consider Housing Ombudsman publications self-assess against the Ombudsman's good practice recommendations.

Tenant's Responsibilities

- Tenants will be provided with and should always follow guidance on minimising condensation in their home.
- Tenants should regularly check for mould and clean small areas as soon as they are found. Mould most commonly forms around windows, room corners and behind furniture placed close to walls.
- Tenants should regularly check for and immediately report evidence of rising and penetrating damp, and any faulty equipment that will affect ventilation, heating or condensation control (e.g., faulty extractor fan, non-opening windows, or heating faults).
- If all reasonable efforts have been made to manage condensation and mould and this has not been successful, tenants should contact the council for further support.
- If the council provides guidance on controlling condensation and mould, tenants are expected to follow this guidance.
- Tenants must allow reasonable access for inspections by council staff or approved contractors.
- Tenants are responsible for any redecoration after DMC-related repairs. If plaster or decorations are damaged due to another issue (e.g., burst pipe or roof leak), the council will repair plaster and apply a mist coat. Full redecoration is the tenant's responsibility unless the damage was caused by negligence of council service. Tenants may be able to claim via their household insurance.

Leaseholder's Responsibilities

- Condensation damp – leaseholders are responsible for everything non-structural within the four walls of their flat or maisonette. The council is not responsible for repairing any service that only affects a leaseholder's flat, and all repairs inside a leaseholder's flat are their responsibility. Therefore, treating condensation damp and any resultant mould will usually be a leaseholder's responsibility.

- Penetrating damp – if there is a leak coming from a pipe that solely serves a leaseholder flat it will be their responsibility to repair. In other cases, responsibility for treating penetrating damp and any resultant mould depends on what the fault is (e.g., damaged brickwork/missing roof tiles/loose flashing/leaking/etc), where it occurs, and why it occurs.
- Rising damp – all repairs to the structure of a leaseholder's flat and block are the council's responsibility, and under the conditions of their lease, leaseholders must contribute to the cost of any work to their block or group of blocks. The council maintains certain shared services that run through a leaseholder's flat, and we are also responsible for the structure. Therefore, treating rising damp and any resultant mould will usually be the council's responsibility.

7. Reviewing our Policy

This Policy is compliant with Section 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (Awaab's Law), and incorporates statutory requirements for hazard investigation, repair timelines, tenant communication, and safeguarding.

We will comply with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, and we will continue adopt best practice relating to the provision of DMC services.

The council will monitor legislative developments and update this Policy accordingly.

The policy will be reviewed after 1 year in anticipation of future legislative changes. The review will include an evaluation of how effectively the Policy has achieved its aims.

8. Performance Reporting

Performance against this policy will be reported to the Landlord Board, with oversight provided by the respective subgroup. Reports will include inspection volumes, repair completion times, tenant satisfaction and repeat cases.

Lessons learned from complaints, complex cases, and tenant feedback will be reviewed quarterly and used to inform service improvements.

Findings will be shared with governance structures (including Landlord Board, Cabinet Member for Residents Services and Deputy Leader of the Council, and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property) and through tenant structures.

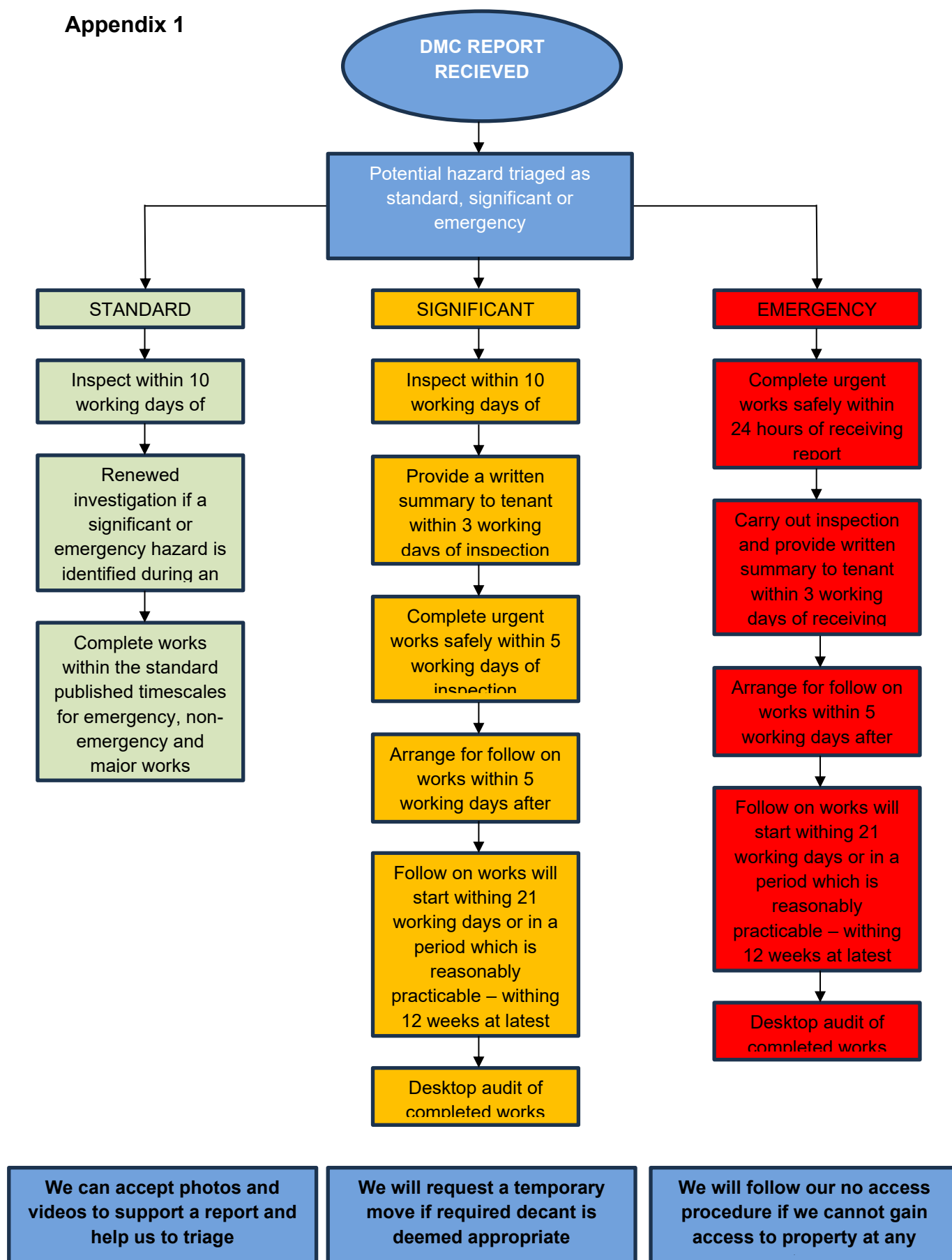
9. Associated Documents and Links to Further Information

- [English Housing Survey 2023 to 2024: Headline findings \(GOV.UK\)](#)
- [Housing Ombudsman resources for DMC](#)
- [Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 \(Section 11\)](#)
- [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\) Guidance](#)

Hillingdon Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

- [Decent Homes Standard – June 2006 update](#)
- [Homes \(Fitness for Human Habitation\) Act 2018](#)
- [Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory Standards](#)
- [Public Sector Equality Duty \(Section 149 of Equality Duty 2010\)](#)
- [Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document F](#)
- [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#)
- [Awaab's Law: Guidance for social landlords – Timeframes for repairs in the social rented sector](#)
- Hillingdon DMC Operational Practice Note
- Emergency and Urgent Works Policy
- Emergency and Urgent Works Operational Practice Note

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Hazard Description & Criteria - Section 1	TICK ONE ONLY
	Score
Widespread/Severe Damp & Mould (e.g., mould covering a bedroom wall; mould affecting more than one room, or a critical area like a bedroom or kitchen; or any mould report involving direct reference to severe respiratory distress.)	4
Moderate/Localised Damp & Mould (e.g., mould covering a significant patch in a non-critical room like a bathroom, or damp patches that are actively spreading.)	3
Minor Damp/Mould or Secondary Hazard (e.g., persistent condensation causing minor mould in a bathroom; a non-structural cold issue; a non-critical broken handrail.)	2
Low-Level Property Issue (e.g., non-spreading mould on a window frame, an unresolved history of minor damp, a report of poor ventilation only.)	1
Vulnerability Status of Any Resident in the Home - Section 2	TICK ONE ONLY
	Score
Critical Health Impact (Tenant reporting direct, recent, or immediate medical symptoms linked to the hazard e.g., "My child is struggling to breathe at night because of the mould.")	5
Vulnerable Group with High-Risk Health Condition (Any resident who is pregnant or any resident with asthma, COPD, severe allergies, compromised immunity; resident is on dialysis or using oxygen/life support equipment in the home.)	4
Very Young Child or Elderly/Frail Resident (Any resident is under 3 years old OR over 75 years old OR has severe mobility issues making swift exit difficult.)	3
High-Risk Medical Condition (A chronic condition not directly respiratory (e.g., diabetes); or has a non-severe physical/learning disability.)	2
Standard Tenancy (No explicitly stated or known health or age vulnerabilities.)	1
Criteria	Score
Hazard Description & Criteria Score	1 to 4
Vulnerability Status of Any Resident in the Home	1 to 5
Total combined score	
Outside Awaab's Law Scope – Treat as a standard DMC issue Significant hazard – investigate within 10 working days Emergency hazard – investigate and make safe within 24 hours	Up to 4 5 to 7 8 or above