



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 20 January 2025

Report of Cabinet Member for Housing,
Councillor Virginia Moran

Damp and Mould Policy

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To inform the Committee of the updated Damp and Mould Policy effective from April 2025.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the contents of the report and the updated Damp and Mould Policy.**
- 2. Recommends the approval of the updated Damp and Mould Policy to Cabinet, effective from April 2025.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Connecting communities
Sustainable South Kesteven
Enabling economic opportunities
Housing
Effective council

Which wards are impacted?

(All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (Deputy s151)

Legal and Governance

1.2 The Council has statutory responsibilities as a social landlord regarding compliance associated with damp and mould. Having a damp and mould policy in place ensures that the Council is clear as to how it will meet these regulatory requirements.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

Health and Safety

1.3 Failure to comply with established standards and legal requirements carries both financial and reputational risks for the authority. More importantly the Council has a moral obligation to ensure that time frames for repair are adhered to and no one's physical or mental health is unduly impacted by the presence of or response to Damp and Mould matters.

Completed by: Phil Swinton Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning Manager

2. Background to the Report

2.1. Social landlords must adhere to several regulations relating to damp and mould and a lack of compliance can place a landlord at risk of prosecution or financial penalty. It is therefore essential that the Council has a damp and mould policy in place which meets regulatory requirements.

2.2. Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould, but people with certain health conditions, children and older adults are at greater risk of more severe health impacts.

- 2.3. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and in the most severe cases, death. The tragic death of Awaab Ishak was the result of a severe respiratory condition due to prolonged exposure to mould in a home with inadequate ventilation.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. When responding to reports of damp and mould landlords should:
- Respond sensitively and assess the issue with urgency to identify the severity of the damp and mould and potential risk to residents.
 - Always tackle the underlying issue promptly, and act with urgency when concerns have been raised about resident health.
 - Residents should be informed about the steps that will be taken to remove mould and the timeframes for the work.
 - Landlords should inspect homes at least 6 weeks after remedial work has been carried out to ensure that the issue has been fixed and damp and mould has not reappeared. If damp and mould has reappeared, further investigation and intervention should be pursued.
 - Landlords should take a proactive approach to reduce damp and mould including having a clear process in place to document, manage and act on reports of damp and mould, understand the condition of their homes and make necessary interventions to ventilation, energy efficiency and address any building deficiencies.
 - Landlords should support residents to understand what they can do to reduce damp and mould and build relationships with residents, ensuring that they feel encouraged to report cases of damp and mould.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 This policy replaces the current Damp and Mould Protocol document which forms part of the Council's previous Repairs and Maintenance Policy. This standalone Damp and Mould Policy is in line with good practice and other landlords.
- 4.2 The Committee could recommend that a new policy is not necessary.
- 4.3 The Committee could recommend amendments to the draft Policy appended to this report.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. To ensure an updated Damp and Mould Policy is in place which meets regulatory requirements and our internal auditors' expectations.
- 5.2. To ensure the most efficient and timely service for Council's residents.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 – Damp and Mould Policy

6.2 Appendix 2 – Existing Damp and Mould Addendum