

**CABINET**  
**7 MARCH 2023**

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**HOUSING SERVICES DAMP, MOULD AND CONDENSATION POLICY**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member -  
Councillor Kevin Nicholson, Health and Housing Portfolio**

**Responsible Director -  
Elizabeth Davison, Group Director of Operations**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To approve the Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

**Summary**

2. Housing Services are committed to providing good quality, safe and energy efficient homes. We have a responsibility to ensure our homes are free from hazards, including damp, mould and condensation.
3. The Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy at **Appendix 1** explains how we will ensure that we take prompt action to remedy issues and support our tenants, offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout the process.
4. The Tenants Panel has been consulted on the draft policy and the proposals have received overwhelming support.
5. This report was considered by Health and Housing Scrutiny on 8 February 2023, who agreed its onward submission for approval by Cabinet.

**Recommendation**

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:-
  - (a) Consider the contents of this report.
  - (b) Approve the Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.

**Reasons**

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-

- (a) The Social Housing Regulator’s Consumer Standards places a duty on social housing providers to provide their tenants with good quality accommodation.
- (b) The Social Housing Regulator also expects social housing providers to have a separate and specific policy on preventing and dealing with damp and mould in their homes.

**Elizabeth Davison**  
**Group Director of Operations**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Anthony Sandys: Extension 6926

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for crime and disorder
Health and Wellbeing	The Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy will help address any health hazards caused by mould in Council properties
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address
Diversity	There are no issues which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	All wards with Council housing
Groups Affected	All Council tenants
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	This report supports the Council plan to provide high quality Council housing
Efficiency	There are no implications
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

8. Following the tragic case of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, who died of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home, the Regulator of Social Housing wrote to all social housing providers, seeking assurance that they have a clear understanding and strong grip on damp and mould issues in their homes and are addressing risks to tenants' health.
9. Housing Services are committed to providing good quality, safe and energy efficient homes. We have a responsibility to ensure our homes are free from hazards, including damp, mould and condensation.
10. The Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy at Appendix 1 explains how we will ensure that we take prompt action to remedy issues and support our tenants, offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout the process.
11. Our Housing Management Policy, approved by Cabinet on 22 June 2022, includes a specific section on our approach to dealing with damp, mould and condensation in our Council homes. However, the Regulator of Social Housing expects all social housing providers to have a separate and specific policy on damp, mould and condensation and the policy has been developed to set out our approach to these issues.
12. This policy confirms that dealing with damp, mould and condensation is a high priority including reports of issues from tenants. The policy also confirms that we take a proactive stance to issues of damp, mould and condensation by undertaking regular property inspections and improving ventilation and energy efficiency measures to our homes.
13. The policy sets out the specific responsibilities for Darlington Borough Council as landlords, including:
  - (a) How we respond to reports of damp, mould and condensation from our tenants.
  - (b) Undertaking property inspections and carrying out remedial work to address any issues of damp, mould and condensation.
  - (c) Offering advice and assistance to tenants on how to prevent, report and deal with damp, mould and condensation.
  - (d) Undertaking property inspections of empty Council homes, including an assessment of any damp, mould or condensation in the property and carrying out work to remedy any issues before a new tenant moves in.
  - (e) Undertaking regular and proactive stock condition surveys on our properties, to ensure they continue to meet the Decent Homes Standards and to inform our capital programme of works, as part of our 30-year business plan. These surveys include an assessment of any signs of damp, mould and condensation.

14. The policy also sets out responsibilities for tenants, including:

- (a) Ventilating and heating their homes effectively to prevent damp, mould and condensation occurring.
- (b) Reporting any instances of damp, mould and condensation in their homes to Housing Services straight away, so that we can deal with any issues promptly and effectively.
- (c) Following all advice and guidance issued by Housing Services on managing and controlling damp, mould and condensation.

#### **Outcome of Consultation**

15. The Tenants Panel were consulted in January 2023 and overall, the Panel supported the proposed Housing Services Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy.