



## Appendix 8 - Equality Impact Assessment

### Damp and Mould Policy

Directorate:	Service Area:	Team:	Officer responsible for this assessment:	Name of the policy or project that is being assessed	Date of assessment:
Housing Services	Housing	Property Services	Various	<b>Damp &amp; Mould Policy</b>	June 2025

#### Section 1 - Data Checklist

		Yes/No	Please provide details
1	Have there been any complaints data related to the policy or project you are looking to implement?	No	This is a new policy.
2	Have all officers who will be responsible for implementing the policy or project been consulted, and given the opportunity to raise concerns about the way the policy or function has or will be implemented?	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff workshops at draft stage of the policy work.</li><li>• Circulated to Service Leads for comments and amendments.</li><li>• Discussed at Housing Department Management Team (DMT)</li><li>• Referral process introduced in consultation with the Tenancy Sustainment Team meeting.</li></ul>
3	Have previous consultations highlighted any concerns about the policy or project from an equality impact perspective?	No	Policy was discussed with service users as part of the Service Delivery Groups (SDG) and at the tenant Repairs and Maintenance Redesign workshops. Went to the Tenant Readers Panel. Policy presented to the Economy and Housing Committee in February 2025.
4	Do you have any concerns regarding the implementation of this policy or project?	No	The service is resourced through the HRA forecasted Repair and maintenance Budgets.
5	Does any accessible data regarding the area which your work will address identify any areas of concern or potential	No	

	problems which may impact on your policy or project?		
6	Do you have any past experience delivering similar policies or projects which may inform the implementation of your scheme from an equality impact point of view?	Yes	Service Lead and Property Managers have experience developing similar policies within other housing authorities.
7	Are there any other issues that you think will be relevant?	Yes	Cost of living crisis – high energy costs.

## **Section 2 - Your Equality Impact Assessment form**

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Please provide details</b>
1	What is the name of the policy or project that is being assessed?	Managing Damp and Mould.
2	Is this a new or existing policy?	New Policy
3	Briefly describe the aim and purpose of this work.	The purpose of the policy is for the council and its residents to work together to solve the causes leading to damp and mould within council homes and to control, manage and eradicate damp. The aim is to provide assurance to residents that effective processes are in place to resolve issues of damp and mould in their homes and that they receive a fair and equitable response when reporting damp and mould.
4	What are the associated objectives of this work?	<p>To provide an effective response to damp and mould regardless of the route through which reports are made. To treat all residents who report issues with damp and mould with respect, empathy and with an appreciation of the seriousness of the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure a proactive approach is taken to identifying and resolving the causes of damp and mould in council owned properties.</li> <li>• To ensure that a thorough assessment is undertaken to identify the cause of damp and mould, with all options being considered. Lifestyle and occupation should never be the default explanation.</li> <li>• To develop awareness to prompt behaviour change, understanding, and above all, good support. Provide information about reducing condensation in a sensitive way that avoids blaming and stigmatising residents. Train staff and contractors.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To clearly signpost the council's and resident's responsibilities in the handling of all reports of damp and mould.</li> <li>• Provide residents with good support and guidance to help reduce the likelihood of damp and mould reoccurring in their home.</li> </ul>
5	Who is intended to benefit from this work and in what way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants</li> <li>• Leaseholders</li> <li>• Licensees</li> <li>• Members</li> <li>• Council officers</li> <li>• Contractors</li> </ul>
6	What are the outcomes sought from this work?	See objectives in question 4.
7	What factors/forces could contribute or detract from the outcomes?	Damp and Mould management and this policy reflects a landlord statutory duty contributing to and not distracting from the policy outcomes. Lack of tenant engagement or access to homes may contribute and make it more challenging. In such cases referrals will be made to the Tenancy Sustainment service.
8	Who are the key individuals and organisations responsible for the implementation of this work?	Housing Service Managers and Teams. Repairs and Maintenance Contractor(s).

9	<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>The successful management of damp and mould centres around designing an appropriate resident-centred approach. It is vital that officers find out about the resident's needs and lifestyle and the most effective method of engaging and delivering information to help manage damp and mould problems. This assessment concludes that consideration must be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabilities and conditions that mean individuals/households are more likely to be negatively impacted by damp and mould.</li> <li>• Race, disabilities, digital exclusion and literacy skills that may require special communication measures and options for reporting.</li> <li>• Approaches to cooking and bathing linked with culture that may impact on how moist air is generated</li> <li>• Barriers that prevent certain households from reporting damp and mould</li> </ul> <p>This policy is accompanied by a Strategic Action Plan which includes tasks to cover the issues discussed.</p>
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<p>Tasks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Delivering effective training</b> to all relevant council staff and contractors. This will include raising awareness of cultural factors that may affect lifestyle as well as disabilities that may require special consideration. The training will also include making every contact count, and link in with domestic abuse and safeguarding policies.</li> <li>• <b>Implementing a Communication Plan</b> to provide guidance, information and advice that takes account of different residents' communication needs and is flexible based on what is known about the household (to include bullet point leaflets, independent unbiased information, which is scientifically lead). This will include information on the causes, diagnosis and ways to mitigate condensation.</li> <li>• <b>Tenancy sustainment team</b> – the policy includes a referral process for person centred support in recognition of that some households will require special consideration. This needs to be underpinned by staff training to ensure officers are able to recognise when referral is appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>The Action Plan includes developing and monitoring key performance indicators.</p>			
		Please select your answer in <b>bold</b> . Please provide detail here.	
10a	Could the policy have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of <b>race</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	<b>N</b>
10b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.</p> <p>This policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals based on race. This is because people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to be impacted by damp and mould problems. Translated materials are provided and accessible methods to report damp and mould. Working with community groups who support refugees and asylum seekers. Accessible methods to report damp and mould. Dedicated resettlement scheme to support all individuals in council homes in a recognised government scheme.</p>	
11a	Could the policy have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of <b>sex</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	<b>N</b>
11b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	<p>No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.</p>	

12a	Could the policy have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of <b>disability</b> ?	Y	N	
12b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. The repairs service is open to all. This Policy includes references to aid and adaptations support. Accessibility formats and options are available through the 'My Winchester Tenancy' App, a dedicated telephone line/Repairs Hub, Big word and braille. Tenancy Sustainment Support for vulnerable tenants. Those residents at higher risk of severe health impacts and disabilities associated with Damp and Mould can be prioritised for urgent repairs work, decanted to alternative accommodation, referred for tenancy support, prioritised for a move through the housing register health and welfare criteria.		
13a	Could the policy have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of <b>sexual orientation</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
13b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.		
14a	Could the policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of <b>age</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
14b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all This policy will have a positive impact on both children and older people who are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of damp and mould. Those at higher risk of severe health impacts associated with Damp and Mould can be prioritised for urgent repairs work, decanted to alternative accommodation, referred for tenancy support, prioritised for a move through the housing register health and welfare criteria.  The council also invests in retrofitting existing homes to improve energy efficiency efficiency/insulated homes levels of accessibility and safety for older residents and ensure new housing developments follow age-friendly design. Older people's needs are also embedded in planning and local housing strategies.		

15a	Could the policy have the potential to affect individuals or communities on the basis of <b>religious belief</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
15b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.		
16a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of <b>gender reassignment</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
16b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.		
17a	Could this policy or project have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of <b>marriage and civil partnership</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
17b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all.		
18a	Could this policy have the potential to affect individuals on the basis of <b>pregnancy and maternity</b> differently in a negative way?	Y	N	
18b	What existing evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	No disproportionate impact identified. All staff receive equality and diversity training as part the induction process. The repairs service is open to all. Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth are prioritised for urgent repairs work, can be decanted to alternative accommodation, referred for tenancy support, prioritised for a move through the housing register health and welfare criteria.		

Other groups affected outside of the protected characteristics:

#### **Socio-economic disadvantage:**

People on low incomes are more likely to live in homes with damp and mould as they may struggle to heat their homes and/or experience fuel poverty. This is exacerbated by the cost of

living crisis, and the likelihood of these individuals living in already poorly insulated and low energy efficient properties. These issues are prioritised as part of the wider decarbonisation housing programme with referrals for tenancy sustainment support to maximise income.

## Rural households

It is recognised that the fabric of dwellings in rural areas are less thermally efficient and may not have access to a gas supply. This is a particular vulnerability to those on low incomes as the cost of heating using electric systems is currently greater. These issues are prioritised as part of the wider decarbonisation housing programme with referrals for tenancy sustainment support to maximise income.

19	Could any negative impacts that you identified in questions 10a to 15b create the potential for the policy to discriminate against certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics?	Y	N	See above summary.
20	Can this negative impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for certain groups on the basis of protected characteristics? Please provide your answer opposite against the relevant protected characteristic.	Y	N	Race: Sex: Disability: Sexual orientation: Age: Gender reassignment: Pregnancy and maternity: Marriage and civil partnership: Religious belief:
21	How will you mitigate any potential discrimination that may be brought about by your policy or project that you have identified above?	The Damp and mould policy has several measures included to ensure there are no negative consequences of its implementation. The policy will be monitored and reviewed every 2 years. Contractors are required to comply with the council's safeguarding policy when carrying out jobs and work within the Contractors Code of Conduct. All staff receive equality and diversity training.		
22	Do any negative impacts that you have identified above impact on your service plan?	Y	N	

Signed by completing officer	Gilly Knight
Signed by lead officer	Karen Thorburn