



Damp and Mould update

Trafford Council – Scrutiny Committee
20th September 2023

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Agenda
discussion
points

1. Our initial response and approach
2. How we identify and monitor damp and mould within our homes.
3. Dealing with issues once identified.
4. Supporting customers and recognising diverse needs.
5. Retrofitting our housing stock.

Our initial response & approach

- In response to the inquest finding, Task and Finish Group set up and overseen by the Executive.
- Developed new damp and mould policy and procedure with customers, plus training and support for colleagues.
- Responded to the Regulator of Social Housing's request for information on our approach to tackling damp and mould.
- Completed a self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsmen's Spotlight on damp and mould report.
- Developed specific reporting for damp and mould. This is reviewed and monitored by customers, our executive, and Board.
- Carried out an internal audit (PwC) plus our Resident Scrutiny Panel have carried out a review of our approach.
- Our CEO chairs the Greater Manchester Housing Providers Partnership (GMHP) damp and mould workstream - sharing best practice and developing a shared action plan.
- Through GMHP we are also involved in the development of the GHCA Good Landlord Charter and it's adoption across the city region.

How we identify & monitor damp & mould within our housing stock

Targeted stock condition survey, currently exceeding 40% of homes, includes the Housing Health, safety rating system.

Rolling programme of stock condition surveys, target to achieve a min of 60% by March 2024 and 100% by March 2025.

Investment in equipment and training for colleagues (circa £20k), to ensure we have the skills and capability to manage this inhouse.

Recruited additional property inspectors and trade staff who are trained to carry out Housing Health and Safety Rating Systems assessments.

Scripts for our customer teams to help them prioritise damp and mould cases as they are received.

Identify issues through service requests such as our housing transfer list, tenancy sustainment support and financial inclusion - where related issues such as overcrowding, and fuel poverty can increase the risk.

All colleagues who visit customers are trained to identify concerns around customers wellbeing, damp, and mould and how to arrange action to address this.

After every visit, colleagues are required to report any concerns via an app on their mobile device, which triggers action(s) for an inspection, or a support visit.

Dealing with known issues.

Awarded grant funding from the SHQF. Currently mobilizing programme of works commencing in Sept.

All reports or contact mentioning damp or mould triggers an inspection.

Assessment conducted by our in-house property inspectors and housing officers, so we consider property condition and customer's needs.

Aim to inspect within 10 working days and complete any works within 28 working days. For urgent repairs, we aim to complete these within 10 working days.

Once work is complete, customer get a survey asking them how the repair was - any dissatisfaction is picked up and passed to manager

12-month automated reminder to re-visit homes where we have treated mould, to ensure the problem has stayed fixed.

Supporting customers & recognising diverse needs

Regularly contact all customers with specific damp and mould communications that have been developed with customers. Multichannel approach.

Use customer census data to ensure information is accessible, including using online accessibility tools, language translations, and distributing page magnifiers.

Published case studies to make messages meaningful and dispel misconceptions i.e. highlighting how little it costs to run an extractor fan.

Established skills and competences for key colleagues along with new processes, management information and reporting.

Cost of living support fund set up to support customer experiencing financial hardship with measures to help prevent damp and mould – fuel, furniture, floor and window coverings.

In quarter one this year we have supported 195 customers with financial inclusion, maximised customers income to the value of £56,277, and provided over £5700 of support in relation to food, fuel, and furniture.

Retrofitting our housing stock

- Asset Management Strategy sets out our strategic approach to investing in the quality, safety and sustainability of our homes.
- Specific focus on how we will work towards Net Zero Carbon (NZC) – EPC C, fuel efficiency, fabric first, trialling and monitoring new technology, and attracting external funding.
- Average EPC of homes in Trafford is 66.5, high D.
- Some of blocks, which are predominantly electrically heated, are E – currently assessing funding options for alternative heating and improved insulation (ECO4).
- Eco trial - 1 Chepstow Avenue and 33 Epsom Avenue -improved insulation and Wykamol/Iso-therm insulation fitted to the inside of the brick faced section, air source heat pump, solar PV, window sealing – air tightness.
- Reviewing approach during void works in relation to air tightness and low level works.

Sale West Regeneration

- £50 million regeneration project 2020-30.
- 263 high quality new affordable homes for rent and sale.
- c£7m investment in 1,100 existing homes - new kitchens, fencing, roofs, parking areas.
- New roads, pedestrian links and cycle ways.
- High quality public realm and including new and improved play areas.
- Investment in community projects and initiatives to meet local needs and create opportunities for residents.
- Economic mobility with jobs for local people, apprenticeships, skills and training.





Summary & questions

We are committed to ensuring our customers can live well in a safe, decent home.

We continue to track the development in Awaab Law and will reflect this in our development on our policies, processes and transformation works to ensure we continue to take a robust and effective approach.