

RSH - Assurance on addressing risks relating to damp and mould in tenants' homes

3. Please detail your approach to assessing the extent of damp and mould issues affecting your properties, including how you assess the prevalence of Category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards

Proactive approach

We assess the condition of all our homes using a 5-yearly rolling stock condition survey programme. By this method we ensure we do not rely on cloned data to inform our understanding of stock condition or investment needs.

Our in-house surveyors carry out a full HHSRS assessment as a core component of our stock condition surveys. During this inspection any instances of Category 1 and Category 2 hazards (including damp and mould) are recorded for resolution, as required under the Decent Homes standard.

Since April 2022, our surveys have also included the collection of damp and humidity readings to support our ability to identify potential damp and mould risks. This approach also provides longer term predictive data analytics and trend mapping across our portfolio of homes.

The HHSRS data and insight collected as part of the condition survey is recorded in our asset management system and any remedial repair work is scheduled for completion by our in-house Direct Labour Organisation (DLO).

We are developing an approach that piggybacks our annual gas servicing inspections, with gas engineers carrying out a high-level inspection and recording any instances of damp and mould, as part of our proactive approach to managing the issue.

Responsive approach

In addition to our proactive approach to stock condition, we also capture information regarding damp and mould through our responsive repairs and maintenance services. For example, we employ a team of property inspectors, who, together with our team of repairs managers, work on a more reactive basis to assess any instances of damp and mould evident in repairs enquiries or customer complaints.

4. In the context of the approach detailed in Q3, please provide details of your most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in your homes, including the prevalence of Category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards

Summary

As we operate a rolling 5-year assessment programme (proactive) we have reported here damp and mould hazards identified over the last 12 months..:

Total stock numbers (<i>to which decent homes applies: Dec 22</i>)	6,467
Total number Cat. 1 damp and mould hazards	6 (<i>including 1 works refusal</i>)
Total number Cat. 2 damp and mould hazards	142

Category 1 damp and mould hazards

We have uploaded detailed supporting information relating to the 6 Category 1 damp and mould hazards to NROSH+.

Category 2 damp and mould hazards

We have uploaded summary information relating to the 142 Category 2 damp and mould hazards to NROSH+.

RSH - Assurance on addressing risks relating to damp and mould in tenants' homes

5. Given the findings of the assessment outlined in Q4, please outline the actions you are taking to remedy any issues and hazards, and ensure that your homes meet the Decent Homes Standard

We have 6 Decent Homes failures, as indicated above. Where damp and mould hazards are identified, either through our 5 yearly assessment of stock condition, or through customer repairs enquiries, we take action as outlined below.

Following an assessment of the required remedial actions and working within our defined process for managing each case as summarised in question 6, repairs works are scheduled.

The delivery route varies based on the severity of the damp and mould hazards, and may be completed by our in house DLO, by specialist contractors or through existing planned improvement works programmes.

The type of work required to remedy is varied and is specific to each property. This can be due to a number of factors including, but not limited to, geography, property age, construction type and occupation levels. All the variables impact damp and mould and these are therefore not a universal set of factors. However, typically remedies includes:

- Improving insulation (cavity, roof, floor)
- Improving heating system (type, capacity, location)
- Improving ventilation (passive, mechanical)
- Preventing water ingress (roofs, latent repairs)
- Replacing / repairing windows (reducing condensation)
- Guidance on reducing moisture in the home

6. Please tell us how you ensure that individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents

We have a clear process in place, which has been shaped by customers, who we engaged to provide feedback on how we approach the management of damp and mould. A copy of this process map is provided as supporting information and has been uploaded to NROSH+, but is summarised below:

- Case management starts when a customer contact (telephone, email or in person) is made with a report of a damp and mould issue.
- Inbound contact is handled at the first point of contact by trained customer services staff, who record the repair enquiry and explain to the customer that contact will be made within 48 hours.
- Within 48 hours a repairs manager will contact the customer to gather more information and triage the issue, to determine the next appropriate course of action. At this point, photographs and other information are added to the case file.
- Where a visit is required (in most cases), a Property Inspector will attend the property at a mutually convenient time to inspect and assess the prevalence of damp and mould. This may involve taking moisture readings, assessing insulation, ventilation, and potential water ingress.
- A surveyor's report is prepared with recommendations for remedy, which are managed and completed through various operational delivery routes.

It is important to note that we have adopted a 'property failure first' approach to damp and mould. We mirror the Housing Ombudsman's expectations in our Complaints approach and actively ask customers when they contact us whether they would prefer their enquiry to be recorded as a complaint. In those situations, we ensure the complaints process runs in

RSH - Assurance on addressing risks relating to damp and mould in tenants' homes

parallel whilst dealing with the damp and mould issue. We manage each case individually, ensuring that we find a resolution that addresses both the customer's concerns, and treats the asset problem.

If we identified a Category 1 hazard, if the work is substantial or we feel that the hazard risk requires it we would liaise with the customer and seek to decant to another home.

As described in question 3, we use various data sets to intelligently analyse where we may have a broader property archetype issue, for example, type of construction or location. Using this we can proactively develop a bespoke plan to address a block or area where action is needed to prevent further cases.