

Questions 1 - 11

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

1.Please provide your registered provider code
L0026
2.Please provide your registered provider name
Broadland Housing Association Limited
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
<p>Our approach to damp and mould follows our internal processes and identifies various ways that this can be reported which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stock condition surveys• Customer reported concerns• Frontline staff or third party reported concerns <p>Dependant on the severity of the problem and method reported, this will be used to inform and determine the next appropriate course of action. When customers report their concerns via our contact centre, we will seek sufficient information to prioritise and process their enquiry accordingly.</p> <p>The assessment of damp and mould can range from low level condensation and advice and support through to instructing a full survey using our internal surveying team and commissioning any subsequent remedial system. In certain instances, we may appoint an external company who specialise in damp proofing or 'whole house' ventilation systems and we benefit from the guarantees provided.</p> <p>We use our internal categorisation for damp and mould which has been attached as a separate document for reference. This identifies the classification for all damp and mould assessments and records HHSRS, Decent Homes and our internal assessment criteria. Our broader approach helps us to understand which homes have been surveyed for damp and mould, to monitor underlying trends and identify homes using a more specific criteria for damp and mould.</p> <p>An example would include homes that have been surveyed and do not suffer from damp or mould or have very low levels of manageable condensation, mildew or mould, which we would expect to be managed by the tenants.</p> <p>The assessment of our homes is not limited to the property, as we also take into consideration any vulnerabilities of the occupants that may increase the level of risk. This may for example include respiratory health problems or mobility difficulties where assistance is required to clean the mould.</p>

Mould is the by-product of damp conditions and assessed under the following key headings:

- Penetrating damp
- Rising damp
- Water leak
- Condensation

Within the first three categories above, repair related works are scheduled to remedy the defect and once completed, will resolve the problem.

For condensation related mould, numerous factors are considered before concluding. This can also be understood within the separate assessment document provided.

Every property is assessed on its own merits as there can be various factors that contribute towards damp and mould which may be considered unique to the property.

We encourage our tenants who have reported or have suffered from damp and mould, to allow us to install a 'Switchee' smart thermostat. This has multiple benefits for our customers and includes the remote monitoring of the temperature and humidity levels in the property and identifies high risk properties to enable a more proactive approach to managing these cases.

The 'Switchee' thermostat also allows us to check in with tenants remotely so they can flag up if there has been any further issues of damp and mould since it had been dealt with by us.

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

Our assessment of damp and mould is a register that tracks damp and mould reported cases. This is reviewed weekly and enables us to identify the volume of homes suffering from damp and mould, with the aim of reducing all cases to our internal categorisation of level 4 and 5. In these instances, level 5 refers to free from mould, and level 4 reflects minor mould formation that does not require any further works by us. This information will remain recorded and may be required for further monitoring to prevent escalation in the future.

We currently have:

- 0 - HHSRS Category 1 Hazards
- 6 - HHSRS Category 2 Hazards, including one property we manage on behalf of another registered provider.

We reported four Category 1 hazards on 7th December at Brennan Bank, Norwich. These have now been resolved and the tenants have moved back into their 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

From the six category 2 hazards, five of the properties we own or lease. We also manage one property for another registered provider which is also classified as subject to a Category 2 hazard by our surveyors.

The current position regarding the five properties we own or under these categories had been summarised below.

- 1 property located within a sheltered housing scheme in Norwich called The Cedars, and three are in a general needs scheme in Norwich called Carlton Gardens. The tenant at The Cedars has moved to alternative accommodation in the same scheme whilst works are undertaken. The actual categorisation was borderline. The damp is being caused by a slow leaking radiator heating pipe under the floor. We have classified it as Category 2 as the tenant had underlying health issues.
- 3 properties located at Carlton Gardens, Norwich is a terrace, a row of terraces built in the mid to late 19th century, acquired and modernised by the Association in the late 1970s that now suffers from rising damp. We are working with the three tenants currently affected and arranging permanent moves for all of them.
These moves are likely to happen in early January. In the meantime, we are ensuring that any mould has been cleaned. It is likely that further basement flats in this building will soon be subject to similar problems. We are therefore planning works to all those homes where this is likely and will manage moves for further tenants into “repaired” homes within the block.
- 1 property we lease, located in Kings Lynn at Everard Mews, North Everard Street. It is part of a block of 10 flats and bedsits leased for a term of five years as move on accommodation as part of our urgent response to homelessness during the pandemic. The flat is currently not let due to the damp issues. We are not responsible under the lease for the remedial works, and we are currently in discussions with the freeholder, who is not currently inclined to fulfil their responsibilities.
- 1 property we manage is located in West Norfolk which we have categorised as subject to a Category 2 hazard which we manage on behalf of a social landlord not based locally. Our asset team are in discussion with their counterpart who has authorised us to complete the works to the required investment.

This is a property where the damp proof membrane has failed, and it will involve a decant for the resident for the works to be completed. We have agreed with the tenant a move in January to another home in the scheme which will become vacant. In the meantime, we have ensured that all mould has been cleaned off. There is no mould in neighbouring properties.

It is unlikely that any further properties will be classified as subject to either Category 1 or 2 hazards unless we have not yet been informed of the problem. Our own internal classification has three further “groups” and we are paying particular attention to any cases which have been classified as Category 3, to ensure that the situation has not changed.

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

As similarly detailed within question 3, referring to our approach to the assessment, each property is assessed on its individual merits.

Our internal classification will determine the severity and subsequent priority of any reported case and we encourage tenants reporting their concerns to us, to provide photographic evidence where possible that also helps to understand the extent of the problem and inform the next actions.

The Monitoring for damp and mould is assessed under two criteria. The first relating to the classification of the damp and mould from surveyed properties and the second, relating to the tracking of remedial repairs to completion.

Our Executive Team have sight of all our reported Damp and Mould cases through a PowerBI generated report which is automatically updated daily.

We are concerned about underheating in tenants’ homes this winter due to fuel poverty exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis. This is likely to lead to a significant increase in low level mould in homes. In some instances, the best way of dealing with the damp and mould categorised as levels 4 and 5, using our internal criteria, is to advise and support tenants to self-clean the mould rather than organising a visit by a member of our team. When we are aware of tenant vulnerabilities, we may arrange a visit to assist.

7.Please provide the name of the person in your organisation that we can contact with further queries:

Justin O'Connor

8.Please provide the job title of the person provided in Q7.

Assistant Asset Director

9.Please provide the email of the person provided in Q7.

Justin.oconnor@broadlandgroup.org

10.Please provide the phone number of the person provided in Q7.

Landline: 01603 750203

Mobile: 07808329410

11.Please confirm if you have uploaded additional document(s) to NROSH+

- ☒ I have uploaded additional document(s) to NROSH+ **
- ☐ I have NOT uploaded any additional documents to NROSH+