

**Nuneaton
&
Bedworth**



United to Achieve

Damp and Mould Policy

Regeneration & Housing

January 2023

POLICY MANAGEMENT

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy sets out the activities and responsibilities involved in the control of Damp and Mould within Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's repairs service. The Council aims to provide a consistently high-quality repairs and maintenance service for all our customers and to maintain our properties to provide a well-functioning and safe environment.

2.0 Objectives and Purpose

- 2.1 The overall aim of this policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective management of Damp and Mould of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's housing stock.
- 2.2 To provide an efficient, prompt, and cost-effective repairs and maintenance service, to ensure that the fabric of our properties are protected from deterioration and damage caused from Damp and Mould.
- 2.3 To adopt a data led, proactive approach to identify high demand, high risk areas for damp and mould within NBBC Housing Stock
- 2.4 To promote understanding of the Council's legal responsibilities and mutual obligations in relation to delivering the repairs and major works services.
- 2.5 To ensure the Council achieve high standards of workmanship and customer satisfaction.
- 2.6 To provide a service which reflects the Council's commitment to equality of access to the repairs and maintenance service for all customers.

3.0 Principles

- 3.1 The principles of this policy are:
- To provide dry, warm, and healthy homes for tenants.
 - That all tenants, leaseholders, and stakeholders are involved and consulted in the development of the service and its operational procedures.
 - That through supervision, monitoring and feedback from tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders, the service is continuously improved.
 - That communication with tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders is clear, appropriate, easily understood and in certain circumstances fulfils our legislative requirements.
 - That the repairs service is supported by relevant training for operational staff; and that the Policy should be supported by detailed procedures and agreed practices applied uniformly across the Regeneration & Housing Directorate.
- 3.2 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will utilise both the in-house repairs and maintenance team and external contractors to fulfil its needs and obligations in delivering this service.
- 3.3 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will ensure that Value for Money and procurement tender regulations are adhered to.

4.0 Legislation

4.1 The following is a list of the current legislation that is applicable to this policy:

- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Procurement Regulations
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994
- Building Regulations
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Housing Acts 1985 & 1996
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Rating System
BS7671 - Requirements for electrical installations 2008 (17th Edition)
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

5.0 Equalities

5.1 All Council policies aim to address the general duty of the Public Sector Equality Duty (A requirement on Public Bodies within the Equality Act 2010) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and foster good relations between people from different groups.
- We will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements and with best practice relating to the provision of this service, treating tenants in a fair and non-discriminatory way, in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010.

6.0 Damp and Mould Responsive Repairs

6.1 Damp and Mould responsive repairs are defined in this Policy as requests which are received by the customer or employee, where the defect has been identified.

6.2 On report of a defect we will:

- Complete a property inspection, this may include taking damp and humidity measurements, we will aim to complete this within 5 working days from the initial report.
- We will evaluate the results of the inspection and identify any factors that may lead to damp and mould growth to establish the cause of the problem.

- If the outcome of the inspection shows that condensation is causing the problem, we will liaise with the tenant and evaluate what mitigations we can put in place to support tenants. This will include support to tenants with regards to heating and ventilating their home, if fuel poverty is identified as a factor then we will offer support through Tenancy Support Officers and Financial Inclusion Support Officers.
- If damp is found to be present, we will carry out repair works to areas that are the responsibility of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. Where this requires complex works, we will keep tenants informed of actions being taken to bring about an effective solution.
- Where extensive works are required, the Council may be required to move the tenants out of their home for a period whilst these works are completed.
- Provide tenants with a Damp and Mould information leaflet to support them in avoiding damp and mould in their properties.

7.0 Tenant's Responsibilities

- 7.1 Tenants are responsible for any redecoration following repair works carried out for damp and mould issues.
- 7.2 Support and advice is available to tenants by contacting Property Services Repairs Hub who will arrange an appointment with a Projects Officer.

Information is also available via our website; www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk and from our leaflet "**Condensation & Mould, Advice & Guidance for Tenants**" available from Property Services Officers, Tenancy Management Officers or at the Town Hall.

8.0 The Councils Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Council is responsible for maintaining the property to avoid penetrating and rising damp. The Council is responsible for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
- 8.2 The Council is responsible for insulating the property in accordance with the Decent Homes Standard.
- 8.3 The Council are responsible for the repair and maintenance to the structure of all its blocks of flats and maisonettes. Where reactive repairs or major works are identified to the structure or communal areas at the block, leaseholders who reside within the block, will be contacted by the Council. They will then be consulted in accordance with the Section 20 consultation procedures in instances where the individual leaseholder contribution cost will be in excess of £250.00.

9.0 Training

- 9.1 We will ensure that all our staff and contractors have training to raise awareness and create a good understanding of this policy.
- 9.2 We will ensure that all our staff, other relevant Council staff (visiting Officers) and contractors have training to raise awareness of and create a good understanding of damp and mould issues, related issues (i.e., health), cases and measures to combat these
- 9.3 We will understand our stock, archetypes and components of properties that are likely to suffer from damp and mould
- 9.4 We will provide our Officers with equipment to assess damp in properties and find resolution to the problem if it is our responsibility

10.0 Right to Repair

- 10.1 The Council will operate within the statutory requirements of the 'Right to Repair Scheme' offering appointments to accommodate the tenant needs, however ensuring attendances are met within the prescribed right to repair guidelines.
- 10.2 If the Council fails to carry out the qualifying repair within the set timescale, the tenant may be entitled to compensation and request that an alternative contractor is utilised by the Council.
- 10.3 The 'Right to Repair scheme only covers small, urgent or routine repairs costing up to £250 which are likely to jeopardise the health or safety of the tenant.

11.0 Rechargeable Works

- 11.1 Any repairs required to the property caused by wilful actions or as a result of neglect and cannot be classed as fair wear and tear, will be charged for by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council in accordance with the Recharge Policy.

12.0 Contents Insurance

- 12.1 The Council actively encourages tenants to take out household contents insurance to include the Landlords fixtures and fittings. The Council operate an insurance scheme that will cover the tenant for accidental damage, floods, and fire. Details of the scheme can be obtained from a Housing Officer, calling Thistle Tenant Risks on telephone number 03454507286 or alternatively visit www.crystal-insurance.co.uk.

13.0 Performance Monitoring

- 13.1 To ensure that the Council obtains ongoing value for money and is continually monitoring the service delivery, the housing service will monitor completion of works by reporting on the following Key Performance Indicators (KPI's):
- 13.2 The quality of the works carried out, usually collated by Tenants' Satisfaction responses (via Trade Officer obtaining feedback during their post inspection visit)
- 13.3 KPI monitoring information is usually presented at Senior Management Team or Contractor Operational Meetings where the Residents Partnership will also be involved with this performance monitoring.

14.0 Complaints

- 14.1 If a tenant or leaseholder is not satisfied by the way in which their repair has been dealt with, or in the way in which the work has been carried out, a formal complaint may be raised.
- 14.2 Complaints can be made in the following ways:
- Via the Councils website www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk
 - By emailing Customer Services at customer.services@nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk
 - By letter
 - In person at the Town Hall
- 14.3 Complaints will be given a unique complaint number, this will help track progress of your complaint.
- 14.4 Matters should be resolved as soon as possible and within 10 days of the acknowledgement; for complex cases this may be extended for a further 10 working days. If matters cannot be resolved within the maximum timescale of 20 working days, we will contact the complainant to let them know of the delay and advise when we will be able to respond by.
- 14.5 The Housing Ombudsman can also be contacted any at point to offer free, impartial advice to tenants and leaseholders. The Council will advise tenants and leaseholders of the Housing Ombudsman's contact details in all regular and other correspondence. Their contact details are as follows:

www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Or you can write to them at:

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 152
Liverpool L33 7WQ

15. Review Date

- 15.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or when a change in Legislation is received.
- 15.2 This Policy should be read in-conjunction with the Repairs and Major Works Policy, Tenancy Agreement and Rechargeable Repairs.