



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
PARTNERSHIP HOMES

Damp, Mould and, Condensation Policy



February 2026

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THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH:
<p>1. Repairs Policy</p>

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1.0 Purpose and Context

In October 2021, the Housing Ombudsman issued a "Spotlight on Damp, Mould and Condensation", highlighting the approach they expect social landlords to take when dealing with tenants who complain about damp to them.

Critical Update - Awaab's Law Implementation: Following the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak in December 2020, the UK Government introduced Awaab's Law as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 come into force on 27 October 2025, requiring social landlords to address damp, mould and emergency hazards within mandatory timescales.

The Housing Ombudsman has been adopting a more proactive approach to dealing with tenant complaints and in line with Government direction is working much more closely with the Regulator for Social Housing in preparation for new legislation being brought by the Government, based on the Social Housing White Paper.

Studies estimate that in the UK between 10-50% of homes are affected by damp. Social housing and low-income communities where there is often overcrowding, lack of appropriate heating, ventilation and insulation can experience a substantially higher proportion of damp, mould and condensation than the national average.

NPH tenants could fall into either or both of the above criteria which increase the likelihood of living in a home which suffers from damp, mould, and condensation.

Sufficient evidence has been found to link exposure to indoor mould with upper respiratory tract symptoms, coughing, and wheezing in otherwise healthy people. Also, the numbers of dust mites are elevated by damp indoor environments; dust mites affect allergies and asthma. Studies have shown that dampness and mould are associated with approximately 30-50% increases in respiratory and asthma related health outcomes.

We want to ensure that our residents have warm, safe, and healthy homes to live in. A more purposeful approach to the prevention, treatment and remediation of these issues will benefit our tenants and ensure compliance with Awaab's Law requirements.

2.0 The Environment in Northampton

Northamptonshire Partnership Homes (NPH) manages West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) housing portfolio of around 11,500 social rent properties and just under 1,000 leasehold properties. Our Property Maintenance and Asset Management teams includes experienced and qualified surveyors and repairs managers working across Responsive Repairs, Empty Homes Management, Planned Maintenance and Asset Management.



The housing stock is generally traditional; large estates were built by the housing corporation following the Second World War, with another major building boom in the 1960s and 1970s.

NPH has been at the forefront of innovative energy efficient construction, having been successful in a bid for Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding (SHDF). This initiative will continue through the provision of wave 2 funding.

Working in partnership with WNC, we will continue to work to the provision of a joined-up approach to managing issues with damp, mould, and condensation within Northamptonshire in full compliance with Awaab's Law requirements.

3.0 Policy Statement and Approach

Our Approach to Managing damp, mould, and condensation

We commit to:

- Provide and maintain a comfortable, warm, and healthy home, free from damp, mould, and disrepair for our residents.
- Comply with all requirements of Awaab's Law including mandatory timescales for investigation, making properties safe, and completion of remedial works.
- Adopt a person-centred approach to risk assessment, considering tenant vulnerabilities and circumstances when assessing hazards.
- Implement emergency response procedures to address hazards presenting imminent and significant risk of harm within 24 hours.
- Recognise that having mould issues in a home can be distressing for our residents and ensure we are supportive in our approach.
- Never attribute damp and mould issues to tenant 'lifestyle' choices - we take full responsibility for investigating and addressing all reported hazards.
- Work in partnership with our residents and other stakeholders to resolve and understand how to reduce condensation, damp, and mould issues.
- Ensure our stock meets and complies with decency standards where access is provided to undertake such works.
- Maintain detailed records of all investigations, communications, and remedial works to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements.
- Where a property is considered uninhabitable or cannot be made safe within prescribed timescales, we will move the residents to suitable alternative accommodation at our expense.
- Provide all visiting officers with the skills to identify and differentiate between signs of damp, mould, and condensation and understand the causes, impacts on residents and potential remedies.



4.0 Relevant Legislation, Policy, and Regulatory Compliance

We will ensure that we carry out damp, mould, and condensation services in accordance with best practice and relevant policy and legislation, including the following:

A) Awaab's Law - Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025

With effect from 27 October 2025, these regulations require social landlords to:

- Investigate potential hazards within 10 working days
- Provide written summary to tenants within 3 working days of investigation completion
- Address emergency hazards within 24 hours
- Make properties safe within 5 working days if significant risk identified
- Begin supplementary works within 12 weeks (long-stop provision)

B) Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

Introduces Awaab's Law and strengthens regulatory oversight of social housing providers.

C) Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Section 11

We are responsible for:

- Maintaining the structure and exterior of the property
- Keeping installations for utilities in good repair and proper working order
- Keeping heating and water heating installations in good repair

D) Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Person-Centred Approach: Under Awaab's Law, we adopt a person-centred approach considering tenant circumstances, meaning hazards don't need to be Category 1 under HHSRS to trigger mandatory action.

E) The Decent Homes Standard

For a home to be considered 'decent' it must:

- Meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- Be in a reasonable state of repair
- Have reasonably modern facilities and services
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort



F) The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

Requires properties to be fit for human habitation throughout the tenancy, including being free from damp and mould hazards.

5.0 Common causes of damp, mould and condensation in our properties

The most common causes of damp, mould and condensation within our properties are listed below:

- Cold Bridging
- Blocked or inadequate ventilation
- Failure to adequately dry properties following leaks
- Finlock gutters and defective rainwater goods
- Inadequate heating systems
- Bridging damp from render systems
- Lack of pointing on brickwork
- Penetrating damp from render systems
- Fuel poverty preventing adequate heating

Important Note: We do not attribute damp and mould to tenant lifestyle choices. All reports are investigated as potential structural or building-related issues requiring our intervention.

We commit to finding the root cause of any damp, mould or condensation issues, and will continue our investigations and remedial works until issues are no longer present. As part of this process, we will continually monitor recurring cases of damp, mould and condensation to help us identify any trends within our stock portfolio that could be a contributing factor (such as architect type).

6.0 Areas of Responsibility and Delivery

6.1 Tenant's Responsibilities

While we take full responsibility for investigating and addressing all damp and mould issues, residents can help by:

- Reporting issues promptly using our multiple reporting channels
- Providing access for investigations and remedial works
- Following advice on temporary measures while works are completed
- Maintaining reasonable ventilation where safe and possible to do so

6.2 NPH Responsibilities

NPH are responsible for:

- Complying with all Awaab's Law requirements and timescales



- Conducting person-centred risk assessments considering tenant vulnerabilities
- Investigating all reported hazards within 10 working days
- Addressing emergency hazards within 24 hours
- Providing written investigation summaries within 3 working days
- Making properties safe within 5 working days if significant risk identified
- Insulating homes in accordance with the Decent Homes Standard
- Providing efficient heating systems
- Maintaining properties to avoid penetrating and rising damp
- Professional drying following major leaks
- Moving tenants to alternative accommodation when properties cannot be made safe within prescribed timescales

6.3 Training and Competency Requirements

NPH will ensure:

- All staff (including contractors) understand Awaab's Law requirements and person-centred risk assessment
- Staff (including contractors) can identify and differentiate between types of damp, mould, and condensation
- Competent investigators are available to assess hazards
- Regular refresher training on HHSRS hazards and regulatory requirements
- Clear escalation procedures for emergency situations

6.4 Responding to Reports - Updated Procedures

Phase 1: Initial Response and Triage

Day 0 - Report Received:

- All reports logged within 2 hours during office hours
- Initial triage to determine if emergency hazard (requiring 24-hour response)
- Person-centred risk assessment considering tenant vulnerabilities
- Appointment arranged for investigation within 10 working days

Emergency Hazard Response (0-24 hours):

- Immediate safety assessment
- Temporary measures implemented to make property safe
- Resident relocated if property cannot be made safe
- Full investigation and permanent remediation planning

Phase 2: Investigation (Within 10 Working Days)

Day 1-10:

- Competent investigator conducts comprehensive assessment
- Person-centred risk evaluation considering:



- Tenant age, health conditions, and vulnerabilities
- Extent and type of hazard
- Immediate and long-term health implications
- Identification of root causes
- Assessment of remedial works required

Phase 3: Communication (Within 3 Working Days of Investigation)

Day 11-13:

- Written summary provided to tenant including:
 - Investigation findings
 - Identified hazards and risk assessment
 - Proposed remedial works and timescales
 - Temporary measures if required
 - Contact details for queries
- Please note that if the issue has been fully resolved within 3 working days, written communication is not required).

Phase 4: Remediation

Significant Risk Properties (Within 5 Working Days):

- Property made safe using temporary measures if necessary
- Resident moved to alternative accommodation if property cannot be made safe
- Permanent remedial works commenced

Long-Stop Provision (12 Weeks Maximum):

- All supplementary works to begin within 12 weeks
- Alternative accommodation provided if works cannot be completed
- Regular progress updates to tenants

Phase 5: Follow-Up

- Follow-up inspection 2 months after completion
- 3-month review to ensure effectiveness of solution
- Tenant satisfaction survey

7.0 Emergency Response Procedures

7.1 Definition of Emergency Hazards

An emergency hazard presents "an imminent and significant risk of harm to the health or safety of the tenant" requiring action within 24 hours. Examples include:

- **Damp and mould:** Prevalent conditions affecting ability to breathe
- **Structural:** Immediate collapse risk



- **Utilities:** Gas leaks, electrical hazards, loss of water supply
- **Security:** Broken external doors/windows affecting home security
- **Heating:** Complete heating failure in vulnerable households during cold weather

7.2 Emergency Response Protocol

0-2 Hours:

- Initial assessment and immediate safety measures
- Resident safety prioritized - evacuation if necessary
- Emergency services contacted if life-threatening

2-24 Hours:

- Detailed investigation by competent person
- Temporary repairs or alternative accommodation arranged
- Written confirmation of actions taken sent to tenant

24+ Hours:

- Permanent solution planning and implementation
- Regular updates to tenant on progress
- Formal investigation report completed

7.3 Out-of-Hours Emergency Procedures

- 24/7 emergency contact number available
- Trained emergency response team
- Authority to arrange immediate alternative accommodation
- Clear escalation procedures to senior management

Please refer to our Repairs Policy for further detail about our approach to emergency hazards within our homes.

8.0 Communications

At NPH we listen to our residents and their needs. We communicate with residents about damp problems whether they are based on structural issues or whether we need to support tenants to live more comfortably within their homes.

To ensure that our approach to damp, mould and condensation is accessible to all our residents, we have multiple reporting channels.

Multiple Reporting Channels:

- Online portal with appointment scheduling
- Telephone reporting (24/7 emergency line)



- In-person at the One-Stop Shop
- Housing & Rent officer visits/NPH Staff/Contractor visits
- Social media channels
- Email reporting
- Website
- Community Hubs/Engagement Cafe

Awaab's Law Communication Requirements:

- Written summaries within 3 working days of investigation
- Regular progress updates during remediation
- Clear explanation of tenant rights and complaint procedures
- Proactive communication about preventative measures

We will ensure that written summaries are available in different languages and formats as required, and we will confirm preferred communication preferences so we can effectively keep our residents informed throughout the process.

We have developed a comprehensive customer relations management system and refined complaints handling processes to adhere to the Ombudsman's guidance, encouraging feedback to assist in organizational learning.

9.0 Technology

Where appropriate, NPH can deploy technology to identify, predict, and prevent damp, mould and condensation issues with our homes. This could include:

- **Environmental Monitoring:** Sensors monitoring temperature, humidity, and movement
- **Data Analytics:** Dashboard systems for early hazard identification
- **Stock Condition Surveys:** Full data intelligence through comprehensive surveys
- **Compliance Management:** HHSRS risk management systems
- **Record Keeping:** Comprehensive documentation systems for Awaab's Law compliance

Technology helps us identify whether problems relate to property defects or support needs, enabling targeted interventions and fuel poverty assistance.

10. Review Date

Next Review: August 2026 or following any changes to government guidance/legislation.

Continuous Monitoring: This policy will be reviewed following implementation of Awaab's Law Phase 2 (2026) and Phase 3 (2027) extensions.



Appendices

Appendix A: Awaab's Law Compliance Flowchart

REPORT RECEIVED

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EMERGENCY TRIAGE (2 hours)

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Emergency Hazard? → YES → 24 HOUR RESPONSE

↓ NO

INVESTIGATION (10 working days)

↓

WRITTEN SUMMARY (3 working days)

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Significant Risk? → YES → MAKE SAFE (5 working days)

↓ NO

REMEDIAL WORKS

↓

POST INSPECTION (2 months)

Appendix B: Person-Centred Risk Assessment Matrix

Hazard Level	Tenant Vulnerability	Action Required	Timescale
High	High (age/health)	Emergency response	24 hours
High	Medium	Significant hazard protocol	5 working days
Medium	High (age/health)	Significant hazard protocol	5 working days
Medium	Medium	Standard remediation	Reasonable time
Low	Any	Preventative measures	Planned works

Appendix C: Supporting Documents

C.1 Assessment and Investigation Forms

Document C.1.1: Initial Hazard Report Form

- Tenant details and vulnerability assessment
- Hazard description and location
- Initial risk triage
- Emergency action required (Y/N)
- Investigation appointment details



Document C.1.2: Competent Person Investigation Report

- Property inspection findings
- Hazard identification using HHSRS categories
- Person-centred risk assessment
- Root cause analysis
- Remedial works specification
- Risk level determination
- Temporary measures required

Document C.1.3: Written Summary Template for Tenants

- Investigation findings in plain English
- Hazard explanation and health implications
- Proposed works and timescales
- Temporary accommodation if required
- Contact details and complaint procedures
- Tenant rights under Awaab's Law

C.2 Training Documentation

Document C.2.1: Awaab's Law Training Module

- Legislative requirements and timescales
- Person-centred risk assessment approach
- Emergency hazard identification
- Investigation procedures
- Record keeping requirements
- Competency assessment test

Document C.2.2: HHSRS Hazard Identification Guide

- All 29 HHSRS hazards with examples
- Damp and mould hazard specifics
- Assessment criteria and scoring
- Person-centred considerations
- Vulnerability factors

Document C.2.3: Emergency Response Training

- 24-hour response procedures
- Safety prioritization protocols
- Temporary accommodation arrangements
- Out-of-hours escalation procedures
- Communication requirements

C.3 Operational Procedures



Document C.3.1: Emergency Response Procedure

- Initial response checklist (0-2 hours)
- Investigation requirements (2-24 hours)
- Temporary accommodation protocol
- Health and safety priorities
- Record keeping during emergencies

Document C.3.2: Decanting Policy and Procedures

- Triggers for alternative accommodation
- Suitable accommodation standards
- Cost coverage and duration
- Tenant support during moving to alternative accommodation
- Return arrangements post-completion

Document C.3.3: Competent Person Appointment Criteria

- Minimum qualifications required
- Experience and training standards
- Ongoing competency requirements
- Quality assurance procedures
- External contractor requirements

C.4 Record Keeping Templates

Document C.4.1: Compliance Monitoring Log

- Case reference and timeline tracking
- Key milestone dates and compliance
- Communication record with tenants
- Contractor correspondence
- Exception reporting for delays

Document C.4.2: Reasonable Endeavours Documentation

- Detailed record of all compliance attempts
- Barriers encountered and mitigation efforts
- Evidence of resource deployment
- Third-party delays and communications
- Legal defence preparation notes

Document C.4.3: Tenant Communication Log

- All correspondence with tenants
- Phone call records and outcomes
- Appointment arrangements and attendance
- Progress updates provided



- Complaint handling records

C.5 Quality Assurance Documents

Document C.5.1: Investigation Quality Checklist

- Completeness of assessment
- Person-centred approach verification
- Technical accuracy review
- Communication clarity assessment
- Timescale compliance check

Document C.5.2: Post-Completion Review Form

- Effectiveness of remedial works
- Tenant satisfaction assessment
- Lessons learned capture
- Process improvement recommendations
- Follow-up scheduling

Document C.5.3: Performance Monitoring Dashboard

- Compliance with timescales (by category)
- Emergency response performance
- Investigation quality metrics
- Tenant satisfaction scores
- Cost per case analysis

C.6 Legal and Regulatory Documents

Document C.6.1: Awaab's Law Legal Requirements Checklist

- Mandatory timescale compliance
- Written summary requirements
- Record keeping obligations
- Tenant rights and remedies
- Defence preparation requirements

Document C.6.2: Pre-Action Protocol Compliance

- Early notification requirements
- Alternative dispute resolution
- Documentation standards
- Expert evidence preparation
- Settlement consideration framework

Document C.6.3: Regulatory Reporting Templates



- Housing Ombudsman notifications
- Regulator of Social Housing reports
- Local authority liaison records
- RIDDOR reporting where applicable
- Performance data submissions

C.7 Staff Resources and Guidance

Document C.7.1: Quick Reference Guide for Frontline Staff

- Emergency hazard identification
- Initial response requirements
- Escalation procedures
- Tenant communication scripts
- Key contact numbers

Document C.7.2: Manager's Implementation Guide

- Resource allocation planning
- Staff training schedules
- Performance monitoring
- Budget implications
- Risk management

Document C.7.3: Contractor Requirements Specification

- Awaab's Law compliance obligations
- Response time requirements
- Quality standards expected
- Reporting and documentation needs
- Performance indicators and penalties

C.8 Tenant Information Materials

Document C.8.1: Tenant Guide to Awaab's Law Rights

- What tenants can expect
- Timescales for NPH response
- Emergency contact procedures
- Complaint and legal remedies
- Support available during works

Document C.8.2: Damp and Mould Prevention Advice

- Understanding different types of damp
- When to report concerns
- Temporary measures while awaiting repairs
- Health implications and NHS support



- Energy efficiency and fuel poverty assistance

Document C.8.3: Alternative Accommodation Information

- When alternative accommodation may be necessary
- Standards of temporary accommodation
- What NPH will cover financially
- How to arrange return to property
- Support available during displacement

