

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

Date of Meeting: 23rd September 2025

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date of Meeting: 14th October 2025

Report of: Strategic Director of Operations

Title: Housing Damp & Condensation Policy 2025-2030

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Council

1. What is the report about?

1.1 The report summarises the new Housing Damp & Condensation Policy 2025-2030. It is proposed that the revised Policy be adopted and implemented. A copy of the Policy document is appended.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 That Executive recommends that Council approve the adoption of the new Housing Damp & Condensation Policy for the period 2025-2030.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

3.1 The adoption of a new Damp & Condensation Policy is necessary to ensure Exeter City Council meets its statutory obligations under Awaab's Law & the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

3.2 Adoption of the Policy will provide a consistent framework for staff & contractors, ensuring accountability, transparency & effective performance monitoring.

4. What are the resource implications including non- financial resources

4.1 Implementation of the policy will require all front-line staff & contractors visiting Council Properties to have a heightened awareness of damp & condensation. There will also be a requirement for all relevant staff to have mandatory training on the Policy, including identifying damp & condensation & equality considerations.

4.2 Resource required for implementing this policy will be met from existing budgetary & staffing resources however, should there be an increase in demand or the need for change a further paper will be brought forward.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

5.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the cost of addressing damp and mould issues in council housing has an impact on the Repairs and Maintenance programme. This is subject to close monitoring, and any budgetary issues will be reported to Members as part of the quarterly HRA budget monitoring reports or the annual budget setting cycle.

6. What are the legal aspects?

6.1 Social housing is regulated under section 59 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. This includes regulation of local authority providers of social housing. Following tragedies such as the Grenfell Tower disaster and the death of Awaab Ishak among others, concerns were raised about the powers available to the Regulator of Social Housing to regulate and enforce housing standards in relation to both private and local authority providers. As a result, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 (SH(R)A 2023) was introduced by parliament and received royal assent on 20 July 2023. The general provisions of the act came into force on 20 September 2023. Section 42 of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced a new section 10A into the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 which creates the substantive 'Awaab's law'. Subsequently, secondary regulations, the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, were laid before parliament (known as 'Awaab's law' regulations). The regulations come into force on 27 October 2025. From the date that the regulations come into force, social landlords must investigate and address dangerous damp and mould hazards presenting a significant risk to tenants within set time periods and to repair all emergency hazards within 24 hours. The aim is to ensure safer living conditions for tenants and improve accountability among social landlords. Failure to comply with the statutory provisions places social landlords at the risk of prosecution and financial penalties.

6.2 The implementation of Awaab's Law is part of broader reforms to strengthen the regulation of social housing in England. These reforms include enhancing the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to enforce housing standards and hold landlords accountable for providing safe and quality housing.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

7.1 Members will note the legal aspects above. The Monitoring Officer has no additional comments.

8. Report details:

8.1 The policy is designed to demonstrate how we manage damp, condensation, and mould in council housing.

8.2 It incorporates recommendations from the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman and aims to support the existing Repairs & Maintenance Policy.

8.3 The policy ensures fair and consistent treatment of tenants experiencing damp and mould issues. It emphasises a proactive approach to identifying and addressing these issues, moving away from attributing them to tenant lifestyle.

8.4 Our actions are detailed within the policy and there is a detailed procedure developed with staff. These include:

- Visiting homes promptly following reports of damp/mould issues within set timescales;
- Assessment of the severity and risk;
- Investigation into the causes of damp and mould and reports produced;
- Undertaking the best solution for the individual issue including the installation of energy-efficient ventilation systems;
- Provision of information on managing humidity and ventilation to tenants;
- Training for staff on recognising and handling damp and mould issues;
- Follow up with tenants to ensure issues are resolved;

8.5 The policy details our obligations to our tenants and leaseholders and sets out how we will collect and report on key performance data.

8.6 This policy has been taken to the Council Housing and Development Advisory Board (CHADAB), our Tenants' Voice group and suggestions made by these have been evaluated then incorporated into the definitive version. It has also been taken to the Senior Management Board for their review.

8.7 As it is purely departmental and follows the guidelines as set out by the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator for Social Housing, it is not a requirement for this policy that further, public consultation is necessary.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

9.1 One of the intended outcomes under the 'Homes' section refers to

'Better quality, energy efficient and more affordable homes to buy or rent.'

Any work that improves our Council homes contributes to this outcome.

Under the 'A Well Run Council' section one of the outcomes is

'Effective investment and maintenance programmes for our assets that underpins our business'

9.2 Repairs and maintenance of our Council owned homes contributes to this.

9.3 One of the service delivery measures is 'improvements in tenant satisfaction rates'. The delivery of this policy should ensure that we receive fewer complaints about damp & condensation, which should lead to having a more satisfied tenants.

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

There is a reputational risk of not having this policy

11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

12.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

13. Are there any other options?

13.1 The law requires us to have a policy in place.

Director: Strategic Director of Operations

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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

1. [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK](#)

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