

## West Suffolk's action plan for damp and mould

|    | Action  | Update   |
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| 1. | A review of our processes and systems to ensure the correct level of resource is available to carry out the functions of the team.  | Complete   |
| 2. | Upgrade to the database and self-serve capacity for customers that will enable officers to focus on proactive enforcement work.   | <p>Advice on damp, mould and condensation is available on our <a href="#">Damp, condensation and mould</a> webpage.</p> <p>The self-service functionality that will give tenants another option to submit concerns or complaints to the Private Sector Housing and Environmental Health Team is progressing.</p> |
| 3. | Plans to undertake a stock condition survey as part of a Suffolk-wide Housing Enforcement Pathfinder bid. The results of this survey will provide us with targeted data to enable effective policies to be put in place for inspection/enforcement to improve the private rented sector. Where the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) score reveals higher-end category 2 hazard, then action will be taken to reduce the hazard using the powers contained within part one of the Housing Act 2004. | As part of the Suffolk-wide pathfinder, a provider has been commissioned to undertake the stock condition survey that is planned for March 2024. This will be used to target areas of concern and to inform our policy and resourcing to raise standards in the private rented sector across West Suffolk.       |
| 4. | We already proactively target properties that do not comply with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES), where damp and mould is more likely due to poor energy efficiency. We are working in partnership with other Suffolk local authorities to identify properties in the private rented sector with the lowest Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), (that being a rating of F or G). We are actively engaging with landlords to increase these ratings because improving energy                           | Ongoing  |

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| <p>efficiency of buildings results in warmer homes which helps to mitigate issues of damp and mould. This project will also help inform our approach to improving compliance with MEES.</p>                      |   |
| <p>5. Preparing a bid across Suffolk to supplement private rented housing enforcement with the key objective of improving communication with hard to reach tenants and improve intelligence led enforcement.</p> | <p>The <a href="#">Safe Suffolk Renters</a> project was launched on 26 May 2023 following a successful bid to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities. A marketing and communications strategy has been developed to target hard to reach tenants. A tenant liaison officer and a landlord liaison officer have been recruited to engage and empower these two groups.</p> <p>In partnership with the University of East Anglia a study is being undertaken to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better understand the lived experience of tenants and landlords</li> <li>• inform a better understanding of housing within the private rented sector</li> <li>• what works for tenants, residents and landlords in improving the quality of housing stock</li> <li>• improve engagement and policy.</li> </ul> <p>A webpage has been developed to provide information and resources for tenants and landlords to identify and resolve damp and mould. Work to align policies, a stock condition survey and use of the IDB intelligence database to ensure consistency and improve use of intelligence and targeting of resources is progressing.</p> |
| <p>6. The council is carrying out a process of systems improvement and resource optimisation that will help us focus our resources on priority areas.</p>  | <p>Ongoing</p>  |