

Cambridge City Council Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

This tool helps the Council ensure that we fulfil legal obligations of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance on how to complete this tool can be found on the Cambridge City Council intranet. For specific questions on the tool email Kate Yerbury, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223 457046.

Once you have drafted the EqIA please send this to equalities@cambridge.gov.uk for checking. For advice on consulting on equality impacts, please contact Graham Saint, Strategy Officer, (graham.saint@cambridge.gov.uk or 01223 457044).

1. Title of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service
Damp, Condensation and Mould Policy (DCM)

2. Webpage link to full details of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service (if available)
Click here to enter text.

3. What is the objective or purpose of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?
The overall purpose of this policy is to promote the health and wellbeing of Cambridge City Council tenants by effectively and efficiently managing issues related to damp, mould and condensation and maintaining dry homes with healthy internal environment.
This policy aims to raise awareness of legislation related to damp and mould and ensure the council's compliance with these legal requirements. This includes providing practical advice and information to tenants on how to control condensation and mould.

The Council aims to adopt a data-led approach to reporting damp, condensation and mould by conducting effective investigation of issues of damp and carrying out effective repairs to eradicate damp

4. Responsible service: City Operations

5. Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

(Please tick all that apply)

- Residents
- Visitors
- Staff

Please state any specific client group or groups (e.g. City Council tenants, tourists, people who work in the city but do not live here):

Cambridge City Council housing stock for tenants and the structure of buildings that may contain leaseholders.

6. What type of strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service is this?

- New
- Major change
- Minor change

7. Are other departments or partners involved in delivering this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? (Please tick)

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes' please provide details below:

City Homes and Community Services (within the Communities Group), Comms Team and Policy and Performance Unit, Place Group.

8. Has the report on your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service gone to Committee? If so, which one?

The Tenants and Leaseholders Representative groups
Housing Scrutiny Committee (June 2023)

9. What research methods/ evidence have you used in order to identify equality impacts of your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service?

We have analysed repair and complaints reports to establish a proactive approach to reach out to tenants and identify those whose properties at a higher risk of DCM.

Damp and Mould in Social Housing: Initial findings published by the Regulator of Social Housing, Feb 2023. Website: [Damp and mould in social housing: initial findings \[accessible version\] - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114421/damp-and-mould-in-social-housing-initial-findings-accessible-version.pdf) .

Housing with Damp Problems – Ethnicity Facts and Figures published by Ministry of Housing, Committees and Local Government, Oct 2020. Website: [Housing with damp problems - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.service.gov.uk/guidance/ethnicity-facts-and-figures) .

NHS website: [Can damp and mould affect my health? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health-a-z/can-damp-and-mould-affect-my-health/)

One year on follow up report: Spotlight on damp and mould – it’s not lifestyle - February 2023 and Spotlight on damp and mould: It's not lifestyle - October 2021. Website: [Damp and mould - Housing Ombudsman \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/reports/spotlight-on-damp-and-mould-it-s-not-lifestyle/)

10. Potential impacts

For each category below, please explain if the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service could have a positive/ negative impact or no impact. Where an impact has been identified, please explain what it is. Consider impacts on service users, visitors and staff members separately.

(a) Age - Please also consider any safeguarding issues for children and adults at risk

We adopt a holistic approach to support our tenants. Our new policy has a positive impact on older people who may be more likely to have health issues or disabilities exacerbated by damp and mould and will protect babies and children who may be more sensitive to health issues caused by damp and mould.

Our process for triaging the support people will need related to the seriousness of the damp and mould issues will also assist us in identifying children or adults at risk in need of safeguarding support (as we examine contributing factors to DCM) or who might need a social care referral.

(b) Disability

Our new policy will help to prevent worsening or developing health issues resulting from DCM especially for our most vulnerable tenants. People especially negatively impacted by DCM are those with the following health conditions:

- existing skin problems, such as atopic eczema
- respiratory problems, such as allergies and asthma
- a weakened immune system, such as those having chemotherapy

In general moulds produce allergens (substances that can cause an allergic reaction), irritants and, sometimes, toxic substances. Inhaling or touching mould spores may cause an allergic reaction, such as sneezing, a runny nose, red eyes and skin rash. Moulds can also cause asthma attacks. Therefore a policy that tackles DCM will have a positive impact for preventing long term health conditions.

As we consider an overall approach to communicating about DCM issues and supporting people to report them, we will aim to deliver information in different formats such as large print or Braille.

In identifying the priority for the DCM to be treated, we also triage those who are in need of support to specialised services such as mental health support and social care.

(c) Gender reassignment

No impact identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(d) Marriage and civil partnership

No impact identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(e) Pregnancy and maternity

Damp, condensation and mould impact pregnant women and their babies, and newly born children's health. Adopting our new policy will create a healthy environment for pregnant women and their children.

(f) Race – Note that the protected characteristic 'race' refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

According to RUNNYMEDE, the UK's leading race equality think tank, 46% of ethnic minority children are living in poverty in Britain.

According to [Housing with damp problems - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-with-damp-problems), households of Mixed White/ Black Caribbean and Mixed white/Black African are the most likely to have damp issues in their properties at 13%, followed by Bangladeshi and Black other.

This policy has a positive impact on minority groups as it tackles poverty related factors to DCM. Referrals to Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Financial Inclusion Officers are essential to this policy to help tackle issues associated with poverty.

The involvement of our staff will also gives us the space to reach out our tenants who lack the language skills and explore ways to deliver information related to DCM to them either by handing them leaflets that have illustrations or by providing a translator as needed.

(g) Religion or belief

No impact identified specific to this protected characteristic group but we will be looking at better ways of communication with different groups.

(h) Sex

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 5.0% of adults (6.9% women and 3.0% men) aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022. Our new policy will have positive impact on spotting domestic abuse cases when accessing tenanted properties to check damp, condensation and mould issues.

(i) Sexual orientation

No impact identified specific to this protected characteristic group.

(j) Other factors that may lead to inequality – in particular, please consider the impact of any changes on:

- **Low-income groups or those experiencing the impacts of poverty**
- **Groups who have more than one protected characteristic that taken together create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Here you are being asked to consider intersectionality, and for more information see: https://media.ed.ac.uk/media/1_I59kt25q).**

This policy considers an intersectional approach as our staff are trained to spot different elements of social inequalities while investigating DCM issues, report them and refer our tenants accordingly to different forms of support such as with mental health, social care, tenancy sustainment, safeguarding, and the Financial Inclusion Officer. The policy also outlines the different contributing factors such as poverty, mental health, disability and investigates available support for our tenants. DCM is exacerbated by poverty because with energy costs being very high people may not be turning on heating, which can increase the likeliness and severity of damp and mould.

11. Action plan – New equality impacts will be identified in different stages throughout the planning and implementation stages of changes to your strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service. How will you monitor these going forward? Also, how will you ensure that any potential negative impacts of the changes will be mitigated? (Please include dates where possible for when you will update this EqlA accordingly.)

We are looking into ways to support and empower our tenants to report issues related to DCM.

We understand that there are barriers to our tenants' ability to report problems related to DCM. In addition to the protected characteristics mentioned above, digital exclusion and lacking the knowledge of English Language could prevent our tenants from accessing our services. While Cambridge City Council provides interpretation services, it is usually the tenant who needs to report a repair to the council. Our housing officers and Tenancy support officers are playing an important role in delivering our messages to the tenants who are not able to access our services and organising translation and interpretation support where needed.

We have also intensified our messages to our tenants regarding DCM to raise awareness around the issue.

12. Do you have any additional comments?

N/A

13. Sign off

Name and job title of lead officer for this equality impact assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Names and job titles of other assessment team members and people consulted: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of EqlA sign off: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of next review of the equalities impact assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date to be published on Cambridge City Council website: [Click here to enter text.](#)

All EqlAs need to be sent to the Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer at equalities@cambridge.gov.uk