

## **Appendix C: Damp, Condensation and Mould (DCM)**

### **Introduction**

The service is currently in the process of designing a new, real-time spreadsheet to significantly improve the depth and accuracy of our data capture and reporting processes for DCM. This initiative aims to provide more detailed insights into our operations.

Additionally, they are actively exploring the potential of incorporating the 'My Compliance' software to streamline the handling of DCM information. This step is part of our commitment to adopting innovative solutions for more efficient and effective service delivery.

It is important to highlight that certain instances of DCM may not be directly linked to building issues. In such cases, our team collaborates closely with our Housing colleagues and tenants to identify and implement suitable solutions. It's important to note that these cases may remain open for a protracted period due to the nature of the challenges involved.

A DCM report is officially marked as closed only when a comprehensive survey has been conducted, any necessary remedial works are completed, planned works related to thermal issues have been executed, and the tenant has confirmed the satisfactory resolution of the reported DCM.

### **Key Updates:**

#### **1. Increase in Reports:**

The cold weather has contributed to the increase in reported cases of DCM issues. This demonstrates the seasonal influence on such problems. The service proactively monitors weather patterns to pre-empt any uplift in DCM.

#### **2. Customer Contact and Survey:**

We continue to contact customers within 2 days of a DCM report continues, with a scheduled DCM Survey inspection booked in within 10 working days. The Tenant Liaison Officers continue to engage with customers during the initial call to assess the severity of DCM, enabling timely prioritisation of actions, including mould wash treatments.

#### **3. Information Dissemination:**

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A condensation and mould information leaflet is sent to tenants, advising them about DCM issues and preventive measures.

**3.1 DCM Risk Assessment Survey Report:** A new DCM risk assessment survey report has been developed. Surveyors utilise this report to assess risk levels, record findings, outline necessary follow-up actions, and capture relevant survey observations such as potential tenant health issues, financial hardship and overcrowding.

### **4. Follow-Up and Further Surveys:**

A follow-up call to tenants is conducted 8 weeks post-survey completion to ascertain if any further action is required. Since April 2023 we have received 331 reports of DCM, 33 of which had reported that the DCM had not improved since the initial survey. We continue to support these tenants, with a further survey, advise and if necessary, liaise with our housing team colleagues, where the DCM relates to financial hardship or overcrowding.

### **5. Tenant Engagement:**

Collaborative efforts are planned with the resident engagement team, scheduled to commence in the new year. This engagement aims to enhance tenant awareness and involvement in DCM management strategies.

### **6. Housing Officer and Customer Service Centre Teams Involvement:**

Housing Officers, external contractors and our in-house repairs operatives play an active role by identifying DCM cases and communicating them through the dedicated condensation email address, facilitating effective communication and timely resolution.

### **7. Action Plan Implementation:**

The organisation continues to fulfil actions outlined in the Cambridge City Council's DCM Self-Assessment Response Action Plan, indicating a commitment to meeting established standards and protocols.

### **8. Collaborative Initiatives:**

To establish a working Group with Cambridgeshire Housing Associations to support a cooperative effort to address DCM issues across the housing sector, building on successful collaborations from the previous year.

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### **9. Conclusion:**

The increase in reported DCM cases due to cold weather is an expected trend. The current increase in reports of DCM have put a strain on our current resources, whereby we are firefighting rather than proactively making improvements. To make the necessary improvement we have requested additional internal resources to support us to make the changes and complete the next steps outlined below.

### **10. Update and Next Steps**

**10.1 Execute planned meetings with the resident engagement team in September:** We collaborate with the resident engagement team and have publicised DCM information in the Open Door Magazine with another update planned to go out in Open Door in February. We will shortly be sending out DCM information and how to contact us, on social media.

**10.2 Build on the current proactive tenant engagement:** We have 6 weekly meetings booked with our resident engagement representatives and quarterly briefings with the HSE.

**10.3 Build on current collaborative working with Housing Officers and other stakeholders:** Our Housing colleagues, in house operatives, Environmental Health Team, and others that visits properties on a regular basis, report DCM concerns via our condensation email, as do our Gas Servicing contractors, and other contractors that carry out works for the Council.

**10.4 Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the DCM risk assessment survey report:** The DCM risk assessment is reviewed at our monthly DCM meeting.

**10.5 Continue action plan implementation from Cambridge City Council's DCM Self-Assessment Response Action Plan:** We continue to work through the 58 actions in the action plan, with 56 actions either completed or on-going and 6 pending resolution.

**10.6 Participate actively in the resumed Working Group with Cambridgeshire Housing Associations meetings:** We have reached out to Housing Associations in the Cambridge area and hope to start the working group in the forthcoming months.