

## Appendix C: Damp, Condensation, and Mould (DCM) and Disrepair Claims Report



**1 December 2024**

This report tracks the progress of **Damp, Condensation, and Mould (DCM) cases and Disrepair claims**. A major focus has been on managing the influx of cases, streamlining processes, and collaborating with various teams to improve efficiency and outcomes. Table 1 below provides a detailed breakdown of DCM reports received each month from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 1st December 2024.

Table 1.

2023	Reported	Completed	N/Access	Asset/ Planned	Work in progress	Number of 'live' cases
Apr	34	34	0	0	0	0
May	44	44	0	0	0	0
Jun	28	28	0	0	0	0
Jul	35	35	0	0	0	0
Aug	19	18	0	0	1	1
Sep	9	8	0	0	1	1
Oct	36	36	0	0	0	0
Nov	47	47	0	0	0	0
Dec	47	44	1	0	2	3
Jan	86	73	3	0	10	13
Feb	12	4	0	0	8	8
Mar	77	57	2	0	18	20
<b>23/24</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>46</b>
2024	Reported	Completed	N/Access	Asset/ Planned	Work in progress	Number of 'live' cases
Apr	63	51	0	0	12	12
May	50	35	2	0	13	15
Jun	52	24	1	0	27	28
Jul	61	14	0	0	47	47
Aug	33	10	0	0	23	23
Sep	47	6	0	0	41	41
Oct	61	25	0	0	36	36
Nov	99	21	1	0	77	78
<b>24/25</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>Tally</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>326</b>

A damp and mould 'live' case is where damp and/or mould has been recorded in line with the new DCM policy and investigations into or actions to tackle the cause of damp and/or mould are ongoing and yet to be resolved.

**Table 2. Location of DCM from April 2023:**

More than one room	526 cases
Limited to windows, doors, or only bathrooms	341 cases

\*This fluctuates as tenants may initially report issues as isolated, such as a single ceiling, but during surveys it often becomes clear that the issue affects multiple ceilings or the entire property. These nuances emerge as cases are investigated and surveyor reports are reviewed. Variations also occur due to factors like cancelled visits by residents, lack of access, or findings where no damp or mould is identified.

### Categories of DCMs

Table 3 organises the issues based on their severity and frequency, with major examples indicating more significant concerns that require immediate attention, and minor examples representing less critical, but still important, issues.

**Table 3.**

Category	Issue	Occurrences
<b>Tenant Responsibility</b>	No Access	<b>10</b>
	Condensation - Lack of Airflow	<b>48</b>
	Extractor Fan blocked	<b>54</b>
<b>Structural – requires major works</b>	External Wall Insulation	<b>41</b>
	Lack of insulation	<b>36</b>
<b>Structural – requires minor works</b>	Leak	<b>72</b>
	Window/Doors	<b>115</b>

	Gutter	31
<b>Other</b>	Misc (ineffective damp course, broken pipes, defective roof coverings)	533

1. **No Access:** indicates that the inspection team attempted to visit the property after receiving a report but was unable to gain entry. In such cases, cards are left on the property to inform the tenants of the attempted visit and request that they get in touch to rearrange the appointment.
2. **Condensation:** A primary cause of damp and mould across our social housing is condensation, which can result from inadequate ventilation, overcrowding, or insufficient heating. This includes issues like blocked extractor fans, closed windows and blocked trickle vents. In some cases, the property layout contributes to poor airflow.
3. **Insulation Issues:** A notable number of properties suffered from insufficient insulation. The lack of cavity wall insulation or insufficient loft insulation led to cold bridging and condensation, exacerbating the formation of mould.
4. **Leaks:** Water leaks from various sources, including the roof, flat above, pipes, and plumbing fixtures, have been significant contributors to damp and mould reports and cases. Where leaks had been repaired, there is on occasions residual moisture and damage that requires further attention.
5. **Solid Brick Construction:** Older properties that are of a solid brick construction are particularly problematical. External Wall Insulation (EWI) can be programmed to address this. Households identified as potentially benefiting from EWI have been forwarded to the Energy Team for prioritisation.
6. **Structural Issues:** Problems such as failed canopies, deteriorating wooden cladding, and blocked or faulty guttering were also recorded, leading to water ingress and damp.
7. **Tenant Responsibility:** In some cases, causes listed in the tenant handbook as a responsibility of the tenant such as blocked ventilation, cluttering, or using appliances like tumble dryers without adequate ventilation contributed to moisture buildup and mould growth.

8. **Boiler and Heating Problems:** Non-functioning or inefficient heating systems also played a role in some properties, leading to insufficient warmth and increased condensation during winter months.
9. **Aging Infrastructure:** Several properties were highlighted for being overdue for upgrades, including bathrooms, windows, and roofing, which contributed to ongoing issues with damp and mould.
10. **Balcony** – Some properties have cold bridging issues from the integral balcony above their flats. We address these as we receive the reports.
11. **Bathroom refurbishment** - Often, tenants install showers without properly tiling the surrounding walls or using appropriate shower screens or curtains to prevent water from spilling.
12. **Doors & Windows:** Old or deteriorated doors and windows can make the property colder, potentially leading to dampness during the winter season.
13. **Gutter & downpipes:** Broken or blocked drainage, gutters, and downpipes can cause moisture to accumulate on the external walls, leading to dampness on the internal walls and the formation of mould.

## Disrepair Claim Progress

### Current Case Breakdown

	Total claims	In progress	Awaiting post-completion inspections
Older claims (dating back to 2020)	11	4	6
FY 2023/24	13	5	2
FY2024/25*	16	16	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>

### Expenditure Breakdown:

	Total claims (Legal Fee's)	Compensation payments
FY 2022/23	£12,249.60	£41,500.00
FY 2023/24	£125,054.82	£36,526.44
FY 2024/25*	<b>£135,944.15</b>	<b>£44,609.51</b>

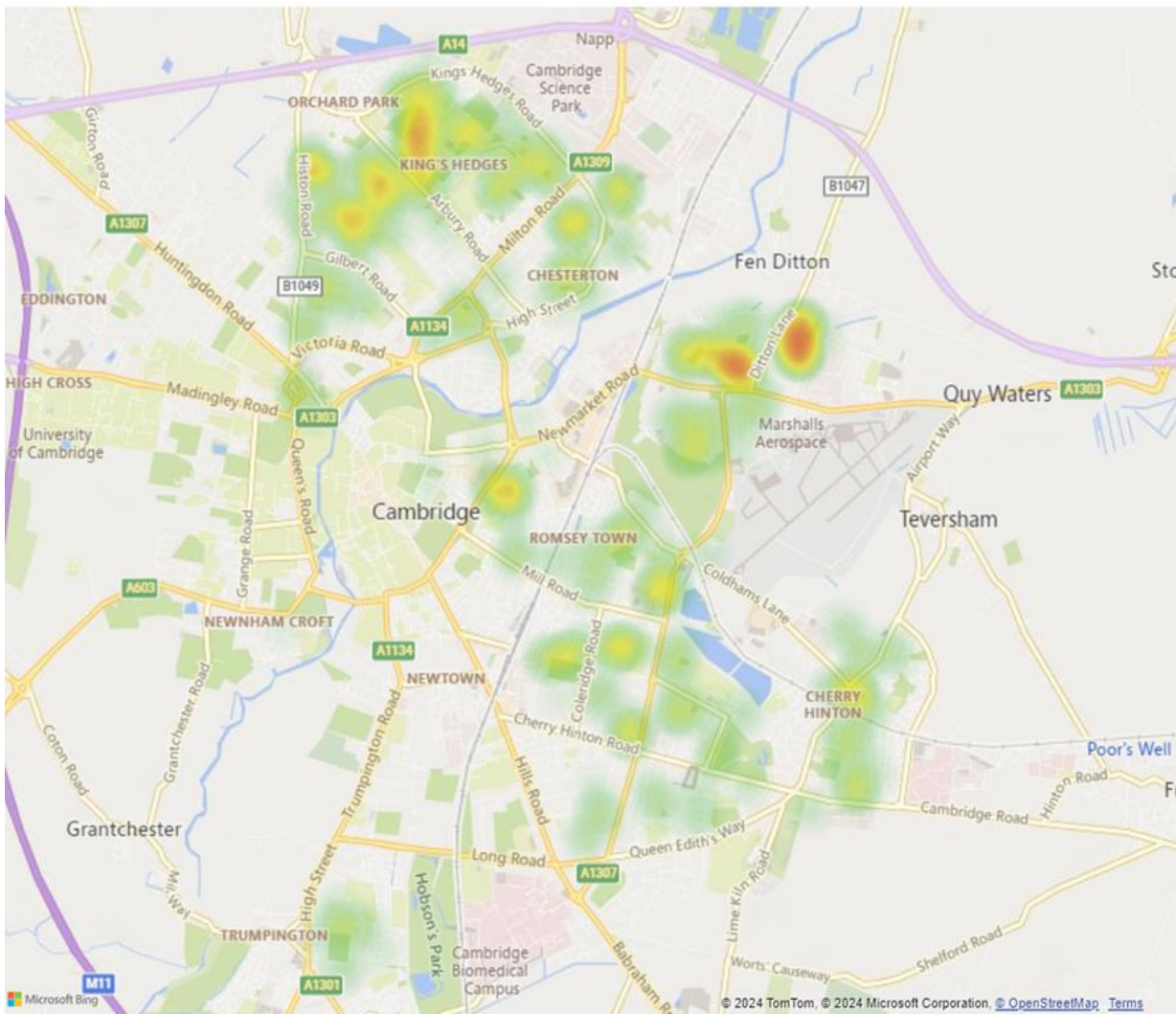
**\*This will be reported again at year end**

## Key Progress

- **Retrofitting Programme:**

The retrofitting programme is expected to significantly improve future cases, particularly in areas with high damp and mould issues. Hotspot locations have been identified, and efforts to complete retrofitting work are underway:

- **Ross Street (13 cases) and Kendal Way (15 cases):** Retrofitting work is nearing completion.
- **Ditton Fields (28 cases):** Scheduled as the next priority for retrofitting.
- **Additional Locations:** Work is planned for Ekin Road (19), Lichfield Road (17), Thorpe Way (16), Molewood Close (14), Cockerell Road (13), Ramsden Square (12), and Akeman Street (10).



- **No-Access Properties:**

The Asset Team has been provided with a list of no-access properties to facilitate surveys. Collaborative efforts are underway to identify solutions to gain access, ensuring comprehensive stock condition reports are carried out. These are crucial for assessing property conditions and managing damp, condensation, and mould (DCM) cases effectively.

- **Safeguarding Concerns:**

Housing Team collaboration has helped address cases with additional issues preventing access. Work with RICS-approved surveyors has identified safeguarding concerns, prompting coordinated efforts with caseworkers, charities and GPs to resolve them.

- **Tenant Awareness:**

A winter article in *Cambridge Matters* magazine highlighted:

- Key steps to address damp, condensation, and mould.
- Reporting mechanisms for damp and mould issues.
- Guidance on preventing frozen pipes.

Additionally, the website has been updated to offer guides on condensation management in accessible formats, including larger print and translations.

- **Enhanced Staffing and Backlog Clearance:**

A new staff member has joined via the agency, clearing the referrals backlog. This additional support has streamlined DCM case management, ensuring tenants receive timely assistance.

- **Diagnostic Tools:**

The Purrmatrix Warmscore diagnostic tool is actively measuring housing performance indicators, including:

- **Average Relative Humidity** (>65% indicates condensation risk).
- **Peak Relative Humidity** (>80% signals extreme condensation risk).
- **CO<sub>2</sub> Levels** (highlighting ventilation deficiencies).

These metrics pinpoint underlying issues and provide evidence for legal proceedings when needed.

- **Contractor Support:**

- **JGPS (RICS Surveyor Consultant):** Reduced report processing times from 6–8 weeks to 5–10 days.

- **Oak Construction Ltd:** Efficiently completing remedial work identified in surveys.

## Key Updates

- **Emergency Case Priority:**  
Emergency DCM cases are being prioritised, with PurrMetrix devices installed within 24 hours. The introduction of an online triage form has significantly improved assessment processes. Emergency cases now receive immediate action, including emergency mould washes within 24 hours.
- **Policy Update:**  
The new DCM policy is aligned with best practices and enhance tenant support.
- **Educational Video:**  
A draft version of the DCM video has been completed and is currently under review [DCM video - draft2.mp4](#). This video aims to support our tenants and staff on damp and mould management.
- **Safeguarding Coordination:**  
An increasing number of safeguarding issues identified during inspections are being addressed in collaboration with housing colleagues and Cambridgeshire Poverty Commission.
- **Volunteer Support:**  
A new volunteer has joined the team to assist with administrative tasks, enhancing operational efficiency.

## Next Steps

1. Implement the new DCM policy.
2. Launch DCM video.
3. Monitor and analyse data from emergency PurrMetrix device installations.
4. Strengthen collaboration with housing colleagues and CAB to address safeguarding and damp-related concerns.
5. Assess the feasibility of adopting Asset MRI for streamlined case management.
6. Fully integrate the volunteer into operational workflows to maximise impact.