



Housing and Growth Committee 23 March 2023

Title	Notting Hill Genesis response to damp and mould
Report of	Chair of Housing and Growth Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	Non-key
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Report from Notting Hill Genesis
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Summary

In November 2022 Housing and Growth Committee invited the Registered Providers with the most housing stock in the borough to attend Housing and Growth Committee and report on how they are responding to damp and mould. The following report provides an update from Notting Hill Genesis on their response to damp and mould. A representative from Notting Hill Genesis will be available at the meeting to answer any questions from Members.

Officers Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the report.

1. Why this report is needed

- 1.1 At the Housing and Growth Committee on 16 November 2022, the Committee invited the Registered Providers with the largest portfolios of housing stock in the borough to attend Committee and report on their response to damp and mould.

- 1.2 On 17th January 2023 representatives from Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, Peabody, Home Group and Network Homes attended Housing and Growth Committee.
- 1.3 It was agreed that a representative from Notting Hill Genesis would attend the Committee on 23rd March. The attached report sets out Notting Hill Genesis' response to damp and mould. A representative from Notting Hill Genesis will be available at the meeting to answer any questions from Members.

2. Reasons for recommendations

- 2.1 In November 2022, the committee asked for a report about the handling of complaints and issues by Barnet Homes and Social Housing Providers.
- 2.2 Further to the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, and the publication of the coroner's report on 15th November 2022, there have been several communications from government, regulators and the ombudsman with directions and advice for landlords and local authorities.

3. Alternative options considered and not recommended

- 3.1 None

4. Post decision implementation

- 4.1 None

5. Implications of decision

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Barnet's Housing Strategy is currently being refreshed, and the emerging themes presented to the Housing and Growth Committee in October 2022 included a focus on ensuring safe, sustainable council housing, and on raising quality and standards in the private rented sector, which will include raising awareness of and, where the council has the authority to do so, tackling damp and mould issues.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 Not applicable

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The Housing Act 2004 (sections 3 and 4) require local authorities to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and to inspect the same with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken under the Housing Act 2004 and other legislation, and if it considers a Category 1 or 2 hazard (as defined by the Act) exists. The Act gives (a) powers to intervene where they consider housing conditions to be in breach of the

same and (b) under section 5, imposes a duty to take action where the authority considers that a Category 1 hazard exists on premises.

5.4 Insight

5.4.1 Not applicable

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 Closer monitoring of damp and mould complaints should lead to a reduction in the incidence of properties that constitute a hazard to health, and improve the social and wellbeing outcomes for residents that are currently living in unsafe properties.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. There is a risk that limited engagement with the housing sector could lead to their lack of compliance with government legislation/regulations resulting in potentially unsafe housing and harm to residents. There are controls/mitigations in place to manage the risk.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

5.7.1 The Equality Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups

5.7.2 Relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.7.3 There is high representation of some protected characteristics within the profile of Barnet Council tenants, and this is reasonably expected to be repeated within the demographic profiles of tenants living within social housing across the borough. Within homes rented from the council, those most likely to be disproportionately affected by damp and mould due to their high prevalence within the population compared to that of the borough (2021 Census results) include women, people from an ethnic minority background (particularly those from a Black or Black British background), and individuals aged over 45. It might reasonably be expected that those with a disability and those affected by socio-economic factors may also be disproportionately impacted, as these groups are more likely to be in need of social housing. In delivering the activities outlined within this paper to reduce the impact of and manage damp and mould within its properties, the council is observing its Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

5.8.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no

adverse implications for Corporate Parenting in relation to this report.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

5.9.1 There is ongoing engagement with the wider housing sector and landlords to monitor issues of damp and mould.

5.10 Environmental Impact

5.10.1 There are no direct environmental implications in relation to this report, however some of the works to properties may also support the journey to Net Zero.

6. Background papers

6.1 17 January 2023, Housing and Growth Committee, item 7, Registered Providers of Housing and item 8, Mould and Damp, [Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Tuesday 17th January, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)