

57508 Damp and Mould Management

I am writing to request information regarding your management of damp and mould in residential properties under your control.

Specifically, I request disclosure of the following:

Recording and Tracking of Damp and Mould Cases

The systems/applications you use to record and track reports of damp and mould.

The City of Edinburgh Council currently uses a combination of systems to record and track reports of damp and mould. We have a survey booking system and a dampness tracker system.

Specific details on software and systems used is withheld under Section 30(c) - Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs (cyber-security).

Whether data is monitored centrally and, if so, how trends are identified and addressed.

Data is monitored by each Locality. Once a damp issue has been highlighted, our in-house Preservation Team Housing Officers will liaise with the tenant and the contractor and offer start dates for treatments required. This information is then updated on our preservation tracker so we can track the job from the point the tenant reported it, right through to completion. Eight weeks after the completion date our in-house Preservation Housing Officers contact the tenant to confirm that the treatment has worked and they are happy for us to close the job down.

Review and Escalation Processes

Your internal process for reviewing reported cases of damp and mould.

The City of Edinburgh Council has both an in-house team and engages with four specialist preservation contractors, city wide. All have been through the procurement process and are on the Framework. The survey reports that are generated by the specialist contractors are assessed by the City of Edinburgh Council in-house Preservation Team. The team includes four Surveyors and one Surveying Manager who are all qualified certified Surveyors in remedial treatments (CSRT) and certified Surveyors in structural waterproofing (CSSW). Once assessed and agreed, the specialists are then given the Purchase Order to proceed with any treatments required. Our in-house Surveyors also carry out specialist preservation surveys and recommend treatments required. During the duration of treatments, the Preservation Housing Officers continue to communicate with the tenant and help with any needs the tenant may have (i.e. fuel poverty, food banks, social care, Change Works benefit advice, Welfare Fund applications, and boxes for packing to allow treatments to be done with the least disruption.) All of these are contributing factors when dealing with Damp Mould and Condensation.

The service standards or timescales you apply for inspection and remediation, and how compliance with these standards is monitored.

The Council has agreed the following KPIs. We are currently working towards the Awaab's Law timelines:

- Survey to report submission – 7 days

- Job raised to contacting tenant to confirm we have works - 48 hours
- Job raised to agreeing start date - 10 days
- Job raised to start date – 30 working days

Details of any performance indicators or oversight mechanisms used to ensure timely resolution.

As detailed in A4 above, work is carried out by both our in-house team and external contractors. Where it is contracted out, our in-house Preservation Team have regular meetings with the specialist contractors to discuss all existing design and technical solutions, and any new products/ techniques new to the market. We actively engage with contractors work in progress to monitor KPIs. Any changes to treatment methods are also communicated with the tenant.

Preparedness for Awaab's Law

The steps you have taken to prepare for compliance with Awaab's Law.

The City of Edinburgh Council has formed a new in-house Preservation Team to prepare for compliance with Awaab's Law. This team consists of the following:

Preservation Manager (CSRT & CSSW) x 1

Preservation Team Leader x 2

Preservation Surveyors (CSRT & CSSW) x 4

Preservation Housing Officers x 8

Preservation Joiners x 5

Preservation Plumber x 1

Preservation Plasterers x 2

Preservation Painter & Decorators x 2

Preservation Labourer x 2

Total 27

The Council has made significant efforts to raise awareness of damp and mould amongst tenants and encourage reporting, including articles in the Council's newsletter for tenants, development of an information booklet, production of fridge magnets and awareness training with a wide range of services across the Council. The Council's Preservation Team is also developing an e-learning module for staff, and a video that can be shared online with tenants to help raise awareness of damp and mould, and action that can be taken to help prevent it. The Council has also installed damp sensors in 500 homes to assist with early identification and intervention.

Any identified risks or challenges relating to compliance and how you plan to address them.

While the City of Edinburgh Council is well-prepared for compliance with Awaab's Law, several risks and challenges have been identified given the complex nature of damp, mould, and condensation issues.

Identified Risks and Challenges

1. **Awareness and Understanding:**
There remains a potential lack of understanding and awareness of Awaab's Law and damp and mould responsibilities among staff in other council departments and some tenants.
2. **Behavioural and Environmental Factors:**
Tenant lifestyle factors (e.g. heating, ventilation, overcrowding) can contribute to damp and condensation and may be difficult to influence directly.
3. **Resource and Capacity Pressures:**
The volume of cases and increasing demand for inspections and remediation may place pressure on staffing, contractors, and materials supply chains.
4. **Data and Monitoring Limitations:**
While data is monitored through local trackers, the process of consolidating and analysing data centrally may require on-going refinement to ensure consistent oversight and early trend identification.
5. **Evolving Regulatory Requirements:**
Future guidance or changes to Awaab's Law may necessitate updates to policies, workflows, and staff training.

Mitigation Actions

- **Awareness and Education:**
Continue staff training and awareness campaigns across all council services and with tenants, supported by the e-learning module, videos, and information materials.
- **Tenant Engagement:**
Strengthen tenant communication to encourage early reporting and understanding of how lifestyle habits can reduce condensation and mould.
- **Resourcing and Workforce Planning:**
Maintain and expand the dedicated Preservation Team as demand grows, ensuring adequate budget and resource allocation.
- **Enhanced Data Integration:**
Develop more centralised data monitoring and reporting tools to allow real-time visibility of trends, performance against KPIs, and early intervention.
- **Continuous Improvement and Compliance Monitoring:**
Regularly review internal processes, KPIs, and feedback from tenants and contractors to ensure on-going compliance and alignment with any future updates to Awaab's Law.

In summary, while challenges exist, particularly around awareness, capacity, and behavioural factors, the City of Edinburgh Council's investment in a dedicated Preservation

Team, proactive tenant engagement, and enhanced data monitoring systems provide a strong foundation for full compliance with Awaab's Law.