

Damp & Mould Policy & Procedure

POLICY TITLE: Damp & Mould Policy & Procedure		POLICY AREA: Property Services
POLICY REFERENCE: DM001	VERSION: 4	AUTHORISATION: Executive Team
LEAD/ROLE MANAGER: Property Admin & Compliance Manager		OTHERS INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING: Property Admin & Compliance Manager Landlord Compliance Team Customer Repairs Advisors, Property Administrators Customer Services Manager Housing Officers
POLICY AIMS: • Ensure compliance with all Statutory, Regulatory and contractual requirements including ensuring all properties are safe, warm and dry and free from hazards. • Proactively manage potential risks, promptly diagnose and prevent issues which may arise from damp and mould. • Support customers to minimise the occurrence of damp and mould and ensuring where required repair works are completed • Providing advice, support and guidance on managing and controlling mould and condensation		
ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS: This policy must be read in conjunction with the following documents		
DOCUMENT:		DOCUMENT LOCATION:
Repairs Procedure		Intranet Property Services
Voids Procedure		Intranet Property Services
Decant Procedure		Intranet Property Services
Complaints Policy & Procedure		Intranet Policies & Procedures
No Access Procedure		Intranet Property Services

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out Hastoe's approach to damp and mould in our homes and communal areas. In line with this document, we will proactively manage potential risks and promptly diagnose and prevent issues, which may arise from damp and mould in our properties, meeting the needs of our customers and providing homes which are safe, warm and dry.
- 1.2 This document outlines how we will support our customers to minimise the risk of damp and mould occurring and steps to be taken where the presence of damp and mould has been reported.

1.3 The key legislation and/or regulations relevant to this document are:

Decent Homes Standard 2006
Homes Standard 2012
Housing Act 2004
Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
Environmental Protection Act 1990
Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
Social Housing (Regulation Act) 2023

2 Types of Damp and Mould;

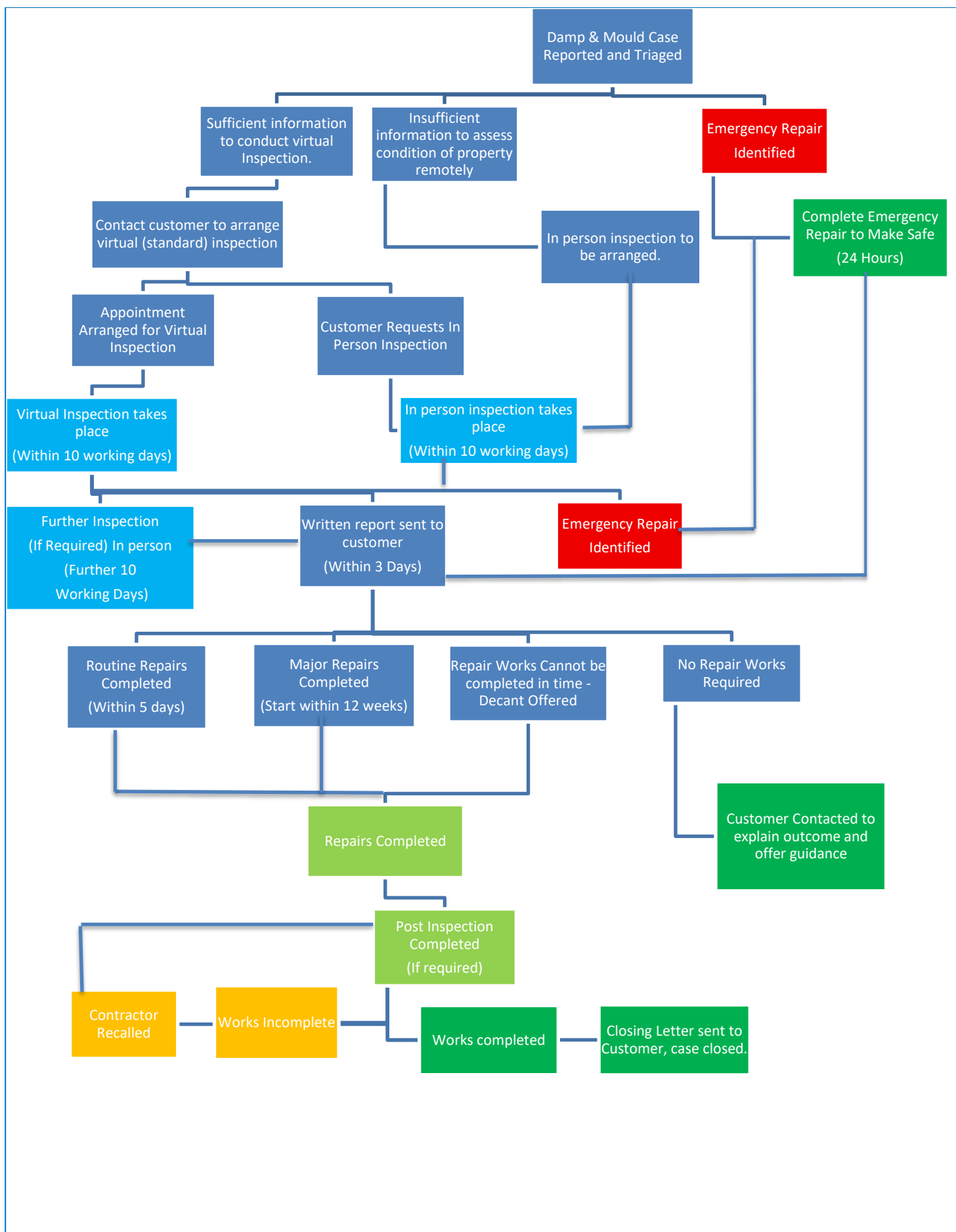
- 2.1 Leak - Caused by defective supply and waste pipework, affecting both external and internal walls and ceilings. The area stays damp regardless of weather conditions and requires repair.
- 2.2 Rising damp - Water rises from the ground into the home through a defective damp proof course (DPC) or masonry without a DPC. It affects basements and ground floor rooms, noticeable all year but more in winter. It is uncommon and requires repair.
- 2.3 Penetrating damp - Caused by defects in the home's structure, such as damaged brickwork or leaking rainwater goods. It appears as a well-defined damp patch after rainfall and requires repair.
- 2.4 Condensation - The most common type, caused by moisture in the air coming into contact with colder surfaces, forming liquid water. It is usually found in kitchens, bathrooms, corners of rooms, and areas with low air circulation. Normal household activities release moisture into the air and good practice in the home minimises and alleviates condensation, and in many cases will prevent it causing dampness and persistent mould.
- 2.5 Mould is a fungus that spreads through invisible spores in the air and grows on damp surfaces.

3 Solutions to Managing Damp & Mould

- 3.1 Preventative action – We will provide our customers with information on how to manage the moisture within their homes to mitigate any potential condensation. Where a repair is needed and it is Hastoe's responsibility to undertake, works will be completed in line with this policy. As part of our stock surveys, damp and mould will be assessed and our staff and contractors will have the skills and knowledge to identify signs of damp and mould, so we can take the right course of action.
- 3.2 Dealing with damp and mould - Residents are required to report any problems to us as soon as possible under the terms of their tenancy agreement. Once reported, cases will be managed in line with this document.
- 3.3 Reports of damp and mould to leasehold properties where Hastoe has repair responsibilities for the external structure should be investigated to ensure there are no defects with the structure contributing to the occurrence of mould. Any defects are to be addressed in line with this document.

4 Addressing Damp & Mould Reports:

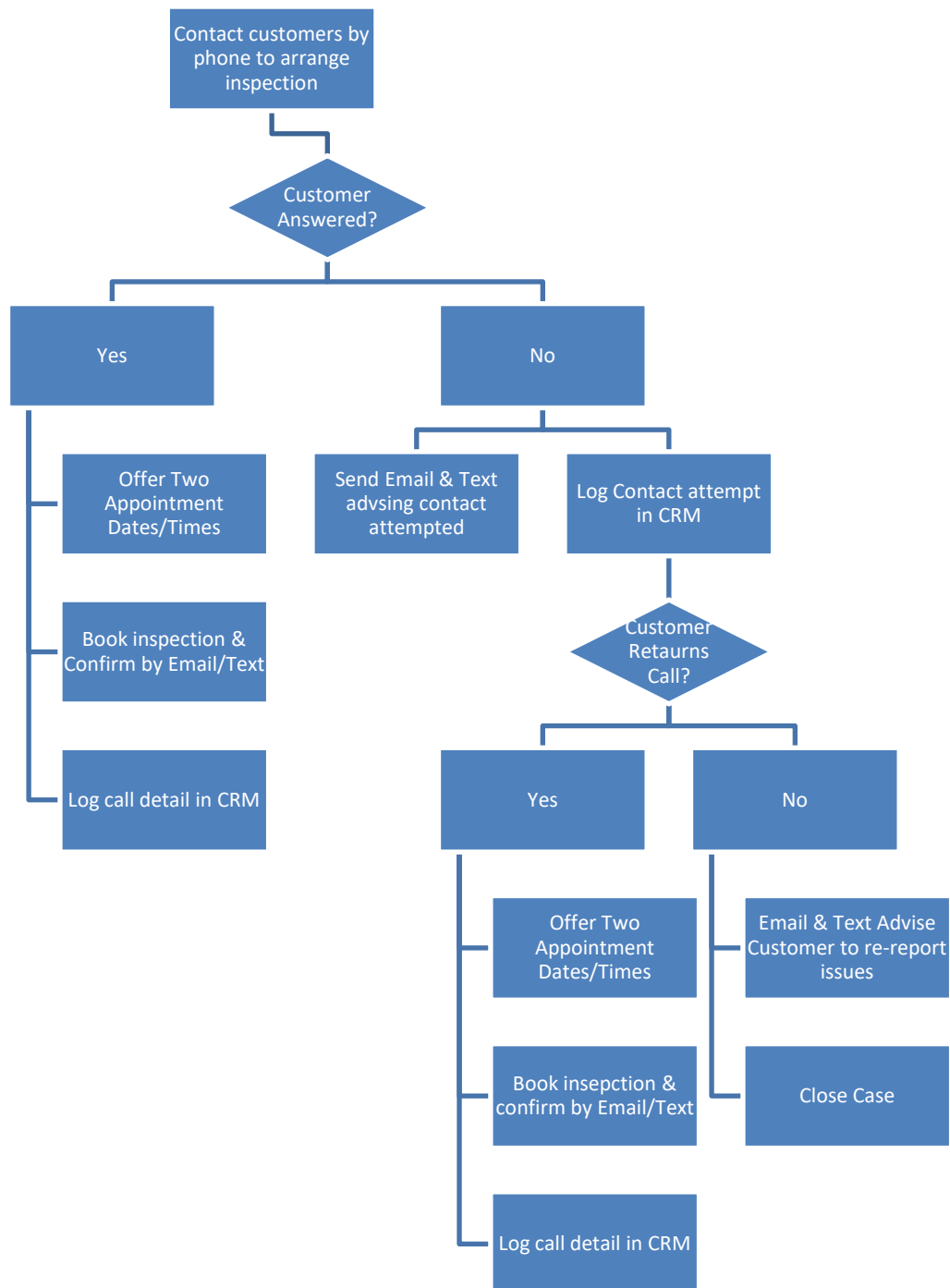
- 4.1 Cases will be inspected in line with statutory requirements and once a standard inspection has been completed, all appropriate information will be reviewed, including photos of damp/mould, previous inspection or repair history, details of customer vulnerabilities and medical conditions, stock survey results and inspection records. The flow chart below illustrates steps to be taken:



- 4.2 In line with Hastoe's Repairs Policy all emergency repairs to make safe will be undertaken within 24 hours. Where an emergency repair cannot be made safe within 24 hours, Hastoe will offer a temporary decant.
- 4.3 Where the standard inspection process identifies that all reasonable steps have been taken by Hastoe to address damp and mould within a property a letter is to be sent to the customer explaining the reason for this. Reasonable steps include: all repairs required have been completed, survey details confirm there are no defects with the building itself, and guidance that has been given to the customer on how to mitigate and manage the occurrence of damp and mould.
- 4.4 Following a standard inspection being completed virtually, a tenant may request an in-person inspection take place, at which point a 'renewed' inspection must be completed. For potential significant hazards, the renewed investigation must take place within 10 working days of the date of the request and should identify the required remedial work to prevent the hazard re-occurring.
- 4.5 All damp and mould inspections are to identify the presence of Category 1 Hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). ActiveH is to be updated with details of hazards present.
- 4.6 Customers are to be kept up to date with the progress of damp and mould works and the outcome of all inspections. Following an inspection a written summary of the report will be sent to the customer by the Landlord Compliance Team within 3 working days of the investigation conclusion which must include the following detail:
- Whether an Emergency or Significant Hazard was identified
 - What action is required
 - Target timeframe for completion
 - If no action is required
 - Why action is not required
 - Information on contact details and escalation route.
- 4.7 Should a Hazard be identified and confirmed as an Emergency during an inspection, the repairs officer must raise a works order immediately and in line with Hastoe's Repairs Policy.
- 4.8 For cases not identified as an Emergency, the Repairs Officer must also raise a works order on the day of the inspection. Works must commence no longer than 5 working days following the investigation and these can be temporary measures where necessary. Where further supplementary works are required and it is not possible to begin them within 5 days, we will start these as soon as reasonably practicable and within 12 weeks of the investigation concluding. The Property Team are to keep the customer updated throughout until all necessary works are completed.
- 4.9 ActiveH is to be kept up to date with all reasonable steps taken to address damp and mould within a property and lessons learnt from damp and mould cases are to be recorded within ActiveH and discussed at monthly team meetings.

5 Supporting & Communicating with our Customers

- 5.1 We ensure residents are communicated with and kept up to date including informing customers of their rights under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and providing timescales for inspections and the completion of works required.
- 5.2 Temporary Data loggers are to be posted to the customers where there is evidence of surface condensation and mould not caused by a building related defect. Data loggers will monitor internal humidity and temperature to allow Hastoe to provide further guidance on how to mitigate the occurrence of condensation and mould. In addition to data loggers, customers are to be provided with hygrometers/thermometers to keep and use within rooms where condensation and mould are prevalent. Permanent Data loggers may be installed in properties where there is evidence of repeat surface condensation and mould not caused by building defects. These devices track internal humidity and temperature continuously, allowing us to analyse the risk of damp and mould and communicate results directly to customers.
- 5.3 Where elevated risk levels are identified with temporary data loggers, or the risk level remain 'Extreme' or 'High' for three consecutive months as identified by permanent data loggers, Landlord Compliance Officers are to contact the customer to discuss the results. Guidance documents are to be provided and where required an appointment for a further inspection arranged. In addition to providing advice and support to eradicate damp and mould where customers are struggling to pay energy bills, with the customers approval, details are to be passed to Hastoe's Welfare & Benefits Advisors who will contact the customer.
- 5.4 We will take all reasonable steps to contact customers, however where it is not possible to contact the customer to discuss reports of damp and mould and arrange inspections the following process will apply.



5.5 Where a case has been identified as an Emergency and the resident refuses access, the Landlord Compliance Team are to follow the No Access Procedure.

6 Damp & Mould Case Management;

All reports of damp and mould are to be managed by the Landlord Compliance Team within the case processing module of ActiveH and ensure the system is kept up to date. All communication related to cases is to be made via ActiveH and recorded within the case itself.

7 Root Cause Analysis;

- 7.1 Repairs Officers and Contractors are to use the following checklist to confirm possible causes of damp and mould within a property. Details of the analysis are to be recorded within ActiveH.

Potential Repair Issue/Building Defect	Action to be taken If Answer is 'No'
Does property have adequate heating and is this fully functioning and controllable.	Order to be raised to address heating breakdown in line with Repairs Policy
Is the property free from leaks and/or water penetration i.e. roof/drainage/guttering etc.	Raise repair order to remediate leak including the supply of low energy usage dehumidifiers for a min. period of 2 weeks
Does the property have adequate humidistat-controlled ventilation to the kitchen and bathroom(s)	Raise repair order for system to be overhauled/cleaned/repaired or replaced as required. Consider need for PIV system.
Do windows have trickle ventilation?	Identify whether it is possible for these to be retrofitted, if this is not possible and windows are due for replacement in coming years consider the need for background ventilation (i.e. Vent Axia fresh vents) and partially opening windows for fresh air intake.
Where required: Data Logger Results; Do results show property has an average temp of 18-22 with relative humidity no higher than 60%. Consider whether any of the above could be contributing to this.	Discuss results with customer, where any of the above defects/repairs are required consider the need to re-send data loggers on completion to ensure they have addressed the issue. Provide customer with help and advice on ways to reduce humidity and need to keep property at an ambient temperature. Information available on Hastoe website.

8 Roles & Responsibilities

Person Responsible	Defined Responsibilities
Property Director	- Overall responsibility for ensuring this document is implemented and adhered to. - Ensuring statutory and legislative requirements.
Property Admin & Compliance Manager	Reporting and overseeing damp and mould cases including providing an assurance statement each quarter to Property Director confirming cases are being reviewed and managed
Landlord Compliance Team Leader	Monitoring open cases to ensure they are being updated with communication, details of data loggers and inspections arranged

	- Monitoring and reporting on completed cases to ensure adequate evidence is saved and the system updated. - Ensure case triaging is in accordance with this document and that adequate information is recorded on the system to progress cases. - Ensuring that cases are assigned to the Landlord Compliance Team and tasks sent to Repairs Officers for Inspections
Landlord Compliance Officers	- Triaging cases following thorough review of all relevant supporting information. - Ensuring cases are managed in line with ActiveH workflow, system updated and customer kept up to date with progress. - Keeping customers updated on the progress of works required including contacting customers on completion of works to ensure all works complete and issue resolved. Tasking Repairs Officer to post inspect works. - Analysing results of data loggers, recording on ActiveH and communicating these to customers. - Monitoring remote damp and mould equipment and arranging inspections for those at risk of mould and condensation.
Property Maintenance Manager	- Monthly reporting of damp and mould cases to ensure inspections are taking place, repair works are being managed and patterns are identified to proactively identify cases of damp and mould. Provide assurance statement each quarter to Property Director confirming this is taking place. - Monthly review of high repair properties. - Monthly reporting of customer satisfaction relating to damp and mould repair orders.
Repairs Officer	- Inspecting properties and updating ActiveH with survey details. - Raising repair orders for works required. - Provide a written summary of findings from investigation within 48 hours for Landlord Compliance to communicate to resident. - Assessing hazards under HHSRS and updating ActiveH with details.
All Members of Staff.	Reporting of Damp and Mould identified during property inspection/visit or phone call/in person conversation with customer to Existing Repairs Team via phone call (0300 123 2250) or ActiveH.
Housing Officers	- Management of no access reports following no access procedure, progressing cases up to and including injunctions - Manage property damage/neglect under the terms of the tenancy agreement.
Property Administrators &	Managing customer and colleague calls and tasks reporting damp and mould.

Customer Repairs Advisors	• Logging reports of damp and mould onto ActiveH and setting up cases to be assigned to Landlord Compliance. • Booking damp and mould inspections with tenants, in line with inspection timescales.
Contractors	• Reporting of Damp and Mould identified during inspection or completion of works to Hastoe on the same day. • Reporting emergency repair to Hastoe immediately. • Providing adequate training to operatives working on Hastoe properties and ensuring robust reporting frameworks.

9 Proactive Approach

- 9.1 Where multiple reports of damp and mould have been made across a scheme or block, the Property Services Team are to proactively contact all customers to identify additional cases. Where present these cases are to be managed as above.
- 9.2 Where tenants consistently refuse access for damp and mould inspections or remedial works, we would consider possession action for repeat offenders.

10 Damp and Mould Complaints

- 10.1 All complaints are to be managed in line with Hastoe's Complaints Policy & Procedure.
- 10.2 Repeated complaints relating to damp and mould are to be escalated to the Property Maintenance Manager.

11 Management & Governance

- 11.1 Damp & Mould cases will form part of our overall compliance reporting to the Executive Team and Board and will show the number of cases and length of time to resolve. Key Performance Indicators are as follows;
- Total number of cases Including the total number of Emergency cases
 - % of inspections carried out within procedure timeframe
 - Total number of properties with issues resolved in quarter
- 11.2 Operationally the Property Admin and Compliance Manager will review cases monthly, and Property Maintenance Managers will review high repair properties monthly. Assurance statements are to be provided to the Property Director confirming this has happened each quarter.
- 11.3 Landlord Compliance Officers will be responsible for managing the case to resolution, keeping the customer informed.
- 11.4 Internal compliance checks will be undertaken and internal audits on a periodic basis.