

# Damp and mould in the home

Information and support available in Hertfordshire

This e-booklet has been produced to: give front line professionals information on damp and mould in the home; an introduction to Hertfordshire's Environmental Health and Housing Department teams; and support assessing severity and making timely and accurate referrals.



## Health risks associated with damp and mould in the home:

Respiratory	Other physical health	Poor mental health due to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General symptoms: cough, wheeze, and shortness of breath</li> <li>• Increased risk of airway infections</li> <li>• Development or worsening of allergic airway diseases, asthma and other conditions that involve inflammation of the airways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritation of the eye</li> <li>• Eczema, and other patches of itchy skin or skin rashes</li> <li>• Other fungal infections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpleasant living conditions</li> <li>• Anxiety related to physical health impacts</li> <li>• Frustration with poor advice</li> <li>• Social isolation because of not wanting visitors in the home</li> </ul>

## Factors influencing damp and mould in the home:

- Inadequate insulation
- Poor ventilation
- Inefficient, ineffective and or unaffordable heating systems
- Overcrowding
- Disrepair
- High rent – cost of living
- Lack of knowledge and or awareness
- Lack of appropriate facilities for clothes drying

## Environmental Health and Housing Departments

Environmental Health teams, or in some cases broader Housing Departments, have the expertise, competencies, practical experience, and community involvement required to deliver strong health safeguards and effectively promote wellbeing.

Housing safety is one area of regulation carried out.

## Housing conditions

These housing teams provide advice to all residents and depending on the severity of the damp and mould they can legally require improvements to homes where they are rented. When deciding what action to take, they will consider the chance of harm, how serious it would be, and any extra risk to vulnerable individuals. They work with landlords initially to get improvements informally; however, they will act if serious problems are found by:

- Issuing a legal improvement notice requiring works in a certain time period.
- Declaring a legal order prohibiting the use of part or all of a property.
- In some cases, the council will complete the works themselves and charge the landlord.

As well as damp and mould, they will advise and regulate safety standards in all rented homes; this includes risks of falls, fire, cold and electrics.

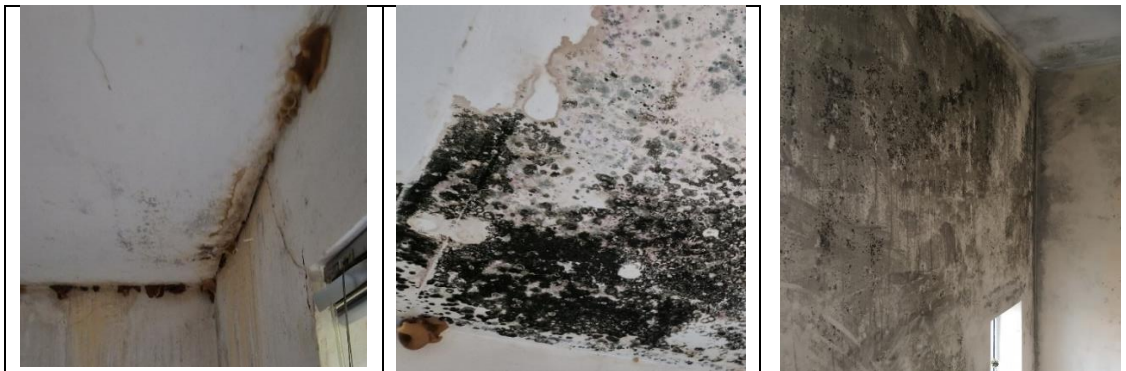
# Damp and mould risk scale



**Level 1:** Signpost (see pages 3, 4 & 5)



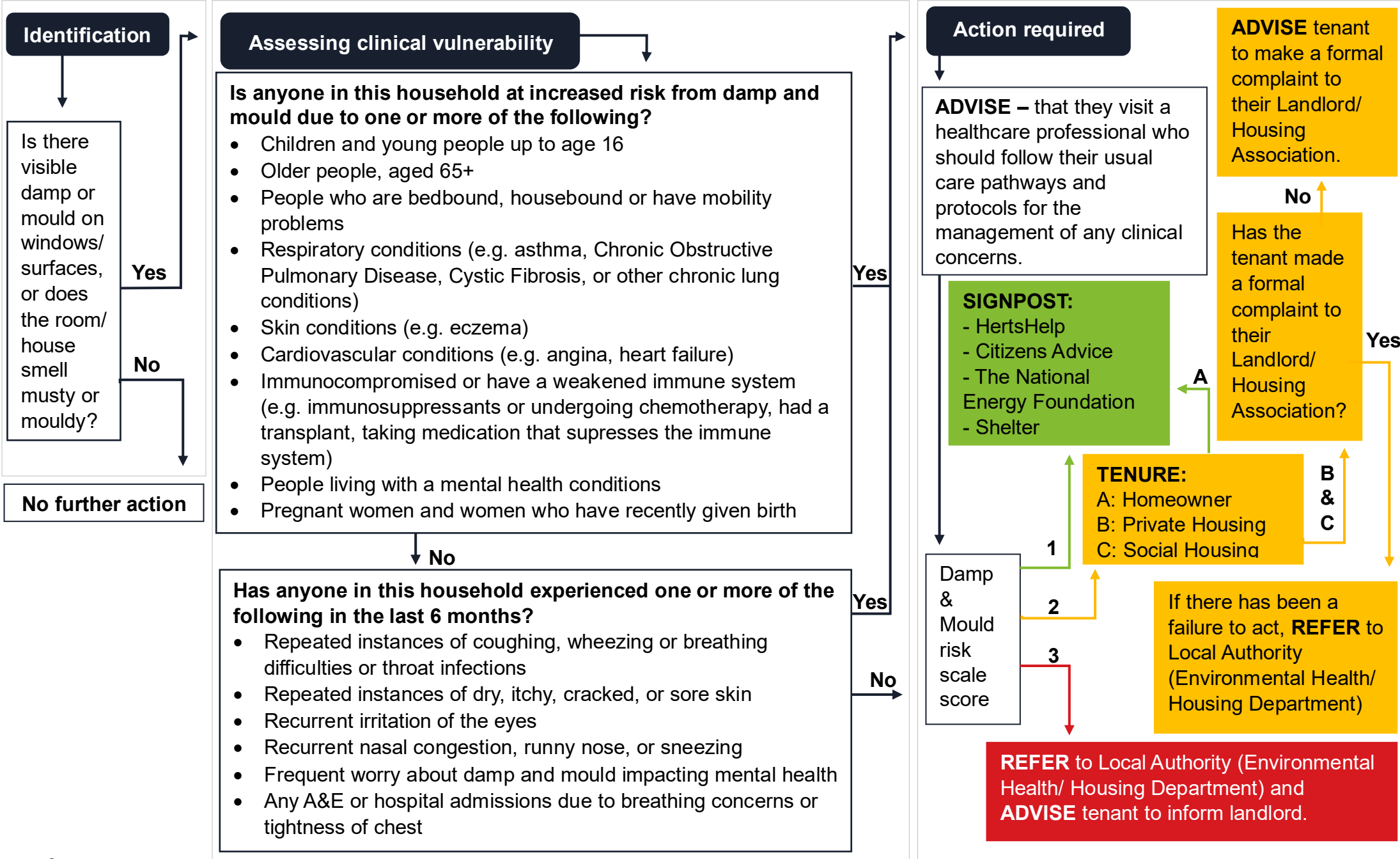
**Level 2:** Refer to Local Authority or Housing Association (see pages 3, 4 & 5)



**Level 3:** Refer to Local Authority (see pages 3, 4 & 5)

**Important note:** The need for remedial works for damp and mould will depend on multiple factors, such as how many rooms and which rooms are affected, to what extent, and what the cause of the problem is (there may be more than one); so if in any doubt you must make a referral so a professional assessment of the entire property can take place.

# Hertfordshire referral pathway



# Hertfordshire local authority support available

Local authority	Email address	Contact number
<b>Broxbourne</b>	<a href="mailto:envhealth@broxbourne.gov.uk">envhealth@broxbourne.gov.uk</a>	01992 785 555 ext 2512
<b>Dacorum</b>	Non-council properties: <a href="mailto:pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk">pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk</a>	01442 228 574  01442 228 000
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	Council properties: <a href="mailto:damp.&amp;.mould@dacorum.gov.uk">damp.&amp;.mould@dacorum.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:environmental.health@eastherts.gov.uk">environmental.health@eastherts.gov.uk</a>	01992 531 502
<b>Hertsmere</b>	<a href="mailto:private.sector@hertsmere.gov.uk">private.sector@hertsmere.gov.uk</a>	0208 207 2277
<b>North Hertfordshire</b>	<a href="mailto:Env.Health@north-herts.gov.uk">Env.Health@north-herts.gov.uk</a>	01462 474 000
<b>St Albans</b>	Non-council properties: <a href="mailto:privatesectorhousing@stalbans.gov.uk">privatesectorhousing@stalbans.gov.uk</a>	01727 866 100
<b>Stevenage</b>	Council tenants: <a href="mailto:stalbansrepairs@morgansindall.com">stalbansrepairs@morgansindall.com</a> <a href="mailto:env.health@stevenage.gov.uk">env.health@stevenage.gov.uk</a>	01438 242 908
<b>Three Rivers</b>	<a href="mailto:environmental.health@threerivers.gov.uk">environmental.health@threerivers.gov.uk</a>	01923 776 611
<b>Watford</b>	<a href="mailto:HousingandWellbeing@watford.gov.uk">HousingandWellbeing@watford.gov.uk</a>	01923 226 400
<b>Welwyn Hatfield</b>	<a href="mailto:housingandcommunity@welhat.gov.uk">housingandcommunity@welhat.gov.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:e.health@welhat.gov.uk">e.health@welhat.gov.uk</a>	01707 357 672  01707 357 242

# Signposting: information & support

<p><b>HertsHelp</b></p> <p>Independent advisors offering free, confidential advice on local services and support.</p> <p><b>Call:</b> 0300 123 4044 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@hertshelp.net">info@hertshelp.net</a> <b>Web page:</b> <a href="http://www.hertshelp.net">www.hertshelp.net</a></p>	<p><b>Shelter</b></p> <p>Information on what action to take if your rented accommodation, social housing, or housing association has damp or mould.</p> <p><b>Call:</b> 0800 107 0044 <b>Web page:</b> <a href="https://england.shelter.org.uk/">https://england.shelter.org.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>Citizens Advice</b></p> <p>Offers a range of advice services, including housing quality and conditions.</p> <p><b>Call:</b> 0800 144 8848 <b>Web page:</b> <a href="https://hertscitizensadvice.org.uk/">https://hertscitizensadvice.org.uk/</a></p>	<p><b>National Energy Foundation – Better Housing Better Health</b></p> <p>Independent advice to improve your home’s energy efficiency, save money and enhance comfort.</p> <p><b>Call:</b> 01908 665555 <b>Web page:</b> <a href="https://www.bhbh.org.uk/">https://www.bhbh.org.uk/</a></p>