

SCRUTINY REVIEW INTITATION DOCUMENT

Review: The health impacts of damp housing conditions

Scrutiny Committee: Health Scrutiny Committee

Lead Officers: Julie Billett, Joint Director of Public Health and Simon Kwong, Director of Housing Property Services

Overall aim: To understand the scale and nature of the negative health and wellbeing impacts of damp housing conditions in Islington, and the effectiveness of current arrangements and measures for tackling damp and its adverse impacts on health.

Objectives of the review:-

- To understand the relationship between damp housing conditions and health and wellbeing in general, and specifically the impact of damp housing on Islington residents' health and wellbeing.
- To understand the extent of damp housing across all tenure types in Islington, and the current arrangements and mechanisms that exist for preventing, identifying, addressing and mitigating its impacts?
- To assess the effectiveness of current approaches to tackling both the structural and behavioural causes of damp, with a particular focus on health-related outcomes, and to make recommendations for increasing the impact of local measures, as appropriate.
- To particularly assess the impact of dampness on children and how it affects absence from school.

Duration: Approx. 6 months

How the review will be conducted

Scope: The review will look at the issue of damp and its impact on health across all tenure types in Islington, and at the measures taken by the council, RSLs, Housing Associations and private landlords to address damp housing and its health-related impacts.

Types of evidence to be assessed:

- National and local data on
 - a. Health and wellbeing impacts of damp housing (particularly on older people and children), including understanding evidence of causation and association.
 - b. Scale and location of damp properties in Islington, including information on the type/cause, severity etc, as well as the limitations of what is known regarding damp housing conditions.
 - c. Overview of local programmes and interventions to prevent, identify, diagnose and address damp, and information on their impact and effectiveness.
 - d. Islington's housing transfer policy, its operation in practice and how it takes into account the interaction between residents' health and housing conditions.
- Witness evidence from a range of relevant individuals and organisations
 - a. LBI
 - i. Housing
 - ii. Public Health
 - iii. Residential Environmental Health
 - b. External partners

- i. Partners for Improvement
- ii. Registered providers eg Family Mosaic, Circle, etc
- iii. Islington Registered Landlords Forum
- iv. Islington CCG - impact on health/addressing damp housing in care pathways; impact on primary care
- v. Help on Your Doorstep

c. Residents

- i. Residents – identified via members' casework?
- ii. Tenants/residents associations
- iii. Islington HealthWatch

• Site visits to see:-

- a. housing / housing estates with known damp conditions
- b. housing where remedial action is or has been taken to address damp
- c. Any out of borough schemes/programmes offering learning for Islington

Additional information:

May want to also consider hearing from national organisations regarding innovative practice such as Shelter, National Housing Federation, etc.