**Housing Leeds, New Process for Reporting Damp & Mould – Members Briefing**

Housing Leeds have been reviewing processes relating to damp and mould in council owned homes since the Housing Ombudsman Service publishing their report, ‘Focus on Damp and Mould’. This work is the highest priority for the service. Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, and the coroner’s verdict that he died as a direct result of exposure to excessive mould in his council home, further focus has been placed on making improvements in this area.

As a result of increased concern caused by media exposure relating to damp and mould, combined with the onset of the cold winter months and the impact of the financial/energy crisis on tenants heating their homes, we are currently experiencing a high volume of enquiries in relation to damp and mould. In some cases we are receiving multiple enquires from a number of sources for the same address which is leading to an additional strain on resource with multiple officers dealing with the same issue. Over the last 6 weeks we have seen an increase of 120% in cases.

To ensure that we can prioritise the most urgent cases for our customers and ensure that any health hazards are removed in a timely manner, **we now have a dedicated team who are dealing with Damp and Mould reports in council homes.**

**Please direct tenants to this process wherever possible as it provides the quickest way for us to record, assess and deal with their report and also an opportunity for us to offer practical self-help advice for some of the less urgent cases:**

The most efficient way quickest way for tenants to contact the team is via email at d&mteam@leeds.gov.uk The team will make sure that we identify and promptly deal with any health and safety issues and take appropriate action to deal with the problem. Tenants who aren’t able to email should continue to report issues in the usual way (through the telephone Contact Centre or face to face at any of the Face to Face HUBs).

Tenants should include the following information:

• Name

• Address

• A telephone contact number

• A brief description of the problem

• Photographs of the problem

The team will assess the report and aim to call back within 5 working days to agree next steps.

See also the Councils Damp & Mould advice leaflet which accompanies this briefing note. Please share this with tenants who raise concerns about damp and mould. The Council will take steps to identify causation and deal with any defects however the leaflet sets out practical advice on how to reduce the risk of damp and mould in the home. It includes **a reminder that wiping down condensation regularly and treating the early signs of mould growth with a readily available fungicidal/mould spray, is the best way to prevent it spreading and becoming a hazard.**

We appreciate your help on this matter during these challenging times

Thank you