

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Housing Standards Team - Damp Mould and Condensation	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Report of:</b>	Assistant Director Economic Growth and Housing		
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	No	<b>Is it included in the Forward Plan?</b>	No
<b>Exempt/ Confidential</b>	No		

### **Purpose/Summary**

To update the committee on the work done by the Housing Standards Team in response to issues of damp and mould in residential properties in the borough.

### **Recommendation:**

That the Committee notes the contents of the report and the approach in response to issues of damp and mould in residential properties in the borough be endorsed.

### **Reasons for the Recommendation:**

To comply with a Council resolution to update the Committee on how damp and mould issues are dealt with in private and socially rented properties in the borough.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

No alternative options were considered. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be updated on this area.

### **What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

#### **(A) Revenue Costs**

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report.

#### **(B) Capital Costs**

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report.

### **Implications:**

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

<b>Financial:</b> None
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<b>Legal:</b> None	
<b>Human Resources:</b> None	
<b>Equality:</b> None	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> None	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Yes
Have a neutral impact	No
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report.	

### Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose

<b>Protect the most vulnerable:</b> The work of the Housing Standards Team ensures that residents in the borough are protected from the effects that can result from poor quality housing, particularly damp and mould issues.
<b>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</b> Good quality housing is a basic requirement of a confident and resilient community
<b>Commission, broker and provide core services:</b> The Housing Standards Team provide a core service to residents of the borough.
<b>Place – leadership and influencer:</b> None directly associated with this report
<b>Drivers of change and reform:</b> None directly associated with this report
<b>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</b> None directly associated with this report
<b>Greater income for social investment:</b> None directly associated with this report
<b>Cleaner Greener:</b> None directly associated with this report

### What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 7506/24). The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5606/24) have been consulted and notes there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**Implementation Date for the Decision:** Immediately following the meeting

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### Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection

## 1. Background

- 1.1 On the 15<sup>th</sup> November the senior coroner for the District of Manchester North Coroner published a report by the Senior Coroner, Ms Joanne Kearsley, into the death of Awaab Ishak who died in December 2020. Awaab was aged 2 years at the time of his death from a severe respiratory condition due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home. The property was managed by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) a tenant and employee co-owned mutual housing society, registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, set up to manage over 12,000 former Council owned homes.
- 1.2 Extensive media coverage has followed the publication of the coroner's report, and shortly after the conclusions of the case became public the RBH Board took the decision to dismiss Gareth Swarbrick as Chief Executive with immediate effect.
- 1.3 On the 19<sup>th</sup> November the Secretary of State of Housing, Mr Michael Gove, has written to all Local Authorities requesting assurances about how housing enforcement work relating to damp and mould is being resourced and managed and for data relating to identified damp and mould cases and action taken
- 1.4 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> November Fiona MacGregor, Chief Executive of the Regulator for Social Housing wrote to all registered providers of social housing requesting information on the provider's response to managing damp and mould cases in their homes.

## 2. Housing Enforcement – Damp and Mould

- 2.1 The Housing Standards Team (HST) is responsible for housing enforcement activity, including on vacant homes, and managing the Council's mandatory, additional HMO and selective landlord licencing schemes.
- 2.2 The enforcement of housing standards is primarily based on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales.
- 2.3 The HHSRS assessment method focuses on the hazards that are present in housing. HHSRS assesses 29 housing hazards and the effect that each may have on the health and safety of current or future occupants of the property. The HHSRS provides a way that hazards can be assessed and the best way of dealing with them identified. If a hazard is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety, this is known as a **Category 1 hazard**. If a hazard is less serious or less urgent, this is known as a **Category 2 hazard**.

The 29 housing hazards contained within the HHSRS are appended to this report at Appendix I.

- 2.4 The vast majority of cases relating to HHSRS Hazards #1 – ‘Damp and Mould Growth’ are Category 2 hazards. Based on a data from our compliance checks carried out as part of the Landlord Licencing 1.6% of properties suffered from the more serious Category 1 level hazards, and Category 2 damp and mould hazards were found in in 30% of privately rented homes.

#### *Private Rented Sector*

- 2.5 The majority of the damp and mould caseload managed by the HST related to privately rented properties. Based upon the 2021 Census Sefton 18.3% of the borough’s properties are privately rented. Private renting occurs across the borough, but is particularly prevalent in older stock in Southport, Bootle, Litherland, Seaford and Waterloo. A plan showing the distribution of privately rented properties in the borough is appended to this report at Appendix II.
- 2.6 The introduction of the Landlord Licencing Scheme in March 2018 has helped to ensure that residential properties rented privately in the borough meet minimum quality standards. Approximately 3,400 properties in the borough are licenced through the selective licencing route, and a further 265 under the Additional HMO scheme.
- 2.7 In March 2023 a new 5-year Landlord Licencing scheme began, requiring privately rented properties that fall under the scheme to be licenced, or re-licenced. As part of the licencing process it is often necessary to carry out pre-licencing compliance visits, and from the start of the new scheme on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 until the end of November 2023 304 such visits were undertaken. Compliance visits carried out as part of the licencing process are valuable opportunities to proactively assess the quality of privately rented stock in the borough, and identify HHSRS hazards, including those relating to damp and mould. Two case studies showing the range of issues identified through such inspections, including damp and mould issues, are appended to this report at Appendix III.
- 2.8 In addition to a proactive approach to identifying damp and mould issues, and other HHSRS hazards, through licensing the HST is also available to help both private and social housing tenants who require assistance. In such cases service requests are raised through either referrals or directly from the tenant.

#### *Social Housing Sector*

- 2.9 In the Social Housing Sector the legal duty and responsibility for resolving complaints is imposed by the Regulator of Social Housing direct onto social landlords (ie not with the Council in the first instance). This requires all registered social landlords to have a published complaints procedure to which they are required to adhere to, and all social housing tenants are advised to follow this process for any initial concerns in the first instance. If a social housing tenant is still unhappy with how their complaint has been handled, and it is suspected that a Cat 2 hazard exists in the property, this is when the Council can become involved in a case, and an inspection will take place. The social tenant also has the option to refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman if they remain unhappy with their landlord’s response.

A process map outlining how service requests are managed is appended to this report at Appendix IV.

- 2.10 If a damp and mould issues is identified in a property that requires remediation in the first instance the HST will work with the landlord to resolve this matter informally by agreement. Should that not be possible then an improvement notice will be issued as the first stage of the formal enforcement process which could ultimately lead to a prosecution or service of a Civil Penalty fine.
- 2.11 However, to date Sefton it has not been necessary to instigate a prosecution for damp and mould although it has been necessary to issue 2 x Civil Penalty fines for failure to comply with Improvement Notices relating to a Cat 1 hazard for Damp & Mould.

### **3. Damp & Mould Review**

- 3.1 In response to the Awaab Ishak case in November 2022 a number of actions were carried out relating to our management of damp and mould cases in the borough:
- 3.2 Housing Enforcement Policy – the existing Housing Enforcement Policy was reviewed and update. The scope of this review was to ensure that the policy reflected current good practice in the sector, and that it was clear that it covers all tenures, rather than being solely related to private sector. The revised policy will be approved by Cabinet Member Communities and Housing in January 2023.
- 3.3 Website Update – the council's website was reviewed and updated with advice and information on damp and mould and to ensure that anyone wishing to make a service request could do so easily.
- 3.4 Communication Campaign – a comms campaign around the issue of damp and mould was developed and disseminated using the Council's comms channels over the winter period when damp and mould issues are at the most acute. The campaign ran over winter 22/23 and was repeated in 23/24.
- 3.5 Staff Training and Equipment – all staff training relating to the HHSRS and equipment requirements were reviewed and were found to be up to date. Should there be staff changes HHSRS training is provided as a priority.
- 3.6 Data Analysis – data for the last 3 years prior to the Awaab Ishak case relating to damp and mould cases was reviewed to understand how these were dealt with at the time. Although no major issues were identified from this analysis some minor changes were made to internal processes, for example to improve the consistency of how Category 2 damp and mould hazards are recorded on our case management system. In addition, data from the Property Pool Plus Social Housing Waiting List was analysed to find cases where applicants have specified disrepair of their current property due to damp and mould. This identified 406 cases that were investigated to ensure that those issues have been remedied. Where this could not be confirmed inspections of the affected properties were arranged. No significant issues were identified through this process as issues had been dealt with pending rehousing. Despite this the process operated by the Property Pool Plus Administration Team was updated to ensure that anyone in the borough

registering on the waiting list where damp and mould issues were mentioned is signposted to the help available from the council.

- 3.7 Staff Guidance – the Council and public health has a number of staff members who regularly go into resident's homes, for example health visitors and social workers. In order to ensure that we maximised this opportunity to identify damp and mould cases staff guidance was developed.
- 3.8 Registered Providers – in the immediate period after the Awaab Ishak case came to light council officers wrote to all Registered Providers of Social Housing to request information on what actions they had taken in response to the case. This was followed up with meeting with our main providers to discuss their response. The responses from Registered Providers was positive, and we are happy with the respective approaches that have been taken.

#### *Internal Audit*

- 3.9 As part of the process of assurance relating to the council's management of damp and mould cases an internal audit has been carried out, with the final report in November 2023. The audit found no High Risk issues with the service, however, 2 Medium Risk and 1 Low Risk issues were identified:
- 1) Although procedure notes are updated when necessary the audit identified that these should be reviewed periodically rather than just updated as required. In response this has now been actioned.
  - 2) Although members of the HST subscribe on an ad hoc basis to various email alerts and mailing lists from professional bodies, government agencies and other sources a recommendation from the audit was that this should be reviewed to ensure that all areas are covered, with relevant information circulated to all of the team where necessary. This has now been actioned by the team.
  - 3) The audit reviewed response times relating to damp and mould cases and although no issues were found it did identify that routine checks should be in place to ensure that all cases were actioned in line with adopted policies and procedures. This has now been adopted and routine assurance checks are now carried out by the Team Manager.
- 3.10 The audit also identified an action relating to how Park Lodges are managed and this is being actioned by the Green Sefton who manage these properties.

## **Conclusion**

The death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale has raised awareness of the dangers of mould in residential properties. The reaction within the housing sector, particularly the social housing sector, has been significant, and continues to be felt. From discussions that council officers had in the immediate aftermath of the Coroner's report into Awaab's death it was clear that the issue was being taken very seriously by registered providers, and there's been a continued focus on ensuring that the tragedy is not repeated since.

For residents the reporting around the case, and the information now available in the public domain, including on the council's website, has increased awareness which has in turn has increased the number of service requests related to the issue. The council's

Housing Standards Team has responded to this and provided help where necessary. In the majority of cases where a mould hazard is identified in a property the matter is dealt with informally with the relevant landlord but the council will continue to take enforcement action where necessary to ensure that properties are safe.

Although the approach to damp and mould issues in the borough has been subject to review, both by senior managers, and through internal audit the service continues to look for improvements and opportunities to supplement the current approach.

## Appendix I – HHSRS Hazards

	HAZARD	HEALTH EFFECT
1	<b>Damp and mould growth</b> Health threats due to dust mites, mould or fungal including mental and social wellbeing health threats associated with damp, humid and mouldy conditions	Allergies, asthma, effects of toxins from mould and fungal infections
2	<b>Excess cold</b> Threats to health from cold indoor temperatures. A healthy indoor temperature is 18°C to 21°C	Respiratory conditions: flu, pneumonia and bronchitis Cardiovascular conditions: heart attacks and strokes
3	<b>Excess heat</b> Threats due to high indoor temperatures	Dehydration, trauma, stroke, cardiovascular and respiratory
4	<b>Asbestos and MMF</b> Exposure to asbestos fibres and Manufactured Mineral Fibres (MMF)	Asbestos: Damage to lungs MMF: Damage to skin, eyes and lungs
5	<b>Biocides</b> Threats to health from chemicals used to treat timber and mould growth	Risk from breathing in, skin contact and swallowing of the chemical
6	<b>Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products</b> Excess levels of carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and smoke	Dizziness, nausea, headaches, disorientation, unconsciousness and breathing problems
7	<b>Lead</b> Threats to health from lead ingestion from paint, water pipes, soil and fumes from leaded petrol	Lead poisoning causing nervous disorders, mental health and blood production issues
8	<b>Radiation</b> Health threats from radon gas and its daughters, primarily airborne but also radon dissolved in water	Lung cancer caused by exposure, which increases amount and length of exposure
9	<b>Uncombusted fuel gas</b> Threat from fuel gas escaping into the atmosphere within a property	Suffocation
10	<b>Volatile organic compounds</b> Threat to health from a diverse group of organic chemicals including formaldehyde that are gaseous at room temperature and can be found in a wide variety of materials in the home	Allergies, irritation to the eyes, nose and skin, headaches, nausea, dizziness and drowsiness
11	<b>Crowding and space</b> Hazards associated with lack of space for living, sleeping and normal household or family life	Psychological distress and mental disorders, increased risk of hygiene issues, accidents and personal space and privacy compromised
12	<b>Entry by intruders</b> Problems keeping a property secure against unauthorised entry and maintaining defensible space	Fear of burglary occurring, stress and anguish caused by burglary and injuries caused by the intruder
13	<b>Lighting</b> Threats to physical and mental health associated with inadequate natural or artificial light, including the psychological effects associated with the view from the property through glazing	Depression and psychological effects due to lack of natural light. Eye strain from glare and inadequate light
14	<b>Noise</b>	Psychological and physiological

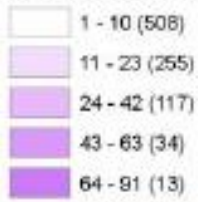


	Threats to physical and mental health due to exposure to noise within the property or within its curtilage	changes resulting from lack of sleep, poor concentration, headaches and anxiety
15	<b>Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse</b> Health hazards due to poor design, layout and construction making it hard to keep clean and hygienic, attracting pests and inadequate and unhygienic provision for storing household waste	Stomach and intestinal disease, infection, asthma, allergies, disease from rats and physical hazards
16	<b>Food safety</b> Threats of infection from poor provision and facilities to store, prepare and cook food	Stomach and intestinal disease, diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach upset and dehydration
17	<b>Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage</b> Threats of infections and threat to mental health associated with personal hygiene, including personal and clothes washing facilities, sanitation and drainage	Stomach and intestinal disease, skin infections and depression
18	<b>Water supply</b> Threats to health from contamination by bacteria, parasites, viruses and chemical pollutants due to the quality of water supply for drinking household use such as cooking, washing and sanitation	Dehydration, fatigue, headaches, dry skin, bladder infections and legionnaires disease
19	<b>Falls associated with baths</b> Falls associated with a bath, shower or similar facility	Physical injuries: cuts, lacerations, swellings and bruising.
20	<b>Falls on the level surfaces</b> Falls on any level surface such as floor, yards and paths, including falls associated with trip steps, thresholds or ramps where the change in level is less than 300mm	Physical injuries: bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries
21	<b>Falls associated with stairs and steps</b> Falls associated with stairs and ramps where the change in level is greater than 300mm. It includes internal stairs or ramps within a property, external steps or ramps associated with the property, access to the property and to shared facilities or means of escape from fire and falls over stairs, ramp or step guarding	Physical injuries: bruising, fractures, head, brain and spinal injuries
22	<b>Falls between levels</b> Falls from one level to another, inside or outside a dwelling where the difference is more than 300mm. Including falls from balconies, landings or out of windows	Physical injuries
23	<b>Electrical hazards</b> Hazards from electric shock and electricity burns	Electric shock and burns
24	<b>Fire</b> Threats to health from exposure to uncontrolled fire and associated smoke. It includes injuries from clothing catching fire, a common injuring when trying to put a fire out.	Burns, being overcome by smoke or death
25	<b>Flames, hot surfaces and materials</b> Burns or injuries caused by contact with a hot flame or fire, hot objects and non-water based liquids. Scalds caused by contact with hot liquids and vapours.	Burns, scalds, permanent scarring and death.
26	<b>Collision and entrapment</b> Risks of physical injuries from trapping body parts in architectural features such as trapping fingers in doors and windows and colliding with objects such as windows, doors and low ceilings	Physical injuries such as cuts and bruising to the body
27	<b>Explosions</b> Threats from the blast of an explosion, from debris generated by	Physical injuries, crushing, bruising, puncture, fractures, head, brain and

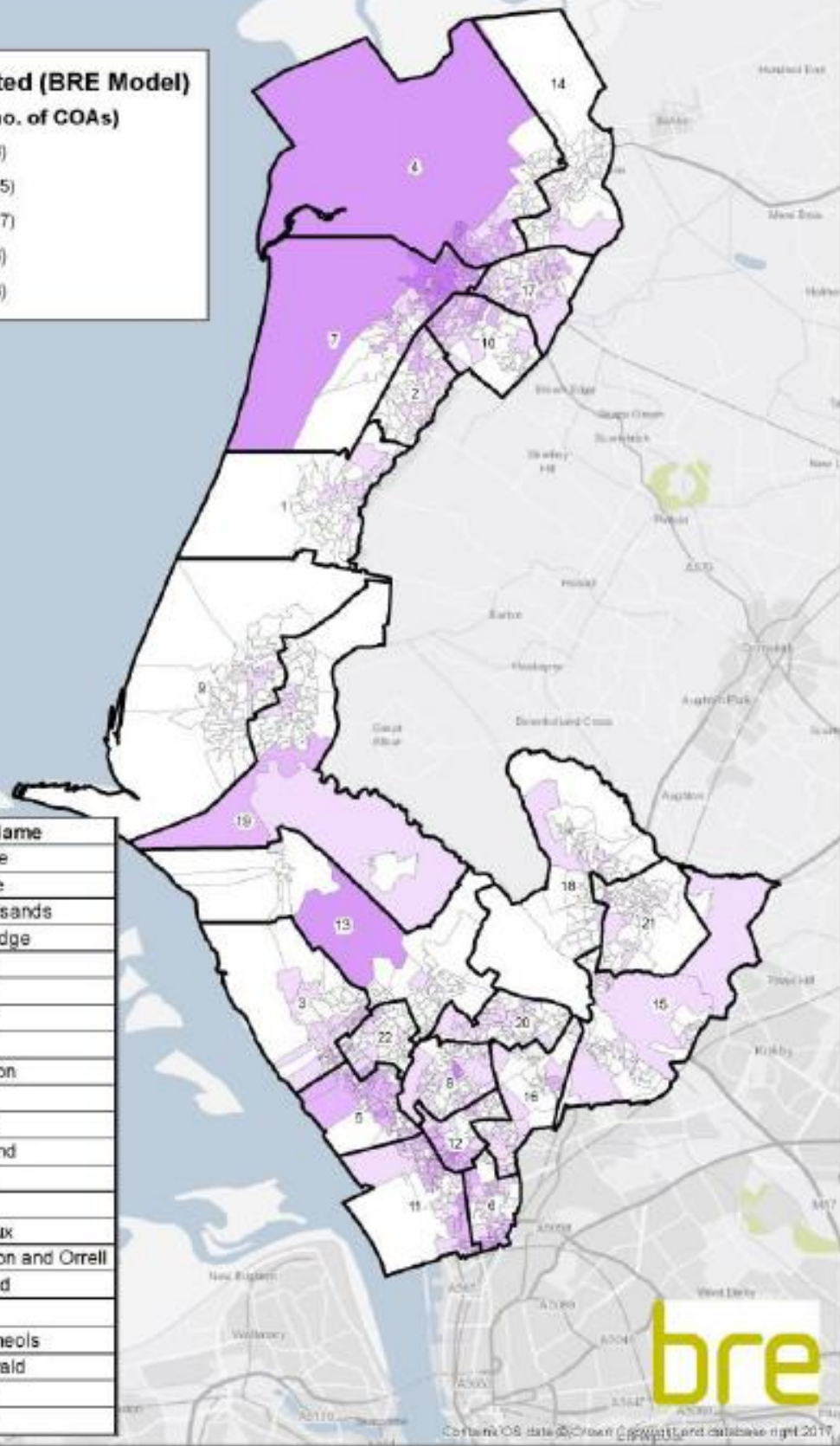
	the blast and from partial or total collapse of a building as a result of the explosion	spinal injuries.
28	<b>Ergonomics</b> Threats of physical strain associated with functional space and other features at the dwelling	Strain and sprain injuries
29	<b>Structural collapse and falling elements</b> The threat of the dwelling collapsing or part of the fabric being displaced or falling due to inadequate fixing or disrepair or as a result of adverse weather conditions.	Physical injuries

### Private Rented (BRE Model)

Percent and (no. of COAs)



Ward ID	Ward Name
1	Ainsdale
2	Birkdale
3	Blundellsands
4	Cambridge
5	Church
6	Derby
7	Duke's
8	Ford
9	Harrington
10	Kew
11	Linacre
12	Litherland
13	Manor
14	Meols
15	Molyneux
16	Netherton and Orrell
17	Norwood
18	Park
19	Ravenmeols
20	St. Oswald
21	Sudell
22	Victoria



bre

## Appendix III – Licencing Case Studies

### Case Study 1 Selective Licensing Bootle – Linacre Ward

This property is a Victorian mid terrace two-bedroom property of solid wall construction. It is located off a busy main road surrounded by properties of similar construction and age. The property is made up of 2 unrelated occupants, both deemed vulnerable. The current tenants didn't view the property prior to occupation and within a matter of weeks they were concerned regarding the poor housing conditions once they had started to live in the property. As one of the Tenant's already suffered anxiety issues the condition of the premises exacerbated their condition. The Tenant also suffered respiratory problems and they were concerned the damp issues were making the condition worse. The property had recently been painted prior to the Tenant's occupation so when the property was viewed online the full extent of the damp was not evident until they moved in. However, when she complained to the landlord, he issued the Tenant with a Section 21 Notice during the Covid-19 pandemic when Tenants had been given a reprieve from eviction during this period. A Selective Licence application had been submitted and a licensing compliance visit was undertaken.

There were numerous hazards identified in this property on the selective licence inspection visit including: -

#### Damp & Mould Hazard

There were rising damp issues to the hallway and through lounge and penetrating damp to the front bedroom.



#### Electrical Hazards

There were a number of issues with respects to the electrical installation in the property. A number of sockets only worked on an intermittent basis. There were insufficient sockets causing the tenant to overload the use of extension leads to create a trip/falls on the level hazard. The electrical socket to the cooker was only accessed by removing the cooker away from its static position. There was an electrical socket that remained in situ in the bathroom that had failed to be isolated.



Socket identified in bathroom

The light fitting to the bathroom was not compliant as did not have an 'Ingress Protection' (IP) rating where the installation was in close proximity to water.

### **Personal Hygiene, Sanitation & Drainage Hazard**

Rainwater gullies were not fit for purpose and were susceptible to obstruction.



### **Fire Hazard**

The property only had one working smoke detector in place reducing the early warning for the occupants. However, the complex layout of the property also meant the occupants had to pass through a high-risk room in the event of a fire. We had requested for an upgrade from battery smoke to mains operated smoke detection, FD30's in all bedrooms and escape windows to provide early warning and escape route. As an emergency battery smoke detection was requested.



Missing smoke detector

A schedule of works was produced, and the following works were undertaken: -

- A Damp Report was undertaken and provided to the Council and remedial works were carried out to the property followed by plastering of effected walls.



- All Electrical issues were resolved and an EICR Electrical Installation Condition Report was received confirming the electrical safety standard of the property was satisfactory including installation of a cooker switch and providing additional sockets. The bathroom socket was isolated, and a blanking plate installed.



Cooker switch installed

- The downpipe and rainwater gullies were repaired to ensure there was no obstruction and water could safely discharge to the drainage system.



- The bathroom light was changed for one which has a 'Ingress Protection rating of IPX4".



- Due to the cost implications of upgrading the fire precautions we provided the landlord with an alternative solution which involved reinstating the protected

route and removing the “inner room” scenario with Building Regulations approval where necessary. The alternative solution then only necessitated battery smoke detection which was acceptable.



Smoke detector fitted

### **Other Actions**

- The occupants were referred to the Council’s Housing Options Team to discuss the service by the landlord of the Section 21 Notice which was deemed illegal, and the landlord was notified of his legal obligations regarding the service of eviction notices during this period.
- The occupants were also offered guidance for a referral to the Adult Social Care Team and advice also given on the exceptional hardship fund to help with any rent or Council Tax shortfall as they were both benefit claimant recipients.

### **Conclusion**

It could be argued that if the Council did not have the Selective Licencing scheme in place this property would not have been inspected as the tenants who were vulnerable, may have been too fearful to complain and would not have reported it to the Council. It is likely in this case the Tenant may have been evicted without knowing their rights as a Tenant. The relationship of the Tenant and landlord had become significantly strained and due to the work required, the landlord agreed to reduce the rent during this period as a goodwill gesture and for the inconvenience caused. This is a far contrast to the situation on our initial visit. The Tenant now resides in a property that meets “decent homes standard” and selective licencing has played a part in achieving this.

### **Case Study 2**

#### **Additional (HMO) Licencing Southport – Dukes ward**

A four-storey detached Victorian property located in a road off The Promenade in Southport situated within the Additional Licencing Area. The premises have been converted into six self-contained flats. Although the date of conversion is not known it pre-dates the 1991 Building Regulations.

The freehold is owned by a Limited Management Company with each flat owner also having a single share in the company. There are six leasehold flats, five of which are tenanted, and one is owner occupied.

During the Additional Licence inspection visit, a large number of Category 1 and Category 2 Hazards were identified and remedial works were specified including:

#### **Fire Hazard**

The premises lacked a full Automatic fire detection system, Emergency lighting, adequate fire separation and means of escape in case of fire.

An 'inner room' situation existed within flat B, as it is necessary to go through a high-risk room (Kitchen) from the bedroom to reach a place of safety. (Although there is an escape window this is considered too high for means of escape in the event of a fire.)

The travel distances from flat C was excessive and therefore it was necessary to provide a protected route out from the flat by ensuring that all the flat doors within the flat (with the exception of the bathroom) are made FD30s Standard.

### **Damp & Mould Hazard**

There was excessive dampness and excessive mould growth within the top Flat (Flat C) which was a direct result of the defective roof.



### **Excess Cold Hazard**

There was insufficient heating within Flat C some of the heaters within the rooms were unsuitable to provide sufficient heating. There was no heating to one of the bedrooms and no heating to the bathroom.

### **Falling on stairs Hazard**

The staircase within flat C and to the rear of the premises leading up to flat A and Flat C represented a fall on stairs hazard and both required a handrail.

### **Flames & Hot surfaces Hazard**

There was exposed pipework within flat B which should be covered or boxed



in.



A full report of all hazards identified was sent to all leaseholders and it was suggested that the freeholder and leaseholders work together to remedy the hazards. Although it is sometimes argued in this type of House in Multiple Occupation that only the leaseholders that rent out their flats should have the work done and pay for it, some of the works required, particularly in respect of fire precautions benefit everyone living in the premises and therefore there is a need to work together.

The responsibility for having works done can fall to either the freeholder or the individual leaseholders depending what work is required.

The owners worked together to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

- The Automatic Fire Detection and Alarm System and the Emergency Lighting have been installed.
- The owners of Flat 2 did not want to lose kitchen space by providing a partition as suggested. Further discussions took place with the Housing Standards Team and it was agreed an Automatic Mist System would be installed instead.
- Extensive work has been carried out to Flat C internally and the roof has been overhauled and made watertight.
- Insulation has been provided internally in Flat C and the owners took advantage of a Government Scheme to help with the cost.
- The required handrail to the external steps has been provided and the pipework to Flat B has been boxed in.
- The Fire Doors (FD30S) have all been installed as requested with combined intumescent strips, cold smoke seals and self-closers.

## **Conclusion**

If the Authority had not introduced an Additional Licensing Scheme in April 2018 many of the Hazards identified in these premises on the compliance inspection would not have come to the attention of the Team.

This is just one Section 257 HMO that was identified as requiring an Additional Licence and a large amount of remedial work. Sefton has many Victorian buildings that are too large for single families to live in these days. There are now limited options for such buildings. Previously those which are located near the seafront in Southport were used as traditional seaside bed and breakfast establishments. With the building of new hotels, self-catering accommodation and the move to more foreign travel, this type of Victorian buildings have over the past fifty years been poorly converted into flats. Many were also converted to residential care facilities which have for a number of years been closing with a view to building purpose built residential care facilities to meet current government standards and these former care facilities have also been poorly converted to flats.

# Appendix IV – Service Request Process Map

