

# Tackling mould in rented property

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propertymark



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# A brief introduction

- Pennington was established in 1989
- One of the largest, independent agencies in the area
- A long-term member of Propertymark
- Propertymark Advisory Panel member
- We work with landlords with a single property to large professional portfolios
- Complete range of services offered



# Why is mould on today's agenda?

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- What is mould?
- Why are we talking about it today?
- What can be done?
- A landlord's responsibility
- Frequently asked questions
- The benefits of a mould-free property

# What is mould?



Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments.



Mould growth is generally caused by excess moisture, humidity and lack of ventilation.



It tends to be more common in winter when the inside temperature is higher than outside.



When warm indoor air comes into contact with cold surfaces, it can lead to condensation, allowing mould to thrive.



Mould can cause adverse health conditions as well as damage to buildings.

# Why are we talking about it today?

Mould is on our agenda today but also on the Government's agenda -



It is timely today – onset of winter when it is most common, but also end Oct/early Nov is when it is best to address



New housing legislation introduced as part of Awaab's Law, following the tragic death of a young child



Government published 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home' Sept 2023

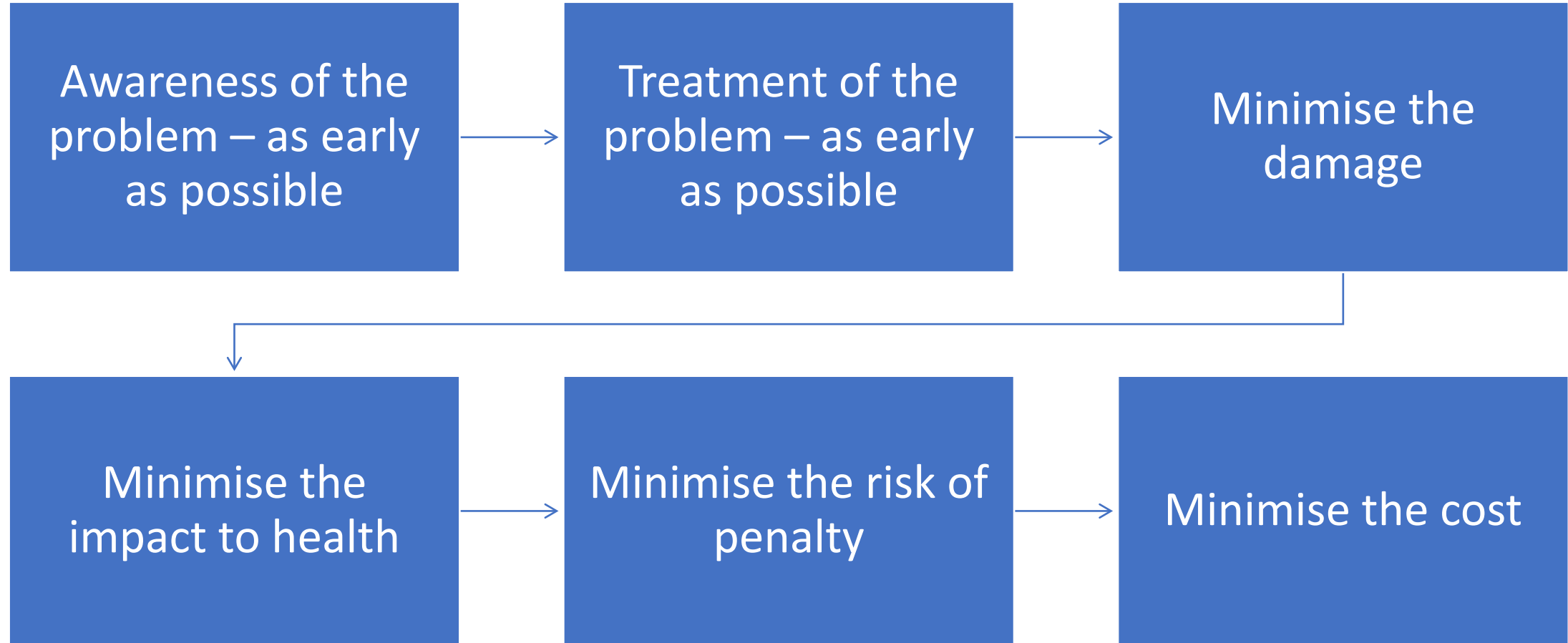


Decent Homes Standard for PRS will mean a tenant's lifestyle cannot be used solely to blame



Increased focus on compliance is expected through the introduction of a PRS Ombudsman complaint process

# What can be done?



# A landlord's responsibility

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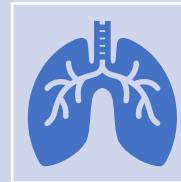


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Ensure that tenants have awareness of how to prevent mould and what to do with initial signs of mould



Provide information on prevention related to reducing moisture, maintaining the inside temperature and allowing ventilation



Ensure that the boiler is working correctly and the property is insulated where possible (energy efficiency grants for landlords may be available)



Act on any reports of an ongoing issue immediately and carry out an in-person inspection at the property with the tenant present, if possible

# A landlord's responsibility

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Recommend products to help with mould treatment



Instruct structural checks if required on leaks, building fabric, insulation etc and complete any required work as soon as possible



Monitor the situation through updates from the tenant or follow up inspections.



Maintain the good progress or look at further intervention if it is required



# A landlord's responsibility

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Document all interactions and remedial actions that have been taken

# Frequently asked questions

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## **What if the tenant has financial concerns which prevent them from heating and ventilating the property adequately?**

Ensure they know how to work the boiler, thermostat and any radiator settings properly. That any trickle vents or other ventilation haven't been covered or decorated over and they are in use.

A tenant cannot be forced to use the heating, but it may be helpful to signpost them to charities that may be able to help with financial advice and their utility company may be able to help too with advice or other support they offer customers.

## **How do you deal with the issue if the tenants are not following advice?**

An in-person visit to the property makes a bigger difference than a telephone call or email.

You can give further advice, provide inexpensive and effective cleaning/preventative products and give a practical demo of products if needed.

Follow up visits and inspections help too and keep regular checks.

# Frequently asked questions

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## **Is it ever impossible to remove mould?**

In my experience it is always possible to treat mould.

Education and advice for the tenant is important in the first instance to prevent or deal with it swiftly.

Inexpensive and effective products are readily available to treat it and they will work if there aren't any underlying structural issues.

Structural issues will need to be resolved as soon as possible to protect the building fabric and stop any problems becoming bigger than they need to be.

## **What do you do if tenants want to make it an issue – that you are making them ill, that they won't give access when needed etc?**

Continue to proactively manage the property and document everything you do for evidence.

Cooperation, education and advice is looking to keep the tenants safe and if they are proving to be the preventative element you must remove the risk from yourself.

# Benefits of a well-maintained property



Create a healthy environment



Compliance with legislation



Improve energy efficiency



Minimise maintenance costs



Increase property rental value



Capital growth



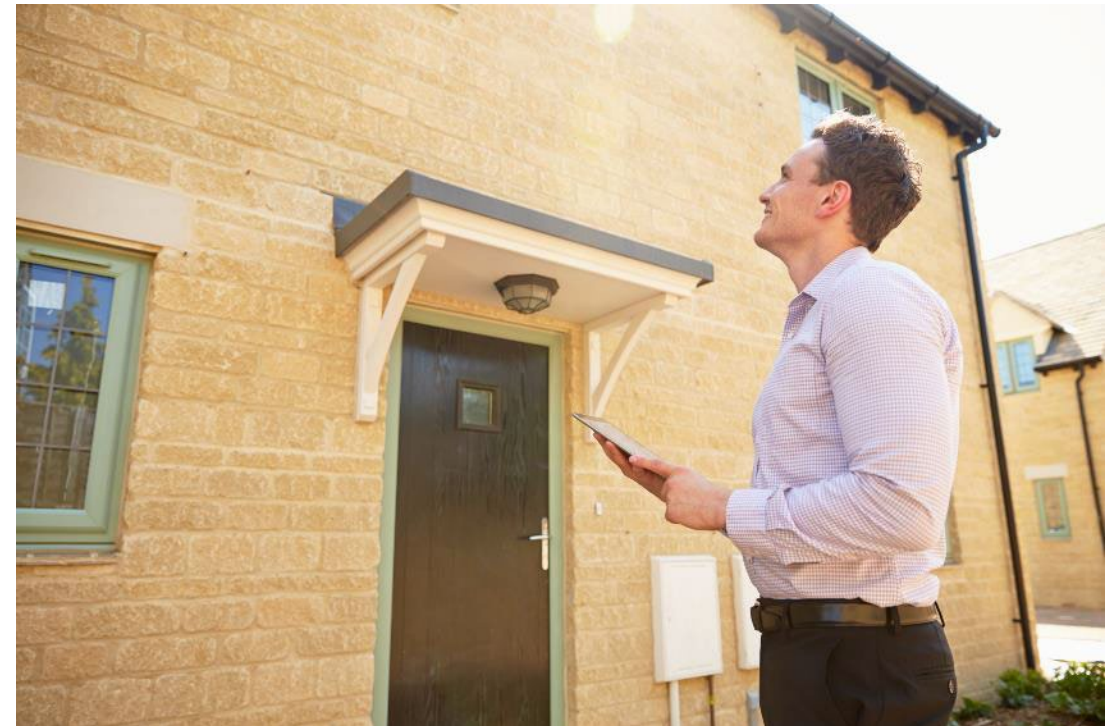
# Regular inspections



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- We can carry out regular inspections of a property, inside and out, and produce a detailed inspection report, including photographs.
- We will liaise with your tenants to arrange the inspection, giving sufficient notice and we find that most tenants welcome an inspection too.
- We will highlight any work that is more urgent and advise on any maintenance that is recommended.
- We can manage any work on your behalf with our trusted contractors and keeping you up to date throughout so there are never any surprises.
- Whether you need a one-off inspection or want to book up on a regular basis, inspections give landlords peace of mind.



# Thank you

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