



DAMP & DISREPAIR

SERVICE

WHO WE ARE

Groundwork Five Counties is a regional charity, supporting local communities and businesses to build capacity and resilience.

This is vital if we are to tackle hardship, achieve a just transition to net-zero and help nature recover in a way that reduces inequality and leads to better work and healthier, happier lives.

We work across Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland, making a positive impact on the people in communities, the places where they live and work, and encouraging them to be better guardians of our planet.

Our commercial services range from habitat management and facilitating volunteering opportunities to sustainable business solutions and beyond.

The principle of creating dynamic partnerships for action is at the heart of our approach.

For over three decades, we've worked with organisations of all sizes to enable them to make a difference on the ground. We work flexibly with businesses to understand their needs and collaboratively achieve their goals.

By partnering with Groundwork Five Counties, you'll be supporting your local community and making a difference where it really matters – close to home.



OUR STRENGTHS

- **Local action, national reach:** With projects all around the country, we're unique in that we can combine local knowledge with an ability to manage relationships and capture impact on a national level.
- **Track record:** We've worked with major brands such as Tesco, Barclays, M&S, KPMG, Britvic and Cadbury and are used to designing programmes around the needs of different businesses.
- **Bridge-builders:** We act as an interface between the boardroom and the community group, bridging the gap between the corporate world and neighbourhood needs.
- **Genuine impact:** We've helped businesses make a real difference within communities and can map and report that impact and value, including the benefit for employees and brand perception.





DAMP AND MOULD

As a landlord, your organisation is responsible for dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of properties.

Damp, mould and disrepair are some of the most prominent issues landlords are currently facing. In our experience, landlords are finding it harder to keep up with the high demand for maintenance requests.

Your tenants may not be using their heating enough due to the cost of living crisis, or are not adequately ventilating when cooking, showering or drying clothes indoors. This can result in damp and mould in the property.

Landlords around the country are seeing their housing stock value decrease by damp and mould problems, which can affect the property to the point of needing thorough refurbishments to resolve the root issue.

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) will count every instance of damp and disrepair during its inspection, which will go against your grading.

Tenants may make a complaint to the Ombudsman or sue their landlord. When this happens, costs can quickly escalate and on top of being expensive, these actions also adversely impact your reputation as a responsible landlord.

While these financial and reputational consequences of a damp or mouldy property can be damaging to your organisation, the adverse health impacts of prolonged exposure are even more reason to get on top of these issues as soon as they arise.

HEALTH IMPACTS

Damp and mould within the home can produce allergens, irritants, mould spores and other toxins that are harmful to health. Even if visible mould is not present, dampness alone can increase the risk of health problems.

Some people who live in a home with damp and mould might experience poor mental health, including heightened stress, anxiety, depression. This can further be exacerbated if the issue is not resolved by their landlord.

The more serious the damp and mould problem and the longer it is left untreated, the worse the health impacts and risks are likely to be.

The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death.



Awaab Ishaak

Two-year-old Awaab Ishaak died in December 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by extensive mould in the one-bedroom flat where he lived with his parents in Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

Awaab's father Faisal Abdulla first reported the mould to their landlord Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) in 2017* and for years did not receive the support his family desperately needed, with tragic consequences. As a direct result of Awaab's death, RBH has been stripped of its funding and its chief executive Gareth Swarbrick was fired.

The government has rolled out stringent legislation to improve social housing standards and clamp down on landlords who fail to provide safe homes – supporting their pledge to deliver Awaab's Law.

This includes new legal requirements for social landlords to **investigate hazards within 14 days, start fixing within a further 7 days, and make emergency repairs within 24 hours.**

THE LAW

Private and social landlords must adhere to a number of regulations related to damp and mould.

A lack of compliance can place a landlord at risk of prosecution or financial penalties.

The following information is official governmental guidance, as can be found on their website [here](#). This information is current, last checked in October 2024.

When responding to reports of damp and mould landlords should:

- assess the issue with urgency to identify the severity of the damp and mould and potential risks to tenants
- remove the mould and address the health risk to tenants, using a qualified professional when appropriate
- identify and tackle the underlying causes of damp and mould, including building deficiencies, inadequate ventilation and condensation
- inspect the home at least 6 weeks after remedial work has been carried out, to ensure that the issue has been fixed and damp and mould have not reappeared. If damp and mould have reappeared, further investigation and intervention should be pursued

Landlords should adopt a proactive approach to the identification and tackling of damp and mould. This includes:

- having clear processes in place to document, manage and act on reports of damp and mould and to identify common issues and trends in their housing stock
- understanding the condition of their homes and adopt a preventative approach, making the necessary interventions to ventilation, energy efficiency and building deficiencies before damp and mould occur
- supporting tenants to understand what they can do to reduce damp and mould
- building relationships with health and social care professionals supporting tenants to ensure that every opportunity to identify tenants living in homes with damp and mould is utilised
- building relationships with tenants, ensuring they feel encouraged to report damp and mould



RSH INSPECTION

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is a standalone non departmental public body of government that regulates registered social housing providers, including local authorities and housing associations. All social housing providers in England are required to be on the register.

RSH sets standards that need to be evidenced through a regular inspection. It can issue an enforcement notice if a standard has been breached or on other grounds, including when the interests of tenants require protection, or the provider has mismanaged its affairs.

It can issue a fine if a provider fails to comply with an enforcement notice, and it can award compensation to affected tenants. It can arrange for emergency remedial action to be carried out - requiring the provider to pay expenses it incurs.

RSH will also publicly 'name and shame' providers who fail to comply or rectify issues, or even enforce deregistration.



Housing providers will be graded on governance, viability and consumer standards.

The latter includes:

- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Safety and Quality Standard
- Tenancy Standard
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability (including Tenant Satisfaction)
- Consumer standards Code of Practice

Our Damp & Disrepair service can help you improve your Consumer Standard grading by taking a pro-active approach to tenants' behaviours, mental and physical wellbeing, finances, and satisfaction with you as their landlord.

OUR SERVICE



We believe every home should be a safe and healthy place.

Addressing the causes and effects of damp and mould can do so much to improve quality of life, finances, physical and mental health.

Our team of experts work closely with local authorities, housing providers and their tenants to identify and tackle the root causes of damp, mould and other disrepair. The result is healthier, more comfortable living spaces.

Our approach is centred on empowering tenants to take control of their homes. We offer in-house assessments, identifying specific areas for improvement and providing to the landlord recommendations for remediation.

Your tenants' behaviour may be causing issues within the home, such as damp forming. Encouraging lifestyle changes in your tenants may feel impossible, but we know they are key to keeping homes in good order.

Our impartial and judgement-free advice encourages behavioural change, ensuring tenants are aware of how their actions can prevent issues, and are fully equipped to look after their home. This in turn improves the condition of your housing stock - meaning less repairs and unhappy tenants turning to claim farmers.

We follow up with the tenant two months later, to ensure our bespoke advice has been put into practice, and check if repairs have started on the reported issues.



- **Working with you:** We will provide your tenants with information that you feel is important to them. Being given the right advice and feeling looked after by a caring landlord can make a huge difference to the tenants' feelings and actions towards you.
- **Cost-focused:** We show people that being green is not just good for the planet but also for the pocket. We're laser-focused on how to help individuals, households and communities save money and maximise their income.
- **Experienced advisors:** Our staff have recognised energy-efficiency qualifications and can encourage tenants to make behavioural changes that benefits the property.
- **Practical action:** We don't just offer advice, we take practical action too. We can fit small items that help keep the house in good order, such as draught excluders, and support your tenants with filling in grant application forms or switching energy providers.
- **Expert at referrals:** We know that people living in damp homes might be dealing with a wide range of issues, from health conditions to loneliness. Our staff are trained to spot issues like these and refer people to the right local service.

Damp & Disrepair bridges the gap between tenant and landlord.

RESULTS

We have been delivering Damp & Disrepair for Bassetlaw District Council, documenting the issues we found and reported these back to the landlord. This gives the Council oversight of the state of their stock and the chance to resolve problems amicably with their tenants.

Bespoke advice was given to tenants based on the state of their home and their current behaviours. We expanded their knowledge on preventing damp and mould so they may be able to look after the property, whilst also helping them save money on energy bills and reduce their energy consumption.

See below our impact for the months April to August 2024. In just four short months, we visited 166 properties.

If our advice is followed, an average of £300 can be saved per household each year. A total a reduction of 95,715 kg of CO2 can be achieved, the equivalent of driving 283,470 miles. Together, these households can save 3.4 megalitres of water which could fill up a 25 metre pool four times.

Damp & Disrepair - Bassetlaw District Council, between April - August 2024



166 properties inspected
for damp, mould and disrepair



approx. **£49,797** total savings
across all households if our advice is followed



approx. **£300** average savings
per household



approx. **95,715 kg** of CO2 per year saved in total
The equivalent of:
Driving **283,470** miles or recycling **33.2** tons of waste



approx. **577 kg** per year saved per household on average
The equivalent of:
Driving **1,708** miles or recycling **25** bin bags of waste



approx. **3,408,384 litres (3.4 megalitres)** of water per year saved in total
The equivalent of:
Filling a **25 metre pool** 4 times or running a dishwasher **243,456** times



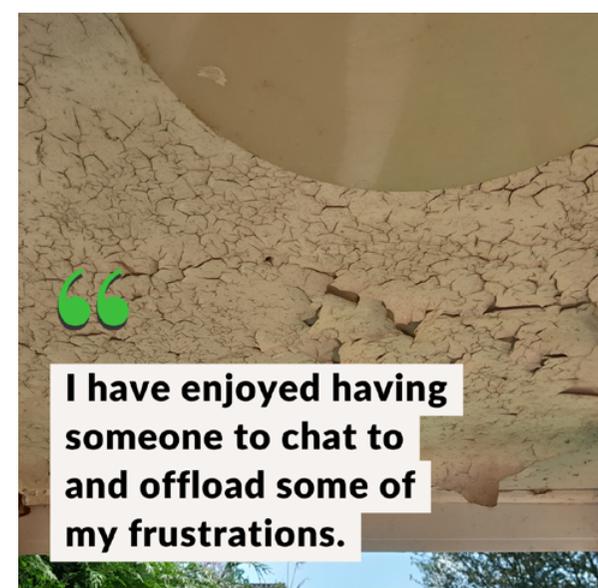
approx. **20,532 litres** per year saved per household on average
The equivalent of:
Drinking **36,131** pints of water or running a tap for **3,422** minutes

TENANT FEEDBACK

Tenants who have received the Damp & Disrepair service feel more positive about their landlord after the visit.

They appreciate the advice and that action is being taken, especially when they have made multiple attempts at getting their reported issue resolved.

They feel they can be honest where they may not feel secure to do so directly.



WORK WITH US

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We are offering limited trials of Damp & Disrepair throughout 2025 for East Midlands housing providers to test the benefits of this innovative service.

If you are interested in making your housing stock healthier, safer and more cost-effective, our Damp & Disrepair service is right for you.

To find out more and register interest and requirement, [click here](#) or contact Darryl Plummer, our Programmes Director:

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Together, we can build a sustainable, healthier future for tenants and landlords alike.



FIVE COUNTIES

DERBYSHIRE • NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
LEICESTERSHIRE • LINCOLNSHIRE • RUTLAND

