

Easy Read



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Cymru · Wales

Housing: Problems with repairs, damp and mould

Should we investigate? Tell us what you think



November 2025

How to use this document



This is an Easy Read version of: **Proposed Wider Own Initiative Investigation – Housing: Responding to reports of disrepair, damp and mould for vulnerable tenants.**



You might need help to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)**. For more information contact:

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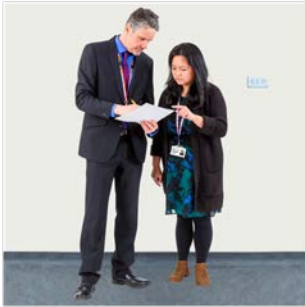
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About this document



We are the office of the **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**.



We look into complaints about public services in Wales. We help services and councils do better.



We are thinking about starting an **Own Initiative Investigation**.



This means we choose to investigate a big problem in services that affects many people.



We would look at repairs, damp, and mould in social housing.



Social housing is housing provided by:

- Housing Associations, also called Registered Social Landlords.
- Local councils.



We want to know how they deal with reports and complaints about repairs, damp, and mould.



We want to know how this affects **vulnerable tenants**. By this we mean, for example:

- Disabled people.
- Older people.
- Children and young people.
- People from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- People on low income.



We want to hear your views before we decide to look into it.

About what we would do



We can carry out **Own Initiative Investigations**.
This means we choose to look into a problem.



We can do this when we think there may be serious problems for lots of people.



We could look at how social housing providers in Wales deal with:

- repairs
- damp
- and mould.

We would check if social housing providers:



- Deal with reports of damp, mould, or disrepair in the right way.



- Think about the needs of **vulnerable tenants** – like older people and children.

We could also:



- Show how providers can improve their services.



- Share good examples to help services work better across Wales.

Why this matters

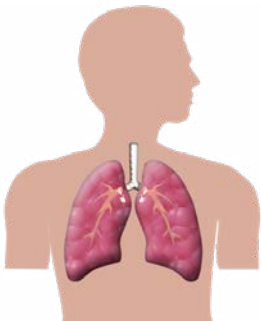


Poor housing can harm health. In 2020, a child in Rochdale died because of mould in his social housing home.



Around 1 in 6 homes in Wales are social housing.

A 2019 report found:



- Poor housing can harm people's physical and mental health a lot.



- Fixing the worst problems could save the NHS in Wales £95 million a year.

A tenant survey in 2025 found:



- Damp and mould affected people's health and safety.



- Not getting clear information made things harder.



- Tenants felt their landlord ignore their concerns.

Laws and standards



The law says landlords must keep homes in good repair and safe to live in.



The **Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023** explains what good social housing should look like. Landlords must follow these rules.



Social housing providers must have:

- Policies for repairs and looking after homes.
- A complaints process for tenants.



If someone is unhappy with the response to a complaint, they can complain to us.

What we have seen



Social housing tenants face problems with:

- How landlords respond to reports about repairs.
- How landlords deal with damp and mould.



We have had more complaints about social housing recently.



Tenants often wait too long for repairs. Especially older or disabled people.



During 2024 to 2025, we resolved 79 cases about disrepair, damp, or mould early, without a full investigation.



We think these problems could affect lots of social housing tenants.



This is why we are thinking about doing this Own Initiative Investigation.

Who we will focus on



This investigation could focus on people most at risk of harm. Like:

Disabled people



Disabled people are more likely to live in social housing.

They face problems like:



- Not enough homes they can use.
- Long waits for changes they need.
- More harm from damp and mould.

Older people



Older people need safe, warm homes.



They can be more affected by:

- Homes that do not keep heat well.
- Damp and mould.
- Safety problems.

Children and young people



Children and young people can be part of families or starting to live on their own.



Families with children make up many people waiting for social housing. Poor housing can harm their health and growth.

People from different ethnic backgrounds



Ethnicity is a person's race or background. For example, black, white or Asian.

People from different ethnic backgrounds are more likely to face:



- Too many people in one home.

- Money problems.



- Problems finding the right homes and lack of understanding.

People on low income



Low income means earning less money than most other people.



People with low income are more likely to live in social housing.



They spend more of their money on rent.



Bad housing and high energy costs affect them more.

Gaps in what we know



We need to understand more about how bad housing affects different groups of people.



- Many social housing providers cannot show which groups face problems.



- A survey in 2023 found that around 4 in 10 of providers could not share this information by household type.



- Most research looks at how people get housing, not what happens after they move in.

Welsh language



We do not know how many social housing tenants speak Welsh.



Social housing providers must offer their complaints process in Welsh.



The Welsh Language Commissioner found some landlords do not always provide Welsh services.



This can cause misunderstandings, and delays in repairs.

What do you think



We are asking for your views before we decide:

- if we should start this investigation
- and what things we should look at.



We want your views on:

- If this investigation could help a lot of people.
- If we are the right organisation to do this work.

We especially want to hear from:



- Vulnerable social housing tenants. Like older people and disabled people.



- People who have reported damp, mould, or disrepair.



- People who deal with housing concerns for vulnerable tenants.



- People who support vulnerable tenants, including charities.



- Social housing providers, councils and housing associations.

Questions

Please answer the questions and explain your answers. Give examples if you can.



1. Should we investigate how social housing providers deal with damp, mould, and repairs?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you want to tell us more, please write below:



2. Are there problems in how social housing providers deal with repairs or complaints?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you want to tell us more, please write below:



**3. Should we focus on one group of people?
For example, disabled people.**

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered Yes, please write below which group and why:



4. Are there any social housing providers that we should investigate?

Yes

No

Not sure

If you answered Yes, please write below which ones and why:

Welsh language



5. What effects would the investigation have on people using Welsh? Please write below:



6. How could we make this investigation have good effects on people using Welsh? Please write below:



7. How could we lower any bad effects on people using Welsh? Please write below:

Other comments



8. If you have any other comments about this possible investigation, please write below:

How to share your views



Please send your views by 12:00 midday on **8 December 2025**.

You can use any of these ways:



Email this completed form to:

OwnInitiative@ombudsman.wales



Post this completed form to:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae

Pencoed

CF35 5LJ



Phone 0300 790 0203 and ask for the Own Initiative Lead Officer.



[Fill in our online form.](#)

Privacy notice



We will keep your personal information safe.
[Our privacy notice explains how we use your information, you can read it here.](#)