

Confidential

Agenda Item 14.4
Date of Meeting: 29/03/23

To: The Management Committee
From: The Director
Subject: Notifiable Event – Dampness and Mould Case

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 Recently we had been approached by a reporter from The Sun to comment on a tenant's property in relation to dampness and mould. After being asked to comment a second time, an article appeared in the newspaper on 13th March 2023.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the action taken and that a Notifiable Event had to be made to The Regulator.

2. Notifiable Event – Dampness and Mould

- 2.1 Committee is aware that dampness and mould is a key topic at the moment and is a focus for The Regulator in terms of tenant safety. This has come on the back of the horrendous reports on English landlords and the state of some of their properties and the tragic case of the young child that died.
- 2.2 We received the first request from The Sun reporter during the week beginning 20th February. After obtaining some advice from our DPO service, we provided a brief comment on 24th February which stated "The work is scheduled for today at the tenant's request, following it being reported to us late on Friday 17 February 2023."
- 2.3 The tenant phoned the out of hours emergency repair service on Friday 17th February to report water coming down into her bathroom. Despite our contractor calling out that night to attend the emergency, no access was given to the property.
- 2.4 The issue relates to a leak at the bath overflow from the property above. Access to both properties was only given on 20th and 21st February. The repair to the bath overflow was completed on 21st February. The initial steps taken to the flat, that had the water damage, was to wash down the ceilings and walls (kitchen and bathroom) with anti-fungal solution. This work was originally planned for 21st February but at the tenant's request

was not carried out until 24th February. Two weeks drying out period was required.

- 2.5 On Friday 3rd March we were asked for further comment by The Sun reporter as he had been advised the mould had returned. We responded on the 8th March “We further attended the property on Monday and have removed the bathroom ceiling to allow further drying out works. We are actively working with the tenant during this drying out period.”
- 2.6 Late on the afternoon of Wednesday 15th March 2023, I was advised that an article had been in The Sun newspaper on 13th March about the case. On Thursday 16th March I reviewed the case with our Technical Services Manager and Housing Services Manager and established that arrangements were being made to put dehumidifiers in the property that week. I then briefed the Chairperson on the matter and that I intended to contact our Regulation Manager to discuss it with them. On speaking with our Regulation Manager, due to the nature of the claims being made, I was advised to submit a Notifiable Event and send her a summary of our position on the case. I did this on Friday 17th March.
- 2.7 I received an acknowledgement from our Regulation Manager on 20th March and on the 21st March received the following response from The Regulator

“Thank you for your Notifiable Event Form of 17/03/2023, Reference Number 30426, on behalf of Rosehill Housing Co-operative Limited.

The background information provided has given us a clear understanding of the current situation between Rosehill and the tenant. We only ask that you provide us with an update when the repair work is concluded and the tenant's response to this.”

- 2.8 I provided The Regulator with an update on 21st March which was to advise the dehumidifiers were switched off the day before as the ceiling had dried out. The tenant's mother confirmed to our contractor she was happy with this. Ceiling replaced and plasterwork done. A new light would be fitted in the bathroom the next day, at which time we would remove dehumidifiers and take photos of completed work. I advised I would confirm once the works had been fully completed.

- 2.9 A copy of the newspaper article is attached for Committee’s information.

3. Risk

- 3.1 Any bad publicity about Rosehill could be damaging to our reputation amongst our tenants and stakeholders and could result in a loss of confidence. How we respond and how quickly can help to mitigate such

risks arising. Once I became aware of the newspaper article I met with the relevant Managers to review the points raised in the news article. I then briefed the Chair and made contact with our Regulation Manager to determine whether a Notifiable Event should be raised. With regard to the case itself I am satisfied, having reviewed the matter, that we acted quickly to the reports of mould and dampness and have taken all necessary steps to address the matter. Any delays to completing works have been down to getting access to the property which is not currently being occupied.

4. Compliance and Assurance

- 4.1 The actions we have taken to date including contacting our Regulation Manager and submitting a Notifiable Event about the case, demonstrates we are compliant with Regulatory Requirements by following the statutory guidance on Notifiable Events.

5. Summary

- 5.1 Following a recent article in The Sun newspaper about one of our properties in relation to dampness and mould, a range of steps were undertaken. This included reviewing the case with relevant Managers, briefing the Chairperson, contacting our Regulation Manager, and subsequently submitting a Notifiable Event.
- 5.2 Information about the case is provided in paragraphs 2.3 to 2.8. A copy of the newspaper article is attached for Committee's information.
- 5.3 The risks relating to this matter and the mitigating measures are covered under Section 3.
- 5.4 We have ensured our compliance with Regulatory Requirements as set out in Section 4.
- 5.5 Committee is asked to note this report and the current position with the case. It is also asked to note there is an open Notifiable Event on the matter and that I will be keeping The Regulator updated on the completion of the works.