



Damp, Mould and Fuel Poverty Toolkit for health, care and community staff

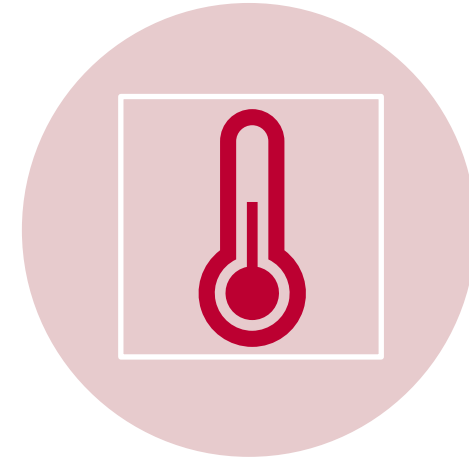
Adele Vowles, Senior Public Health Specialist, Bristol City Council

Local context



In 2022, **more than 20,000 households** were living in fuel poverty in Bristol (10.3% of residents)

(Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2024).



Almost **one in three** Bristol residents were extremely or moderately worried about keeping their home warm last winter

(Quality of Life Survey, 2024).

Definitions

Fuel poverty

Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE), finds a household to be fuel poor if it:

- Has a residual income below the **poverty** line (after accounting for required fuel costs) and
- Lives in a home that has an energy **efficiency rating below Band C**



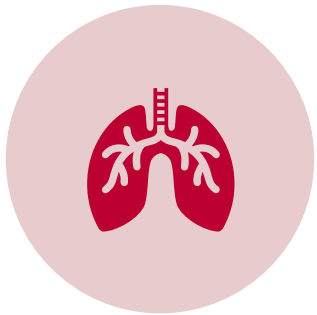
Damp and mould

- Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property and can lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms,
- It can occur in homes for a variety of reasons,
- Landlords are legally responsible for addressing damp and mould,



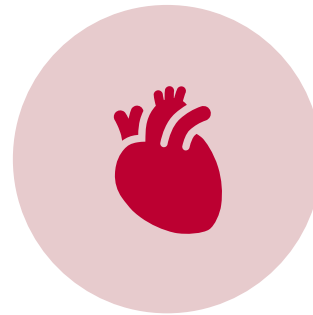
(Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2021)

Health impacts of damp, mould and fuel poverty



Respiratory effects

Cough, wheeze and shortness of breath, increased risk of airway infections, development or worsening of allergic airway diseases such as asthma



Cardiovascular effects

Circulatory problems, increased risk of stroke and heart attack.



Other physical effects

Irritation of eyes and skin such as eczema



Poor mental health and wellbeing

People at an increased risk from damp and mould

Population groups:

- Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth
- Children and young people up to age 16 years
- Older people, aged 65+

Health condition/s:

- Respiratory condition
- Skin conditions
- Cardiovascular conditions
- Immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system
- People living with a mental health condition
- People who are bedbound, housebound or have mobility problems

Health and care professionals in Bristol reported (2024)

- Seeing an **increase** in residents unable to **heat** their homes and reporting **damp and mould**,
- Don't know where to **refer and signpost** – difficult as see patients from different local authorities
- Frequently being asked to provide **letters** highlighting impact of housing on health – but don't know what they should say or where they need to be sent,



Damp, Mould and Fuel Poverty Toolkit

**Bristol Health
Partners**

**BRISTOL
ONE CITY**

Damp, mould and fuel poverty toolkit for staff

(Health, care and community staff in Bristol, North
Somerset and South Gloucestershire)

January 2026

Version 2

Damp, mould and/or fuel poverty identification and action

IDENTIFY

Increased risk of damp and mould impacts (population group/ health condition)

AND

Damp, mould and/or fuel poverty concerns

RECORD

Damp and mould and/or fuel poverty e.g. for primary and secondary care use SNOMED code “Housing problem – Fuel poverty”

TAKE ACTION

➤ **RAISE** negative health impacts

Does the client have capacity to advocate for themselves?

➤ **SIGNPOST/REFER** for damp, mould and/or fuel poverty **advice** and support

➤ **ADVISE** raising/**RAISE** with landlord/**housing** provider

Free fuel poverty advice and support

Centre for Sustainable Energy – Bristol and North Somerset

Warm and Well – South Gloucestershire



- Help to resolve energy bill or meter issues, discount applications
- Emergency support e.g. vouchers, grants for essential appliances,
- Sign up to Priority Service Registers (energy, water)

- Advice on:
 - how to manage / reduce energy usage, use of heating controls,
 - energy saving measures e.g. draught proofing,
 - energy efficiency improvements and grants e.g. heating, insulation,
 - handyperson services or emergency repairs

Supporting resources

➤ Templates

- SMS signposting template,
- Letter template to raise concerns about the health impacts of damp and mould (where significant concerns),

➤ Resources

- List of population groups and health conditions which increase a person's risk of the negative health impacts of damp and mould,
- Key links and printable factsheets.

➤ Local training opportunities

