



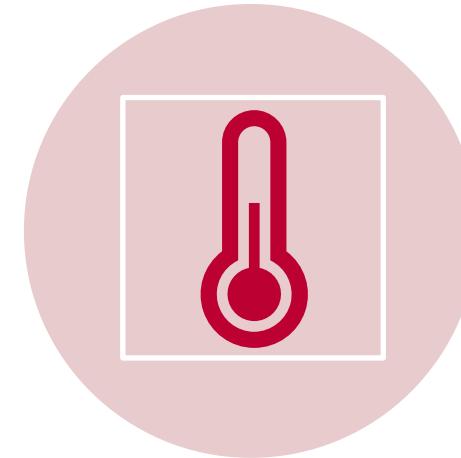
# **Damp, Mould and Fuel Poverty Toolkit for health, care and community staff**

Adele Vowles, Senior Public Health Specialist, Bristol City Council



**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).

## 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**

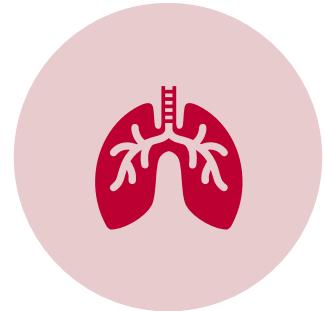


## Damp and mould

- 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,

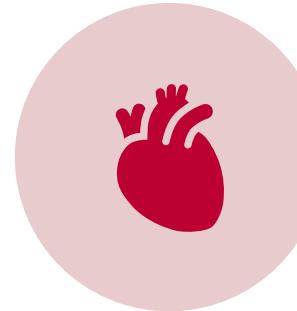


# Health impacts of damp, mould and fuel poverty



## 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,



**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

