

Housing Provider's Guide to Awaab's Law

Helping you understand your new responsibilities under Awaab's Law, from when the clock starts to scenarios in practice, to support full compliance and ensure resident safety.

October 2025



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Awaab's Law Background

As of **27th October 2025**, Awaab's Law introduces strict new legal duties for social landlords to identify, investigate, and resolve hazards in tenants' homes within set timeframes. The law follows the government's October 2025 implementation guidance.

The aim is to prevent health and safety risks from being left unresolved, and to ensure that tenants are kept safe, informed and supported throughout the process.

Awaab's Law is an amendment to UK housing legislation, proposed in honour of the tragic death of two-year-old Awaab Ishak in December 2020. Awaab suffered respiratory issues caused by prolonged exposure to black mould in his home. The family reported the mould as a severe health risk to their social housing provider who failed to deal with the issues and root cause of the mould. The family and campaigners highlighted the injustice that social housing tenants can face and the necessity for legal provisions to be implemented.

This landmark law will be the most significant change to how the sector operates in the past decade, as the first piece of legislation to introduce timescales that hazards must be addressed within and is an important step towards protecting tenants and preventing other tragedies from happening in the future.

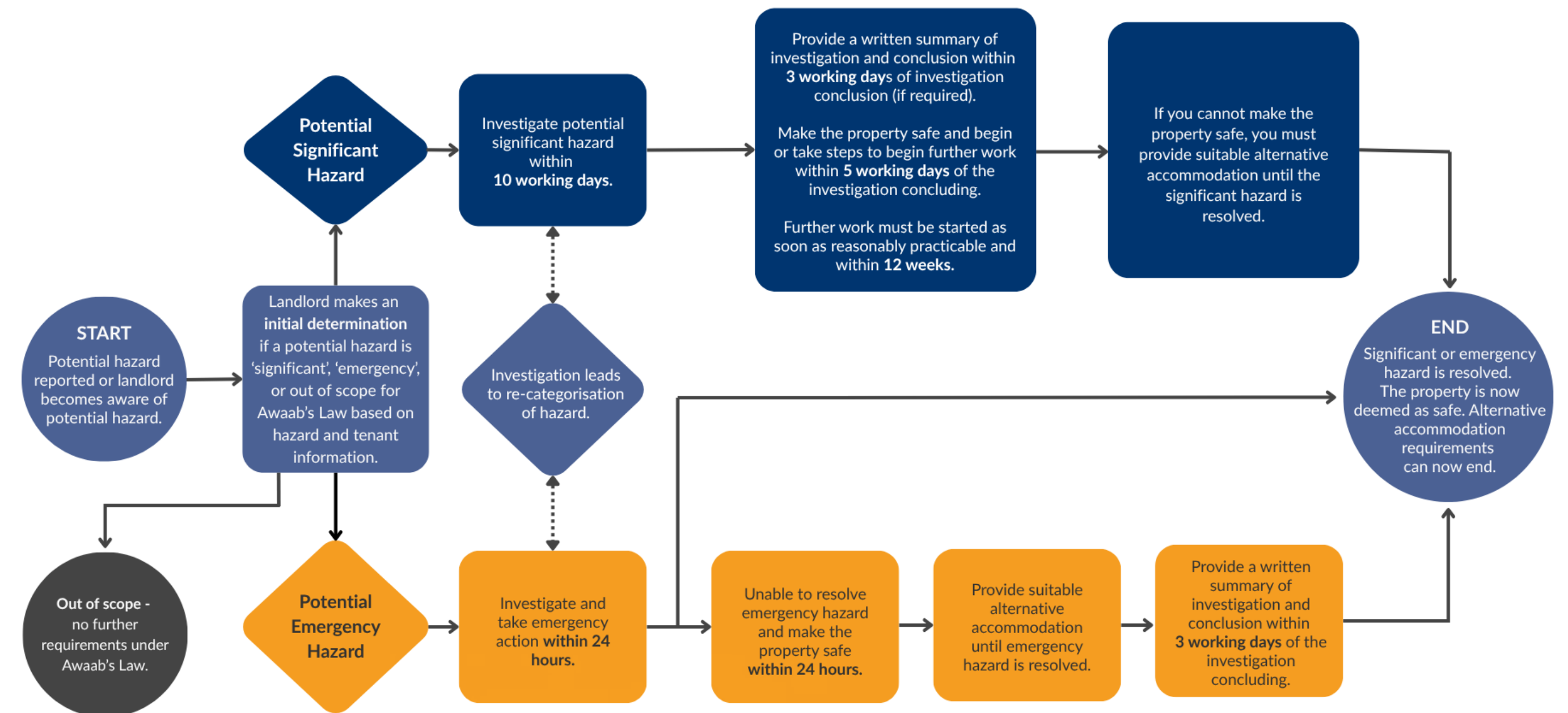


Your Legal Requirements

Awaab's Law introduces strict new legal requirements that social landlords must identify, investigate, and resolve hazards in tenants' homes within set timeframes.

Social landlords must:

- Investigate potential emergency hazards immediately, and if confirmed, complete safety work as soon as reasonably practicable, and always **within 24 hours**.
- Investigate potential significant hazards within **10 working days**.
- Provide written findings to tenants within **3 working days** of any investigation concluding.
- Carry out safety work within **5 working days** where a significant hazard is identified.
- Begin or take steps to begin supplementary works (to prevent recurrence) within **5 working days**, or as soon as reasonably possible, and **no later than 12 weeks**.
- Complete works satisfactorily within a reasonable period.
- Secure suitable alternative accommodation (at the landlord's expense) if hazards cannot be resolved within the required timeframes.
- Keep tenants updated and provide advice on how to stay safe while works are ongoing.



Failure to meet these obligations can leave a landlord in breach of the law unless they can show they used all reasonable endeavours.

Note: This process does not include, renewed and further investigation timeframes.

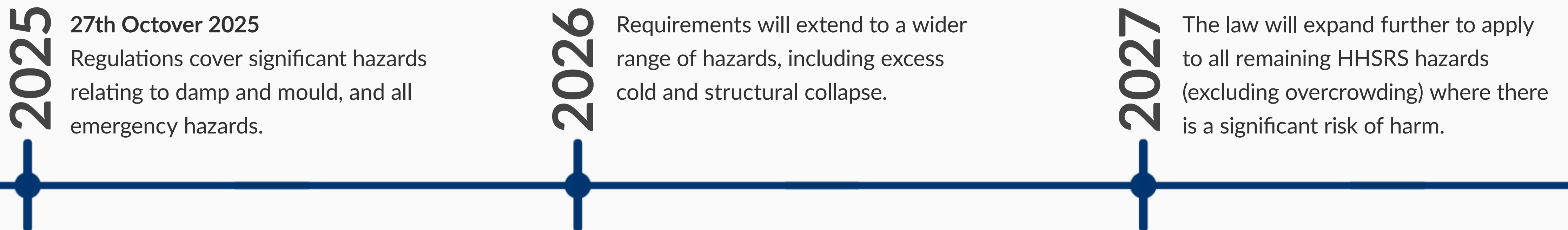
How the Law is Being Implemented

Awaab's Law is being implemented in phases, with the first phase taking effect from 27th October 2025, where regulations cover significant hazards relating to damp and mould, and all emergency hazards.

Phase 2 will come into force in 2026, to apply in addition to phase 2 and extend the regulations to include the following hazards where they present a significant risk of harm:

- Excess cold and excess heat
- Falls associated with baths etc., on level surfaces, on stairs and between levels
- Structural collapse, and explosions
- Fire, and electrical hazards
- Domestic and personal hygiene and food safety

Phase 3 will be implemented in 2027 and will extend regulations to all remaining HHSRS hazards, apart from overcrowding, where they present a significant risk of harm.



When Does the Clock Start?

Your legal duties begin the moment a landlord becomes aware of a potential hazard (**day 0**).

Awareness may come from:

- Routine inspections or visits
- Investigations of related hazards
- Notifications from contractors, regulators, or third parties
- Reports from tenants (or someone acting for them)

Timeframes then begin the next working day (**day 1**).



Hazards in Scope

A hazards that will be in scope for the first phase must:

- a) Be part of a building or land the landlord is responsible for
- b) Fall within the landlord's control to repair
- c) Not be the result of tenant breach of contract
- d) Arise from defects, disrepair or lack of maintenance
- e) Be classed as a significant or emergency hazard

Unlike the HHSRS, hazards do not need to reach Category 1 level. Awaab's Law requires a **person-centred assessment**: landlords must consider the tenant's health, vulnerabilities and circumstances. For example, damp and mould could be a significant hazard for an elderly tenant with respiratory illness, even if it scores as Category 2 under HHSRS.



Want to learn more about HHSRS?

Download your free **Guide to the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** to discover expert insights on the fundamentals of the HHSRS, how to address hazards, and keep your buildings safe and compliant.

Considering Resident Information

The classification of a hazard as significant or emergency depends partly on what the landlord knows (or reasonably should know) about the tenant's circumstances.

Landlords therefore need robust systems to record:

- Known vulnerabilities or health risks
- Household makeup
- Preferred contact methods and reasonable adjustments (e.g. language, disability needs)

Landlords should accept tenants' reports of vulnerabilities at face value (medical evidence is not required) and also consider input from third parties such as doctors, social workers, or schools.



Who Does Awaab's Law Apply to?

Whilst Awaab's Law primarily applies to **social landlords**, on 17th July 2024, the government announced a new Renters' Rights Bill which will extend Awaab's Law to the **private rented sector**.

Applying Awaab's Law to temporary accommodation is also being consulted on to achieve the best outcomes.

The Scottish Government has also announced its intention to amend the Housing (Scotland) Bill, expanding ministers' powers to set timeframes for social landlords to investigate disrepair and begin repairs.



Investigations

There are four types of investigation:

1

Standard

Within 10 working days of awareness. Can be remote unless the tenant requests an in-person visit. Must identify whether a significant/emergency hazard exists and what work is required.

2

Renewed

If a tenant requests an in-person inspection after a remote one. The 10-day timeframe resets.

3

Emergency

Within 24 hours where there are reasonable grounds to believe an emergency hazard exists. Can be remote if appropriate.

4

Further

Where more specialist investigation is needed (e.g. structural survey). Initial safety work must still be completed promptly while this takes place.

Investigations must be carried out by competent staff or specialists with the relevant knowledge and skills.

Access

Landlords must take reasonable steps to gain access, including:

- Offering flexible timeslots, including evenings/weekends where possible
- Using multiple communication channels
- Explaining why access is needed and who will attend
- Providing information in accessible formats (translations, large print, etc.)
- Leaving notices with clear rescheduling instructions if access is missed

If access is repeatedly denied, landlords may not be in breach if they can evidence all reasonable steps were taken. Courts will decide whether “reasonable steps” were met in each case.



Repairs and Further Works

If a hazard is confirmed:



Emergency hazards

Works must be completed
within 24 hours.



Significant hazards

Safety works must be completed
within 5 working days.

If supplementary preventative works cannot be started within 5 working days (due to specialist labour, materials, or regulatory approvals), steps must still be taken within 5 days to arrange them. Works must begin within 12 weeks.

Exceptions

Landlords may not be required to carry out works where:

- The hazard arises from tenant behaviour or damage
- The hazard is due to an accident or natural hazard (fire, flood, storm)
- Legal consents cannot be secured (e.g. building control, freeholder approval)
- The item is tenant-owned (e.g. white goods)

Even where exceptions apply, landlords should still consider how best to support tenants under their wider duties.



Alternative Accommodation

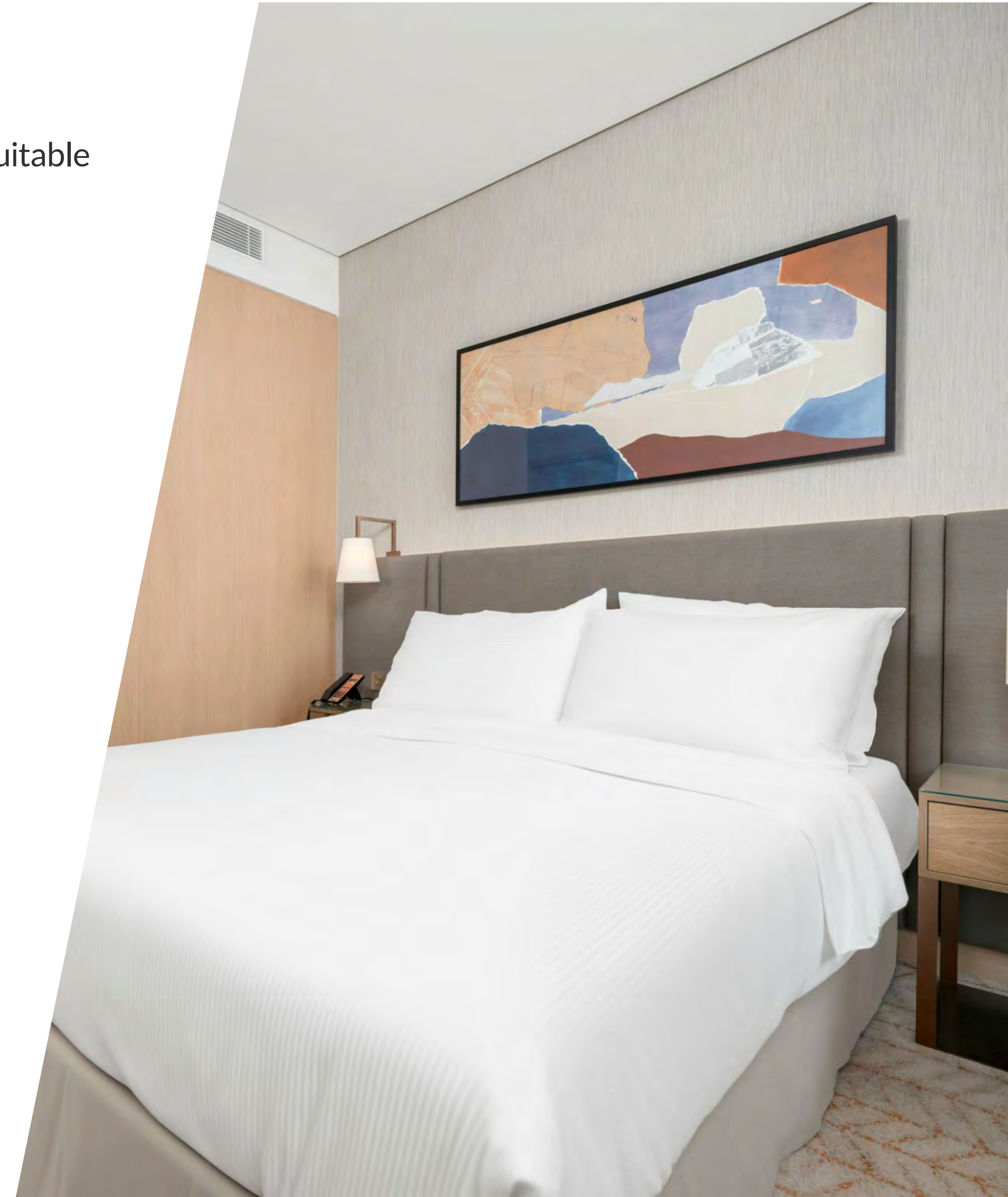
Where homes cannot be made safe within required timeframes, landlords must provide suitable alternative accommodation, covering all household members. Suitability depends on:

- Space and bedroom numbers
- Location (work, school, support networks)
- Accessibility for disabled or medically vulnerable tenants
- Duration of stay (short stays may allow hotels; longer stays require proper facilities)

The duty ends when:

- Works are complete
- Investigations show no significant or emergency hazards
- Legal restrictions prevent works
- Tenants decline alternative accommodation in writing

Tenants may refuse offers but landlords must clearly explain risks.



Written Summaries

Within 3 working days of any investigation concluding, landlords must issue a written summary (unless the hazard has already been fully resolved).

This must state:

- Whether a significant or emergency hazard was found
- What action is required, and timeframes for completion
- If no action is required, why not
- Contact details for the landlord

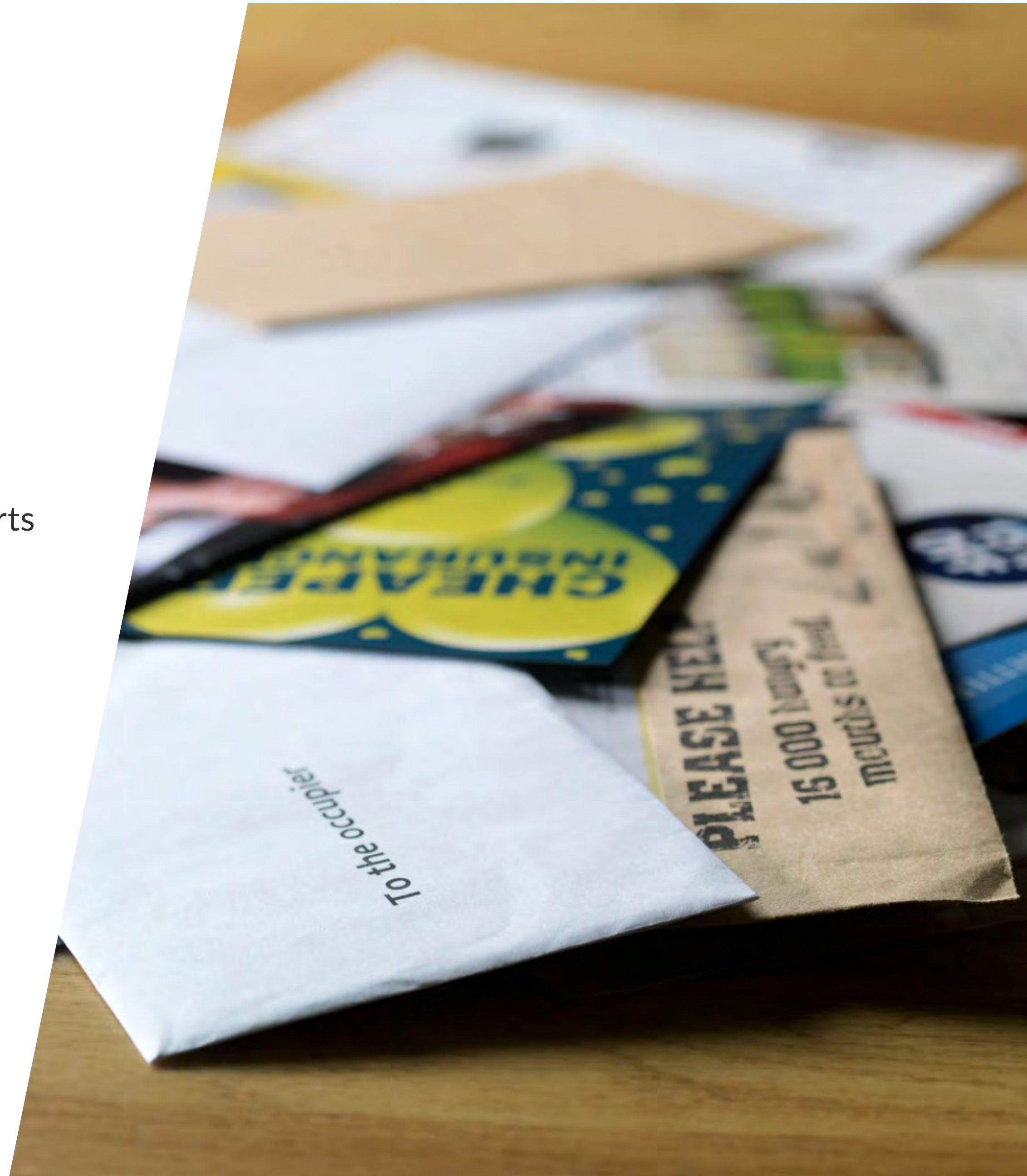


Reasonable Endeavours Defence

Landlords may defend claims of breach if they can evidence that:

- Works were delayed due to regulatory consents
- Specialist labour/materials were unavailable despite efforts
- Tenants refused access despite multiple attempts
- Suitable alternative accommodation could not be found locally despite efforts

Strong record-keeping is critical – including correspondence with tenants, contractors, regulators, and all actions taken.



Your Next Steps

Organisations should:

- **Review** whether current processes meet the new timescales
- **Check** contractor capacity and update contracts if needed
- **Assess** staffing levels and training needs for investigations and decants
- **Review** record-keeping systems for accuracy and auditability
- **Update** access procedures and tenant communication processes
- **Test** decant procedures and capacity
- **Familiarise staff** with the government guidance (October 2025)



Scenarios in Practice

- **Damp and Mould in Bedroom (Emergency Hazard)**

Scenario

Tenant is pregnant and reports breathing issues.

Action

Treat as emergency, **investigate within 24 hours**, and take immediate safety action.

- **Broken Front Door Lock (Emergency Hazard)**

Scenario

Tenant with children cannot secure their home.

Action

Treat as emergency, investigate remotely, and repair same day.

- **Roof Damage and Damp (Significant Hazard)**

Scenario

Investigation finds slipped tiles causing mould.

Action

Carry out temporary mould wash **within 5 days**, and arrange roof **repairs within 12 weeks**.

- **Renewed Investigation**

Scenario

Tenant dissatisfied with remote assessment requests in-person inspection.

Action

Timeframes reset; inspection must happen **within 10 days**.

Awaab's Law Checklist

Use this handy checklist to identify which aspects of your Awaab's Law compliance strategy are already in place and to highlight any areas requiring further attention.

Check that your strategy includes:

Use resident input to shape policies and processes for Damp, Mould, and Condensation (DMC)

Use resident feedback and internal reviews to improve your organisations approach to DMC

Proactively educate your residents on DMC in their homes

Ensure your teams have the right skills and knowledge to manage DMC at a strategic level

Ensure your teams have the right skills and knowledge to manage DMC at an operational/practical level

Ensure your wider staff who visit properties are knowledgeable about DMC, and understand how to report it

Maintain an effective process for all staff to report DMC cases they identify while onsite

Have a process in place for the investigation and management of root causes for DMC

Deliver and rectify remedial works associated with DMC

Provide employees with the necessary equipment to carry out root cause analysis for DMC

Ensure your current internal resources for managing the volume of disrepair claims are sufficient

Undertake quality assurance checks to ensure DMC works are completed properly and will not cause further problems

Maintain up-to-date and accessible housing stock data

Update policies and tenancy contacts

Ensure clear escalation and triage processes are in place

Build compliance dashboards

Celebrate proactive culture

Define what "significant hazard" means in policy

Invest in tracking and reporting systems

How we can help...

Awaab's Law requires significant cultural, operational, and procedural change across housing organisations. We understand the challenges this brings and are here to support you every step of the way. Our team can help you with:

- **Damp and Mould Health Check:** Get bespoke damp and mould health checks which will review your current approach to identifying and addressing damp, mould, and condensation.
- **Staff Training:** Bespoke training addressing specific aspects of your approach to ensure your staff, at all levels, understand the implications of damp and mould, including Awaab's Law, HHSRS, and disrepair.
- **Damp and Mould Policy, Procedures, and Process Map:** Review your existing policies and procedures regarding the management and prevention of damp and mould within your properties.
- **Data Validation:** Ensure your records are stored effectively through a review of your data relating to damp, mould, and condensation within your properties.
- **Damp and Mould Survey:** Our team of qualified and competent surveyors conduct Damp and mould Surveys through a non-invasive investigation of your property to identify whether your building poses a potential health risk if damp and mould are present.

Our expertise in housing compliance, tenant safety, and regulatory changes means we can help you navigate the requirements of Awaab's Law and maintain compliance. If you'd like to discuss how we can support your organisation, reach out to get in touch with our experts.