



Awaab's Law Policy

Accent Housing: Awaab's Law Policy 2026

ACCENTGROUP.ORG

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1.0	Board (24/09/2026)	14/08/2026	14/08/2027	New Policy	Jacob Gibbons Head of H,S&F

Purpose: This policy outlines Accents intentions and methods for complying with the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 – known as Awaab's Law.

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1. Introduction

The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (the **Regulations**)— known as Awaab's Law - came into being after the death of 2 year old Awaab Ishak in 2020, who died from a respiratory condition caused by mould exposure in his home.

Awaab's Law has been introduced to set statutory timeframes against actions after reports of the hazards from the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (**HHSRS**). It has been introduced in phases.

Phase 1 concerning emergency hazards and hazards associated with damp and mould that present a significant risk, which was introduced on 27th October 2025.

Phase 2 concerning the hazards associated with excess cold, excess heat, falls, structural collapse, fire and explosion, electrical hazards, heat networks, and domestic hygiene, which is in force from 30th November 2026.

Phase 3 which will introduce the regulations to all remaining HHSRS hazards, apart from overcrowding – in 2027.

This policy is being formed before the implementation of Phase 2 and will be subject to regular review until after Phase 3 comes into force when a routine review cycle will ensue.

2. Our Approach

Accent is committed to complying fully with the Regulations and all applicable statutory response, investigation, communication and remediation timescales, while maintaining a clear focus on customer safety and outcomes, by:

- Ensuring customers are informed and aware of the methods of reporting hazards to us.
- Applying a consistent and fair triage framework, informed by professional judgement and what we know of our customers, their individual circumstances and vulnerabilities, properties and environment.
- When emergency or significant hazards are identified, making them safe in appropriate timeframes.
- When hazards are identified that fall out of scope of the Regulations – fulfilling our duties to maintain safe homes.
- Producing timely and appropriate written summaries within the statutory timeframes.
- Being transparent in our approach and keeping customers informed.
- Ensuring Accent has a collaborative and organization wide approach to keeping customers safe in their homes.
- Ensuring colleagues have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competence to recognise, respond to and escalate hazards in accordance with this policy and associated procedures, proportionate to their role

3. Scope

The following outlines where Awaab's Law applies. Where this policy states Awaab's Law does not apply, there still may be obligations to take action – albeit not under the timeframes of Awaab's Law.

For Awaab's Law to apply, the hazard in the home must be:

- A significant or an emergency hazard
- Be associated with the building or land for which Accent is responsible as a social landlord
- Arise from a deficiency
- Not be the result of a breach of contract by the customer. However, where a customer's actions, circumstances or capability may have contributed to a hazard, Accent will still assess the risk of harm and take appropriate action to keep the customer and household safe.

Awaab's Law does not cover cladding work.

Shared Ownership

Awaab's Law does not apply in our shared ownership properties or outright sale properties.

New Homes

Whilst new homes may be subject to warranty and defect agreements, the legal obligation under Awaab's Law remains with Accent. It is therefore vital that, if the developer is undertaking investigation and action, Accent ensures the timeframes are met. If the developer cannot, or will not undertake action within timeframes, Accent must do so, then seek appropriate compensation.

Manifestations of hazards where Accent is not the landlord

Where a defect originates in Accent's property but creates a hazard in a property where Accent is not the social landlord, Awaab's Law does not apply. For example, a leak in an Accent property that is causing damp in the neighbour's property – which Accent does not own – is not covered by Awaab's Law.

Similarly, if a hazard appears in an Accent home that is caused by a third party, for example, the hazard of excess cold, where an Accent customer lives in a block with a communal heat network which is owned and managed by someone else, Awaab's Law does not apply.

In these cases, Accent will take reasonable and proactive steps to support the customer and protect their safety. This will include co-operating with the responsible third party, clearly explaining responsibilities and next steps, providing appropriate updates, and considering any interim measures available to Accent where there is a significant risk of harm.

4. Definitions

This document makes reference to words and phrases defined in law and guidance. If not defined in the policy, please refer to the legislation or guidance.

The following are critical to understanding Awaab's law, specifically:

Significant Hazard – is one that poses a 'significant risk of harm' to the health or safety of a tenant of the social home. A 'significant risk of harm' is defined as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency'.

Emergency hazard - is one that poses 'an imminent and significant risk of harm' to the health or safety of the tenant in the social home. An 'imminent and significant risk of harm' is defined as 'a risk of harm to the occupier's health or safety that a reasonable social landlord with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe within 24 hours'.

Under Awaab's Law there are **four** types of investigation, defined below.

Standard Investigations required within 10 working days of Accent being notified of a potential significant hazard.

Emergency Investigations required within 24 hours of Accent being notified of a potential emergency hazard.

Renewed Investigations take place if **after** a remote emergency or standard investigation, the customer requests an in-person investigation. They must take place within **10 working days** of being requested. They are not required if works to prevent the hazard recurring have begun or if a further investigation is required.

Further Investigations are those which might be required to determine what work is required to remedy a hazard and must be done **as soon as is reasonably practicable**.

Standard and Emergency investigations may be in-person or remote. For example, if a customer provides video evidence of the hazard, it may not be necessary to investigate in person – and work can be arranged without undue delay.

5. Communication

Accent will ensure that our customers are informed of their rights under Awaab's Law. A variety of methods, both digitally and otherwise. This includes:

- Website information
- Newsletters
- Poster and leaflet campaigns

An Awaab's Law communication plan, led by the Communications Team, will set out how transparent and open communication will be maintained. Communications will

be clear, empathetic, accessible and customer-centred, and will explain what will happen next, who is responsible and how the customer can raise concerns if the hazard is not resolved.

6. Hazard Triage, Investigation and Make Safe

Accent will take a customer-centred approach to triage, taking account of relevant information we hold about the customer's individual circumstances, vulnerabilities, communication needs and any reasonable adjustments. Our triage process will be documented and retained for each decision.

The triage system Accent employs is based on the government guidance on the triaging of hazards under Awaab's Law and will use suggested prompts.

Wherever possible Accent will seek to make the most thorough judgement of the hazard, drawing on as much data as possible, including use of technology where appropriate (.e.g video surveying).

Our Technical Hub are the preferred colleagues able to triage hazards under Awaab's Law. Every effort will be made to channel reports into the Technical Hub as soon as possible. This will be done by educating our colleagues and contractors to put information through the Hubs triage process as soon as possible.

Colleagues are not expected to determine whether a reported concern meets the threshold for an emergency or significant hazard before escalating it. Where a potential hazard is identified or reported, it should be referred promptly through the agreed triage route.

Where a potential hazard is reported by a third party. Accent is considered to have become aware of the hazard on the date they are notified by the third party.

Potential Emergency Hazards

When hazards are triaged as potential emergencies, the appropriate contractor or colleague will carry out an emergency investigation within **24 hours** of being made aware of the hazard. If the hazard is confirmed as an emergency, every effort will be made to make the hazard safe within the 24-hour period.

Where this is not possible, the affected customers must be offered alternative accommodation in accordance with our decant processes and further information in this policy.

Potential Significant Hazards

For hazards triaged as potentially significant, we will arrange for a surveyor to attend within **10 working days** of becoming aware of the hazard to carry out a standard investigation. If the investigation confirms it is significant, we will make the hazard safe within **5 working days** of the investigation.

Written Summary of Investigation Findings

On completion of any investigation, a written summary will be provided to the customer **within 3 working days**. Day 1 being the day after the investigation is completed. Written communication will be delivered by email, 1st class post or by hand.

The written summary is required even when investigation finds no emergency or significant hazard.

The written summary will include:

- If an emergency or significant hazard was identified and what that is.
- The work that is required, and timeframes for them.
- Any actions required such as safety advice or decant information.
- If no action is required, why this is the case.
- How to get in touch.

Where possible this will be delivered in accordance with the customers preferred methods of receiving written correspondence.

Written communications will take account of customers' communication preferences, accessibility and language needs and any reasonable adjustments, so far as reasonably practicable.

Remedial Works

Where an investigation requires works to prevent reoccurrence of a hazard, we will endeavour to commence works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding. This 5-day period will start regardless of the investigation being undertaken early within the 10-working day window for significant investigation. Following an initial visit, treatment or remedial work, Accent will confirm whether the action has resolved the reported hazard and whether any further investigation or work is required. Where a customer reports that the issue remains or has recurred, the case will be reviewed promptly and will not be treated as resolved solely because an initial intervention has been completed.

When this is not possible, we will take steps within 5 working days of the investigation concluding to commence the works as soon as is reasonably practicable, and within **12 weeks**. We will document the reasons for any delay, such as availability of materials or specialist contractors.

Provision of Alternative Accommodation

Wherever possible Accent will try and remove the hazard so customers can stay in their homes, however, accept this is not always possible.

The provision of alternative accommodation will extend to anyone who usually lives in the property, including children who usually stay in the property for at least one night a week. Where customers choose to make their own temporary accommodation, such as staying with family, this will be documented.

Accent will ensure temporary accommodation is suitable for the needs of the customer. The temporary accommodation could include a hotel or short term let.

Customers who refuse alternative accommodation after the offer and explanation of the risk and chose to stay in the property before relevant safety work is completed will be given advice in writing on how to mitigate risk. If it is not possible to mitigate the risk, the customers will be informed in writing.

During the provision of emergency accommodation, Accent will ensure the customer is updated on the works and will limit the temporary measures to as short a time period as possible.

Access

Reasonable endeavours will be made to gain access to address hazards in our customers' homes. We will follow our Access Policy where access is not readily provided.

Proactive Identification and Matters of Evident Concern

Accent will aim to proactively identify hazards even when they are not reported by the customer. For example, by:

- Hazards identified in stock condition surveys
- Hazards noted by colleagues or contractors whilst undertaking other duties.

Reporting and Monitoring

Accent will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by routine reporting means. In practice, this means reporting compliance on the Health and Safety Scorecard. Leadership will scrutinise this on a monthly basis, and it will be reported to the Strategic Health and Safety Group, as well as Accent Board, to highlight areas of non-compliance and allocate sufficient resource to it.

Reporting of compliance will be of suitable detail to identify where issues are arising, for example at triage, investigation, follow-up, remedial work or report writing. Performance, complaints, repeat reports and customer feedback will be used to identify lessons, emerging risks and gaps in delivery, with improvement actions assigned, monitored and escalated through the appropriate governance arrangements.

7. Responsibilities

All colleagues play a part in ensuring our customers are safe in their homes, specifically:

Role	Responsibilities
Assistant Director of Repairs and Maintenance	• Operational delivery of this policy, and procedures made under it, including clear end-to-end accountability, effective handovers

	between teams and consistent customer communication throughout each case. • Performance reporting of Awaab's Law on the H&S Scorecard, and to Strategic Health & Safety Group • Ensuring Surveyors carry out their duties in relation to inspections and written reports.
Director of Customer Relations	• Ensuring the Technical Hub are appropriately resourced, trained and equipped to triage calls appropriately.
Head of Health, Safety and Facilities	• Providing periodic second line assurance as to the compliance of this policy and offering proportionate safety advice in relation to it.
Director of Development	• Ensuring that Awaab's Law is applied in properties during their 'defect period'.
Director of Organisational Development and Culture	• Providing the organisational learning and capability framework to support colleagues to understand and apply this policy, proportionate to their roles
Director of Communications	• Ensuring customer communications are made in relation to Awaab's Law. • Monitoring social media, and other customer communication channels for relevant information and passing it to the relevant department for triage.
Directors / Service Leaders / Line Managers	• Ensuring colleagues within their areas understand their responsibilities, complete required learning and are supported to apply this policy in practice.
All Accent Colleagues	• Recognise and promptly report potential hazards or information that may indicate a hazard, regardless of how or where the information is received

8. References

Related Documents

- Customer Charter
- Customer Support and Inclusion Policy
- Responsive Repairs and Voids Policy
- Access Policy
- Temporary and Emergency Relocation Policy
- Damp, Mould & Condensation Procedure

- Other procedures concerning hazards in Phases 2 and 3 when applied.

External references:

- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
- Housing Act 2004
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) guidance
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Awaab's Law Phase 2: Guidance for social landlords
- Awaab's Law Phase 2: Guidance to support triaging of hazards

9. Policy Review

Due to the changing nature of the area, and the phased approach to Awaab's Law this policy should be reviewed prior to, and after each implementation phase, then on an annual basis.