

# Water Hygiene Policy Summary



- **Our Objectives:**

- Our key objective of this policy is to ensure that Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team, Employees, Partners and Tenants are clear on what our legal and regulatory obligations are and that our policy provides the framework on how we will meet these obligations.
- As a landlord, we must meet legal obligations which requires us to deal with the risk associated with legionella bacteria in the properties we own and manage. As far as reasonably practicable we must introduce measures to reduce or control exposure to legionella and manage the conditions in which legionnaires grows.

- **Policy dates:** The full version of this policy (version 1.0) was signed off and approved by the Director of Housing in January 2024 and will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulations.

- **The policy scope and limitations:** This policy applies to any housing assets which are owned or leased by Babergh and Mid Suffolk, which are rented out and managed as social housing. This includes:

- Houses and flats and any communal areas within these
- Operational and Commercial buildings that are managed or owned by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils such as Depots and workplaces for staff.

- **Our obligations:** We are defined as the 'Duty Holder' so must take necessary precautions to prevent, reduce or control the risks of exposure to legionella. As the Duty Holder we must:

- Carry out a risk assessment for all hot and cold-water systems, cooling plant and any other systems that can produce water droplets to identify and assess potential risks.
- Implement measures to either eliminate, reduce or control identified risks.
- Appoint a Responsible Person/Contractor to take managerial responsibility for:
  - Carrying out risk assessments.
  - Produce written schemes of control (a practical, risk management document used to control the risk from exposure to legionella).
  - Implementing the written scheme of control.
- Under the Management regulations and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 we are responsible as a landlord and employer to ensure our employees and others are not exposed to health and safety risks including legionella.
- We have a legal obligation under COSHH regulations to prevent or control exposure to biological agents which includes Legionella.

- **Programme:**

- We will ensure all communal blocks, supported scheme, offices, shops depots that we own and manage will have an initial visit to establish of a legionella risk assessment is required.
- All properties which require a legionella risk assessment will be put on a programme which will be every two years or more frequently if the risk may be higher.
- Legionella risk assessment will be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- Change in building use or occupation that increases the risk due to health.
  - Change in internal layout of the water system.
  - After an outbreak of legionella.
  - Following a water hygiene audit (if it is required).
- We will undertake an annual programme of five per cent sample of domestic premises. This programme will be risk led.
- **Consequences if we fail to deliver on our policy:** In serious cases of non-compliance our Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet will consider if it necessary to disclose this issue to the Regulator of Social Housing under regulatory framework and other relevant organisations such as the Health and Safety Executive.