



Birketts' guide to Awaab's Law

How to stay compliant

What's included in this guide?

Awaab's Law imposes strict, legally enforceable deadlines on social housing landlords to address hazards in tenant homes.

The law will be introduced in three phases: from October 2025, it will cover emergency hazards such as damp, mould, gas leaks, and structural collapse, before widening in 2026 to include risks like fire, electrical faults, extreme temperatures, and hygiene hazards, and finally applying to all remaining hazards (except overcrowding) from 2027 onwards with ongoing compliance monitoring.

This guide provides:

- clear flowcharts outlining required landlord actions for emergency, significant, and routine hazards
- step-by-step processes for inspections, repairs, rehousing, and tenant communications
- best practice guidance on recordkeeping to demonstrate compliance and protect against legal or reputational risks
- practical advice for handling tenant enquiries, including a checklist for phone calls and written communications.

Our guide to Awaab's is not a replacement for legal advice, and if you are a social housing landlord looking for guidance, we would be happy to speak with you. *

Get in touch

As always, we are here to guide you through your rights and responsibilities as a social housing landlord.

Our team understands the challenges that will come with the implementation of Awaab's Law, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with any questions or concerns.

Awaab's Law is a watershed moment in social housing, and together we can work to improve safety for tenants while ensuring that landlords are protected from unjust noncompliance reports.

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Introduction to Awaab's Law for social housing landlords

Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in December 2020, the law on social housing landlords' responsibilities has changed profoundly.

Awaab's Law, part of the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#), is being implemented in three phases.

The first phase will take effect on 27 October 2025 with strict, legally enforceable deadlines for addressing hazards. Failure to comply risks legal action by tenants, court-ordered remedies, and serious reputational damage alongside the far greater risk of tenant harm.

This guide breaks down the changes ahead, provides a helpful flowchart of how to respond to an issue, and offers some pointers on how to effectively communicate with clients.

What changes in 2025?

Phase One of Awaab's Law focuses on damp, mould, and all emergency hazards.

The [Hazards in Social Housing \(Prescribed Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#), laid before parliament in June, set out clear timeframes and ways to handle emergency hazards and significant hazards.

What's coming in 2026?

Phase Two will broaden the scope of Awaab's Law.

Although the exact timing is still to be confirmed, hazards expected to fall under the 24-hour requirement include excessive cold and heat, falls, structural collapse, fire, electrical faults, explosions, and hygiene hazards.

These often arise suddenly, so forward planning is critical to ensure that you have the correct response in place.

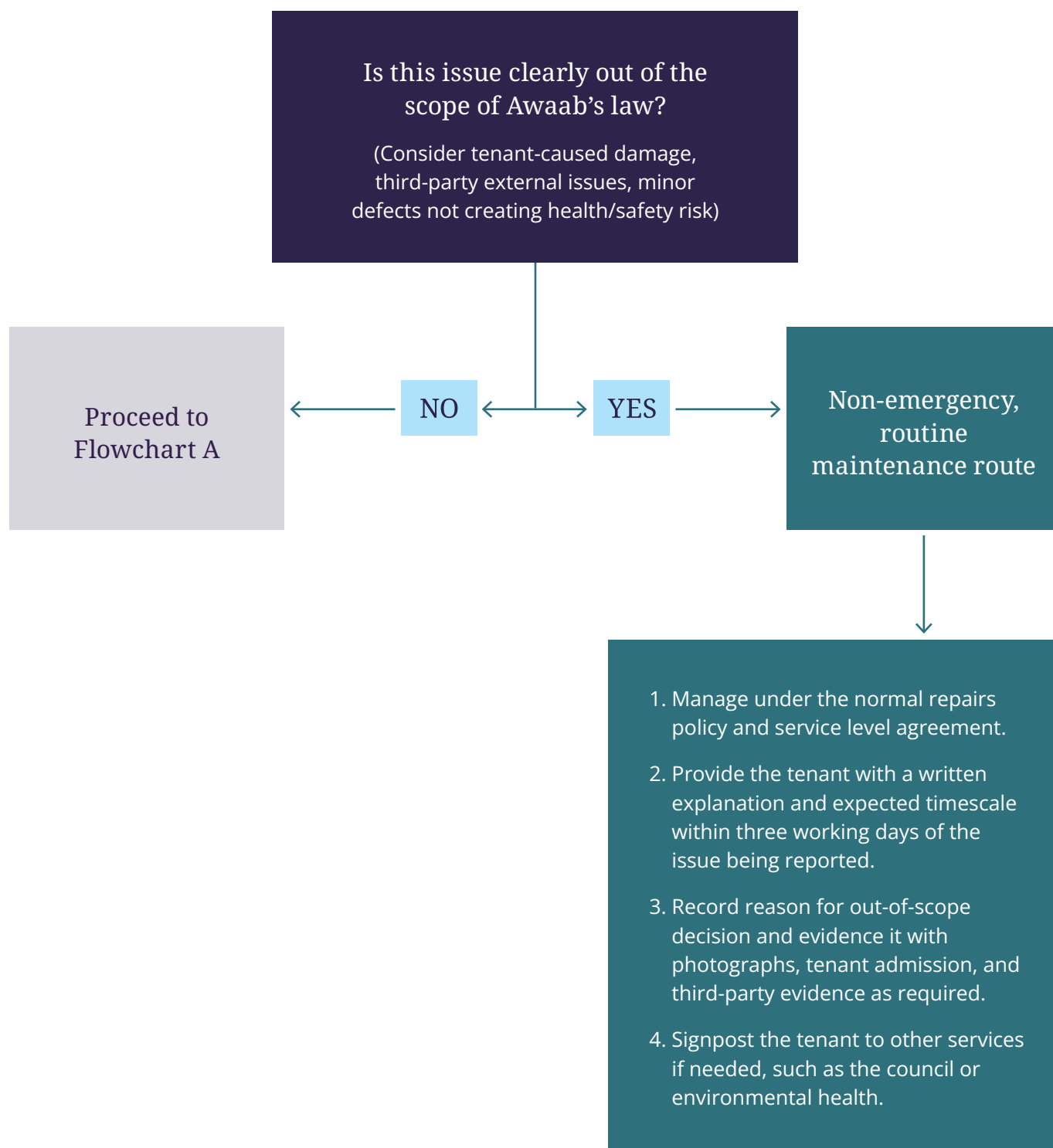
2027 and beyond

Phase Three, scheduled for 2027, will extend the law to cover all hazards (excluding overcrowding). Given cross-party support, you should assume this expansion is certain. The Government has made clear that responsibilities will only increase, and monitoring of landlord compliance will be continuous.

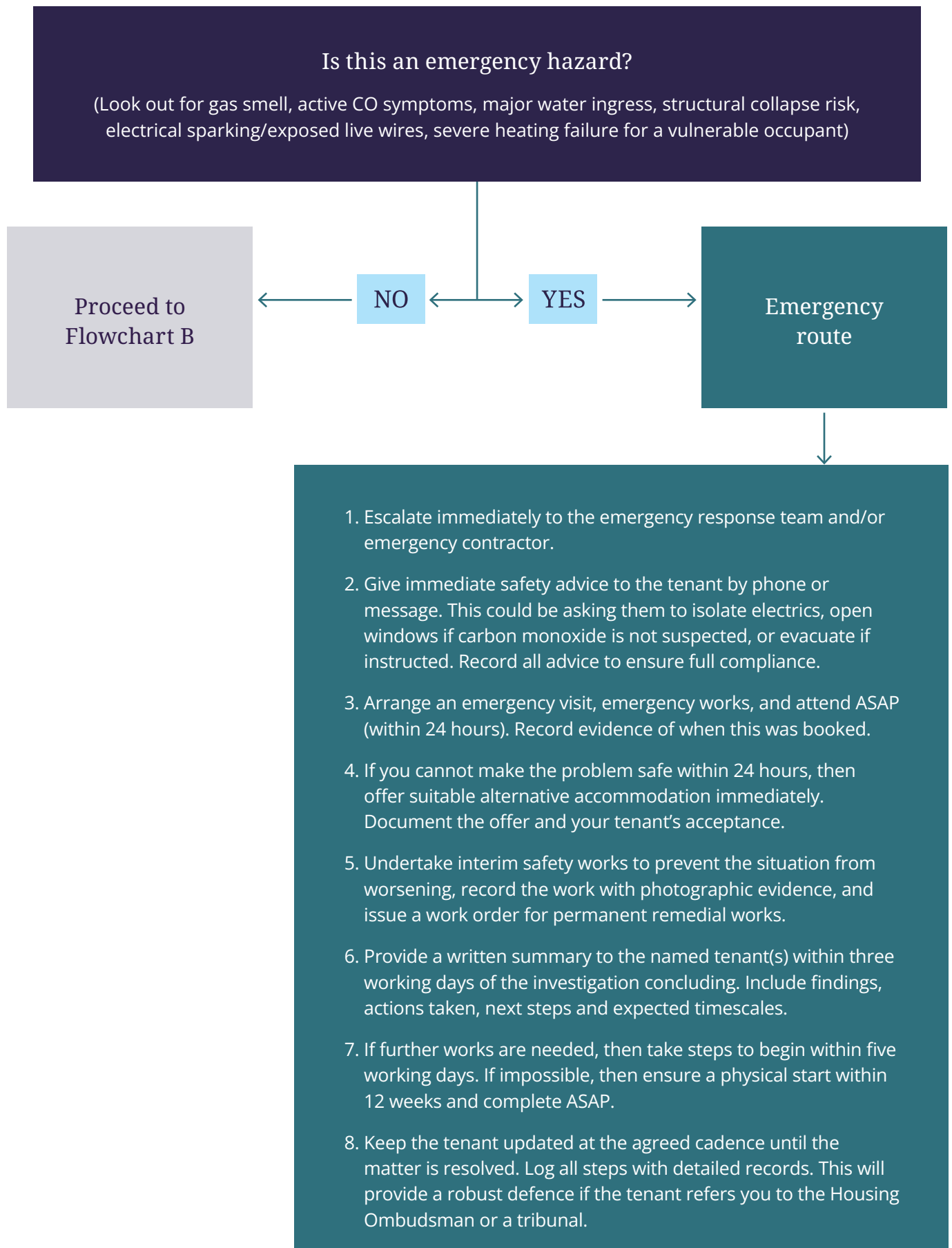
The rest of this guide outlines the ways to respond to issues and the best way to handle tenant communication.*

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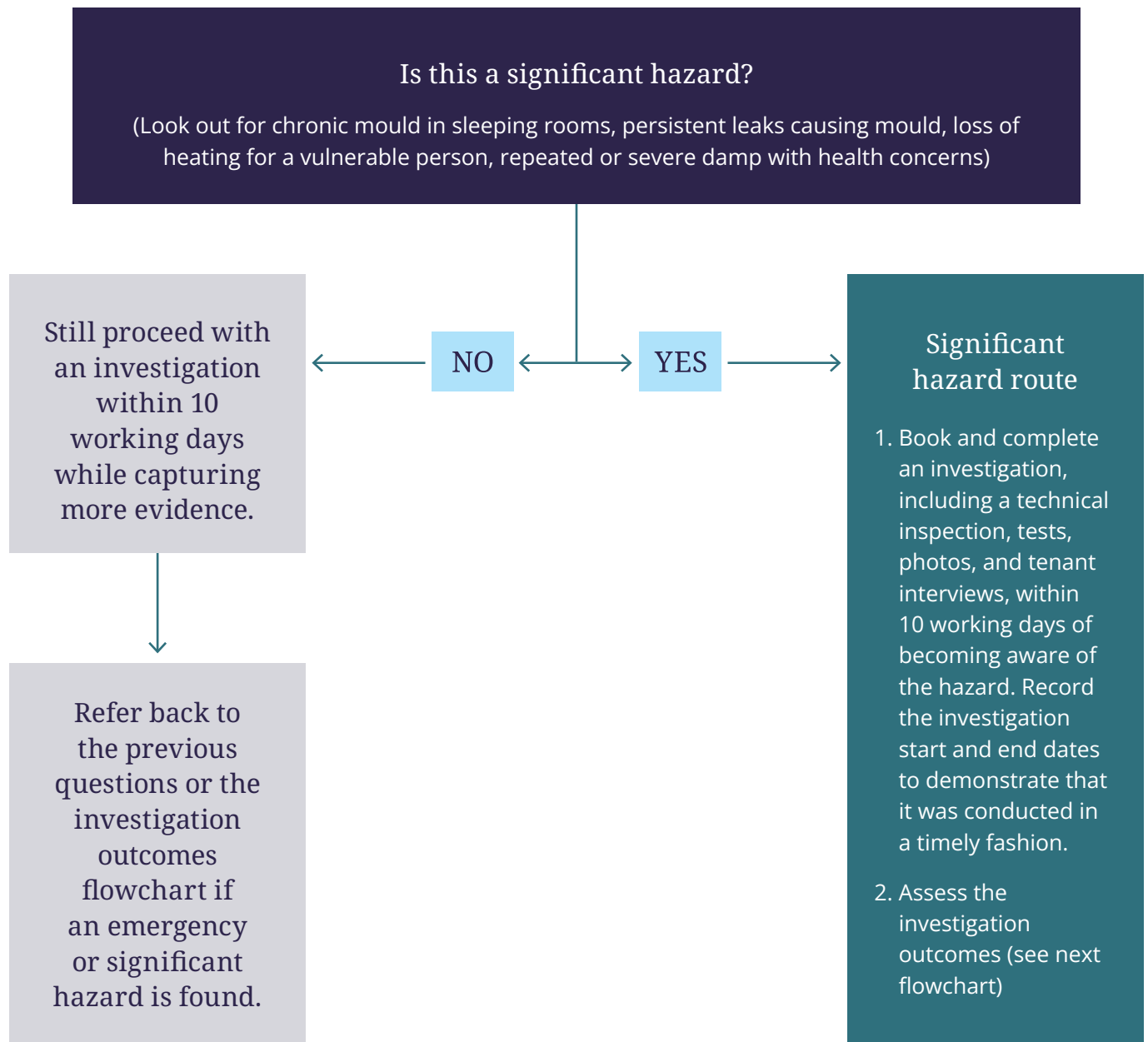
Flowchart for actions in response to Awaab's Law



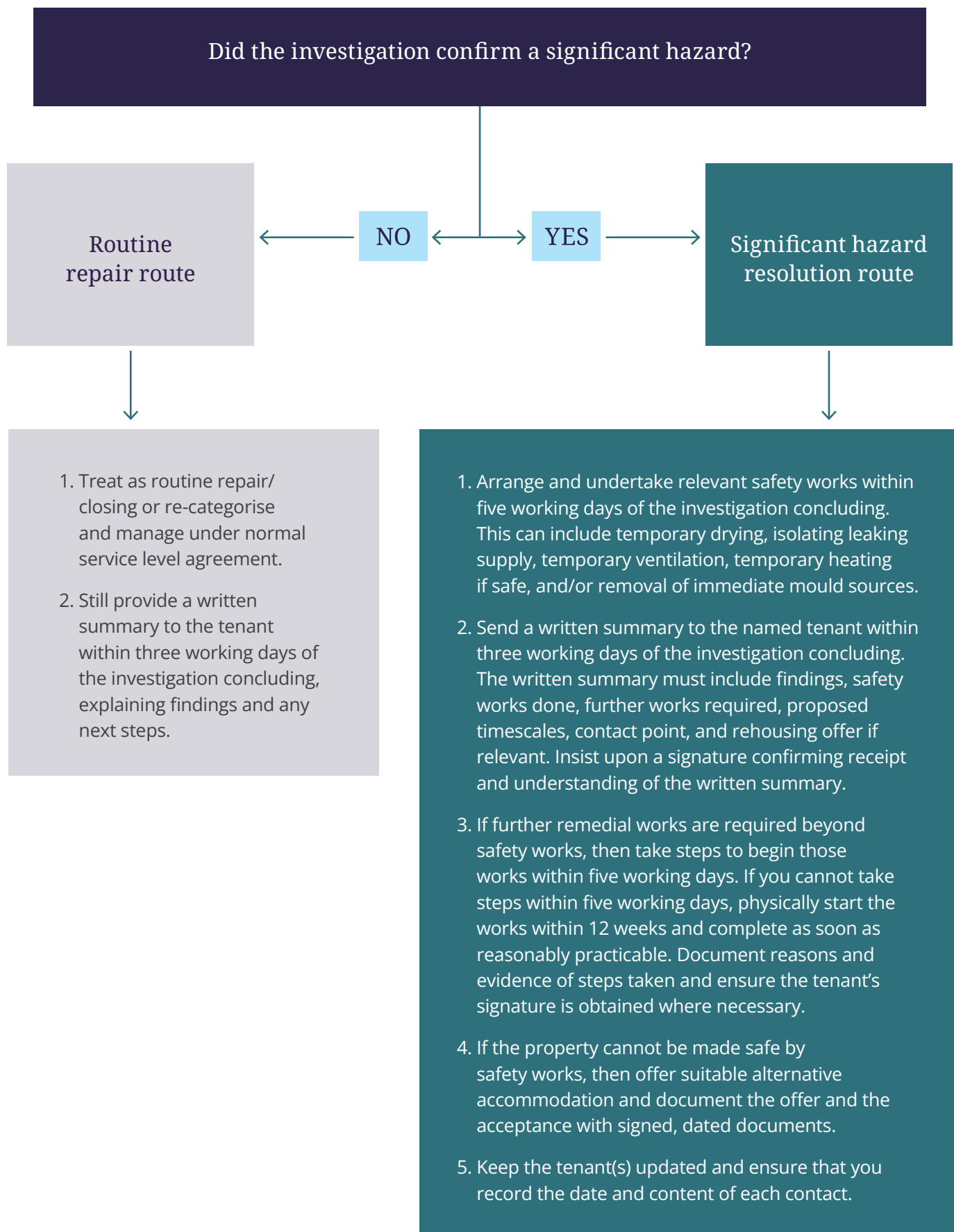
Flowchart A



Flowchart B



Investigation outcomes



Awaab's Law best practice guidance

Now that we have looked at the implementation of Awaab's Law and the ways to tackle issues as they arise, it is time to consider how best to communicate with clients.

As was noted in the flowcharts, recordkeeping is going to be the most vital part of Awaab's Law compliance. You need to be able to justify every decision made, and recordkeeping will be your best defence if you are referred to the Housing Ombudsman or a tribunal.

You should follow the steps below to create a robust paper trail.

1) As soon as you become aware of an issue, you should:

- log the report and give it a case ID and timestamp
- send acknowledgement to tenant via a message, email, or letter with case ID and expected next step and contact. Emails and messages work best due to read receipts and the instant nature of communication.

2) After conducting an inspection, you should provide a written summary. This must be sent within three working days of the investigation concluding. If an emergency is discovered, then provide a written summary within three working days after the emergency inspection and/or emergency repair work.

3) For follow-ups and updates, you should:

- provide regular updates, agreeing on the frequency with the tenant(s), although it is best to update them weekly for serious cases.
- record every contact you have with the tenant
- issue and update if timescales change or deadlines are missed. You should send a written notice explaining the reasons, actions taken, new dates, and offer of compensation if your policy allows.

4) When compiling your files and evidence, you should:

- store photos with timestamps, contractor attendance logs, inspection reports, instrument readings, written summaries, rehousing offers, and costs
- keep contemporaneous notes proving "reasonable steps" if compliance cannot be met or if complications arise.

How to handle tenant communications

When communicating with clients, ensure that your language is clear and concise. Nothing should be ambiguous, and all information should be accurate.

Uncertainty can lead to confusion, and a tenant may claim that they were not properly informed about the steps being taken.

As this can quickly become a compliance issue, we have outlined a checklist below that can be used as inspiration for your tenant communications.

<p style="text-align: center;">Subject</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Case ID] – Investigation summary and next steps for [address]</p>	
Date of investigation:	
Summary of findings: [short bullet points of technical findings]	
Safety works carried out (if any): [what was done, date, who attended]	
Further works required: [what, why]	
Planned next steps and timescales: - Safety works completed: [yes/no and date] - Further remedial works: Steps to begin by [date] / physical start by [date if 12-week fallback]	
Alternative accommodation offered: [yes/no – details and dates if offered]	Yes/no Date: Details:
Contact for questions:	Name: Role: Phone: Email:
Date next update will be given:	Date:
Signature	Contact details Phone Email

How to handle a phone call from a tenant

If you are communicating with your tenant on the phone, you should record the call and keep a copy of the recording safe.

You need to keep your call logs to ensure that you have evidence of the phone call taking place. These will be used to illustrate when you became aware of the issue, and it is against this time that the 24-hour limit may be applied.

Below is a checklist of the information you should obtain when on the call with a tenant:

- caller name, tenant name, address, phone, preferred contact method
- ask if anyone is in immediate danger
- ask if there is a gas smell, fuel smell, boiler making strange noises, or if anyone with headaches/dizziness/flu-like symptoms
- ask if there is water coming in, visible leaks, or major damp in sleeping rooms
- ask if there is visible mould in a bedroom, or have residents had new/ worsening respiratory problems
- ask if there is no heating in cold weather, no hot water, or no working toilet
- ask if there are vulnerable people in the home.

As well as gaining information, you may wish to use the call as a chance to issue guidance, instruction, or reassurance.

When necessary, you should encourage tenants to evacuate the building, caution against the use of naked flames, and let them know of the policies and procedures you will be following. Be clear and concise and avoid emotional language where possible.

The more information you can provide upfront, the better your paper trail will be, as you will be able to demonstrate a conscientious effort to assuage your tenant's fears and concerns.

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For tailored, expert guidance on staying compliant with Awaab's Law, [speak to our team today](#).

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