

Tackling damp, mould and condensation

Damp and condensation can cause black mould to grow in your home. It is a common problem in British homes, but we can work together to manage it.

In this leaflet:

- we explain what causes mould
- we describe the steps we can take as your landlord, and
- we offer advice on simple ways to improve things.

Be assured that we take all cases of damp and mould seriously, because we know that living in a home with mould can be bad for your health.

We will work with you to resolve problems with damp and mould. You are always welcome to phone Shian for advice.

What causes mould?

Mould grows in damp homes. So, it is important to start by working out what is causing your home to be damp.

Your damp problem could be caused by:

- a fault with the building that needs to be repaired, or
- (more commonly) too much condensation.

You may need our help to resolve either of these problems.



A problem with the building

A leaky roof, pipe or guttering, or a problem with the plumbing in your home or your neighbour's home can all cause water to soak into walls and ceilings.

In older buildings, some basement or ground floor flats may suffer from rising damp – where groundwater soaks up into the bricks or concrete.

A problem with the structure of the building you live in is your



landlord's responsibility. **If you can see a problem like this, report it to us as soon as you can, so that we can take action.**

Problems caused by condensation

The most common cause of damp is condensation. Condensation is the moisture that forms when warm, damp air touches a cold surface. Too much condensation can also cause mould.

As a responsible landlord, our aim is to keep your homes well maintained and to provide an efficient heating system. Some of our homes also have built-in extractor fans. These all help to manage condensation in our properties.

In the rest of this leaflet, we offer some simple ways to reduce the condensation that comes from normal living activities.

However, if these tips are not working for you for any reason, please call us. We will be happy to offer advice and/or to arrange a home visit to see the problem first hand.



How to reduce condensation

If your home suffers from mould caused by condensation, it is possible to reduce this by taking certain steps.

The aim should be to:

- make less moisture
- remove any condensation
- keep rooms well aired
- keep them warm, and
- treat any spots of black mould that appear with an anti-fungal spray that you can buy from a DIY store or online.



If black mould appears anywhere in your home, call us straight away so that we can come and inspect it.

1. Make less moisture

Everyday activities put moisture into the air – but there are ways to limit this.

- Avoid drying clothes on radiators. The best place to dry clothes is in the garden or on a balcony. Otherwise, it is best to dry them in the bathroom, with the door shut and a fan running, or with a window left open. Call us if your fan is not working or if your window will not open.
- If you have a tumble dryer, keep the filters clean and regularly empty any water collected. The machine will get warm when it's in use, so leave a gap around it for air to circulate.



- Cover boiling pans and turn off kettles quickly. Keep kitchen doors shut while cooking.



- Keep bathroom doors shut when you are showering or taking a bath.
- Put the cold water in first, if you are running a bath.

2. Remove condensation

When drops or pools of water form on windows and cold surfaces, be ready to remove them.

- Wipe down windows and sills, or use a rechargeable window vacuum cleaner, to remove condensation and pools of water. Ideal times to do this are first thing in the morning and after cooking in the evening.



- Reduce the moisture left on tiling and shower screens, after showering, by giving them a quick wipe down.

- Running a dehumidifier will remove excess water and make your home feel warmer. A larger version is pictured, but you can also buy small ones to focus on a particularly damp spot. [Call us if you need advice about using a dehumidifier.](#)



3. Keep rooms well aired

Fresh air needs to move freely around your home. Mould will tend to grow in places where damp air gets trapped.

- Always use your bathroom and kitchen fans until the steam has gone. Opening a window will speed this up. Keep your fans clean – they won't work properly if they are clogged up with dust. Call us if your fans are not working.



- Keep curtains or blinds open for at least four to five hours every day, so that trickle vents can work properly and to stop mould growing around your windows.



- Keep windows around your home open for a while every day (five to 10 minutes is enough) and always keep trickle vents open. Call us if your windows won't open or if a trickle vent is blocked.



- Pull any furniture away from the wall to leave a gap for air to circulate. Avoid putting any furniture right up against external walls.



- Try not to overfill cupboards and wardrobes. Opening the doors for a while each day can help remove stale air.

4. Heat your home

In the winter, try to keep every room in your home warm during the daytime.

There is advice about how best to use your heating controls at:
<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/thermostats-and-heating-controls>

If you are getting behind with your energy bills, you can:

- contact your energy provider to agree a repayment plan you can afford, and/or
- go to **www.turn2us.org.uk** to search for grants and to check you are getting all the benefits you can claim for.



If you are in crisis, go to your Council's website, to check out the hardship support they offer. You may be able to get vouchers to help you buy food or essential household items, or to pay energy bills.

5. Treat spots of mould

It's important to treat any mould that appears quickly, so that it doesn't spread.

Wipe away spores using a mould cleaner, following the instructions on the pack. You should keep the area well aired as you do this, to avoid breathing in the spores. Throw away the cloth afterwards.



Once any mould is removed, painting walls and ceilings with anti-mould paint can stop mould returning for several years. Call us if you need further advice on treating your home with mould cleaner or repainting.

Old Etonian Housing Association

If you have health and safety concerns, contact our managing agent.

- Phone 020 8525 7650
- Email repairs@oldetonianha.org.uk
- Text 07535 269 269

We're here to help

We hope you have found this leaflet useful.

If you need more information or you would like us to visit your home to give you more advice about your problem with damp, mould and condensation, give us a call.