

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TENANTS

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Dear Tenant,

Damp, Mould & Condensation

I am writing to you to highlight the issues that surround damp, mould and condensation.

We try very hard to ensure your homes are well-maintained and of a decent standard and **we encourage you to contact us if you are experiencing problems with damp, mould, and condensation** as these can make some health problems worse and can also cause serious damage to your home. This point has been highlighted in the news recently, in the tragic case of 2-year-old Awaab Ishak, who died of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home.

The main causes of damp include:

Rising damp - This is a result of Groundwater soaking up into the bricks or concrete. Soil building up against the outside wall above the damp proof course may also cause rising damp. If rising damp is evident and your property is damp proofed, the waterproof layer may be broken.

Penetrating damp – This is as a result of water coming through external walls or the roof. It can be caused by blocked or faulty rainwater gutters, failed render, or rain seeping through a roof where a tile or slate is missing. It can also happen when there is an internal leak or plumbing problem.

Condensation - This is the biggest cause of damp in homes. It creates damp areas by soaking into absorbent surfaces, these damp areas can attract black mould. It is difficult to escape, as everyday life such as drying clothes, using a tumble dryer, showering, bathing and even breathing contribute to the creation of condensation. Two common causes of condensation are a lack of heating and poor ventilation.

If you've got black spot mould growth, please let us know so that we can arrange to visit your home.



What do Condensation problems look like?

Generally, condensation problems are relatively easy to detect. If you notice any of these signs, then as a 'rule of thumb' you likely have a problem with condensation:

- Water droplets on windows or walls
- Decaying window frames, particularly stained & wet corners
- Damp walls causing peeling wallpaper
- Musty/damp smells around the property
- Black mould on walls, curtains, carpets, bathroom tiles and windowsills
- Water droplets on felt and timber in the loft possibly leading to rot

A lot of excess moisture tends to be generated in kitchens and bathrooms which means that they will need more ventilation.

- Please use extractor fans to dispel moisture and report any faults as soon as possible
- Wipe over visible condensation on non-absorbent surfaces with a dry cloth to remove the excess moisture and prevent the build-up of mould. If you already have mould growth in your home it will need to be treated. A Health and Safety Executive approved fungicidal wash, available in most supermarkets or hardware stores, should be used to treat the mould growth.

We know that many of you are struggling with costs of energy and heating your home may be difficult. When heating your home try not to have one room at a high temperature while leaving the rest of the property cold. Air in a warmer room will always try to move to a cooler room and this will create condensation. Rooms that are frequently occupied may need some form of ventilation all the time to allow the moisture produced by breath and water to escape. Keep a small window ajar or a trickle vent open to allow warm moist air to flow out. **(The attached leaflet provides further information about how you can help to prevent condensation in your home.)**

What CHA is doing to help

Insulation - Reducing the number of cold surfaces in a home can reduce condensation. We have been improving the thickness of loft insulation for several years. We have a planned programme for window, door and heating replacement aimed to improve the thermal quality of your home.

Decarbonisation - We are developing plans that aim to ensure your homes meet a minimum EPC value of C. As a starting point we are working with Liverpool City Region in collaboration with several other Housing Associations to access funding through the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). This is a



complicated framework which focuses on improvements to the fabric of the building. This could take the form of external cladding or internal insulation. The work will be planned over a number of years taking account of the funding available at the time.

Ventilation - As the insulation of homes increases ventilation becomes even more important and we are reviewing the type of extractor fans available so that the removal of the excess moisture that contributes to condensation is improved. As a starting point we will seek to install new fans:

- in homes exhibiting signs of damp.
- as part of Decarbonisation works
- as part of programmes that include bathroom and kitchen replacements
- Where existing fans fail and need to be replaced

If you don't have an extractor fan in your kitchen/ bathroom or if your fan isn't working, please let us know.

Information – we want to provide you with information to help you understand the causes that may lead to mould in your home and give you some useful advice that may help to prevent these problems. However, please contact us if you have existing problems relating to damp or mould. **If you think we know you have a problem, but we have not managed to fix it then please tell us again so that we can take appropriate action.**

If you have any comments or questions about this letter, please let us know.

Yours sincerely



Mandy Elliott
Chief Executive

