

Damp/Condensation

On occasion, Maison UK is contacted by residents living in apartments who are suffering from 'Damp', 'Condensation' and in some cases 'Black mould'. In many cases, these residents suspect that the apartment has some form of 'fault' in need of repair.

It is important that these residents (and their Letting Agents and Leaseholders) recognise that the most common cause of condensation is from the property being poorly ventilated, rather than suffering from some form of structural fault.

Damp is a common problem which many apartment occupiers experience and reports of Damp or Mould inside apartments is quite common phenomenon.

There are a number of possible causes of dampness, some common examples are:

- **Condensation** dampness, which generally happens when a property can't deal with the levels of water vapour being generated by the occupants because of a lack of insulation, ventilation or heating, or a combination of all of these things. This usually occurs against external walls or towards the corners of window reveals.
- **Rising damp**, which happens when moisture travels up from the ground through the masonry to the height of about one metre.
- **Penetrating damp**, which happens when water penetrates into the internal fabric of a building from outside to inside. (for example, because of a leaking roof or downpipe)



Example of condensation

In most cases where the report is 'condensation', it is an issue that the leaseholder needs to address, rather than Maison UK (the property management company).

Where Condensation is reported internally (the internals are the responsibility of the Leaseholder – not Maison UK) The majority of reported incidents are nothing more than condensation/air born moisture caused by the occupants failing to ventilate their property adequately. This type of damp problem is commonly found around the windows and ceilings of bathrooms, en-suites, WC's and kitchens. Alternatively, the resident may be generating excessive amounts of moisture (example by drying clothes on radiators)

In these circumstances, it is the Leaseholders responsibility to investigate (using your own surveyors if necessary) and identify the cause or report if a more substantial structural fault is suspected.

If this is the case, Maison UK will get involved and any associated costs incurred by the Leaseholder can be recovered via a subsequent Buildings Insurance claim for the associated works to rectify the problem

If we (Maison UK) inspect these reports and it is found to be nothing more than condensation as a result of occupational usage, a charge may be incurred as an 'inspection fee' that would be placed directly against the Leaseholders account.

It is therefore important that you eliminate all possible scenarios where the damp is being caused by the activity of the occupants prior to reporting a suspected building defect.

In our experience, where the initial reports are of 'damp'

- around the window reveals; or,
- on external walls

This is usually caused by lack of ventilation or by too much air-born moisture being created (eg drying clothing on radiators) and is nothing more than a result of occupational condensation. These problems are more often made for ground floor properties where residents are more reticent to open windows for fear of home security concerns.

However, if the damp is a significant ingress of water and can be directly related to either the frequency of rainfall or the occupation of the apartment above, please do not hesitate to re-contact Maison UK for advice and to arrange and inspection.

Condensation is an issue that has potential adverse health implications for the occupants of the apartment. As Leaseholder and/or Landlord, the responsibility of rectifying this damp is your responsibility and may result in you having to enforce conditions of any Tenancy Agreement you may hold with your Tenant. In these circumstances, you should seek your own advice on this matter.