

Dealing with Damp and Condensation

About Us

Alt Valley Community Trust helps you save money on your energy bills and stay warm at home. We offer simple advice on heating, understanding your energy bills, and using your heating and hot water effectively.

We also support you with reducing heat loss, tackling damp and mould and exploring renewable options.

Did you know?



Drying clothes indoors can add 10 - 15 litres a week



Showering, cooking, bathing and washing can add 15 - 20 litres a week



A family of four can add around 30-40 litres of moisture to the air each week just by breathing.

Top Tips to Reduce Damp & Condensation

- ✓ Open windows for 10-15 minutes each day to let moist air out
- ✓ Dry clothes outdoors where possible, or use a well-ventilated room
- ✓ Leave a small gap between furniture and external walls
- ✓ Keep doors closed when cooking or bathing to stop moisture spreading
- ✓ Use extractor fans when cooking or showering

Damp is caused when warm moist air hits a cold surface such as a window or external wall and condenses, running down the cold surface as water droplets. If this is left it can turn into black mould, which looks and smells bad, this can cause health problems as well as damage to your home, clothes, furniture, books, etc.

Condensation can be an issue in any property no matter the age. It's often worse in homes that have been modernised as ventilation and circulation of air is reduced.

Damp & Condensation

Penetrating damp is when water enters a property from outside. It can occur at any level of the home and is often caused by issues such as overflowing gutters, missing roof tiles, leaking doors, damaged pointing, cladding, flashing or render, as well as blocked air bricks.



Damp

Rising or penetrating damp can cause problems in your home. If you think damp is causing problems in your home, you will need to get the right advice to see what is causing it and how it can be fixed. Here at Alt Valley, we can help you.

Rising damp is caused when a damp proof course is damaged or bridged, allowing moisture from the ground to travel up through the walls of your home. It can usually be identified by a visible “tide mark” along the affected area.

Typical signs of penetrating damp are:

- Growing areas of damp on walls or ceilings
- Blotchy patches on walls
- Wet and crumbly plaster
- Signs of spores or mildew
- Drips and puddles



Mould and its spores often produce a musty smell, which is commonly associated with damp in the home. Black mould cannot grow in areas with salt deposits, such as those affected by rising damp, and is usually a sign of condensation.

Condensation

This can cause mould to form in your home, lead to staining or damaging wallpaper, wall surfaces, window frames, furniture and clothing.



Water vapour is generated in your home, here are the main causes:

- Steam from cooking and boiling the kettle
- Baths and showers
- Drying clothes inside the house
- Unsuitable venting of tumble dryers



The main difference between condensation and other types of damp is that it can often be reduced or solved by changing how you use and ventilate your home.

The best way to treat mould is to clean it using a fungicidal wash, following the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Anti-mould paints can help slow its return, but it's important to also reduce condensation, otherwise the mould is likely to come back.



Areas prone to condensation

The following areas are more susceptible to condensation:

- **Cold surfaces:** Mirrors, windows, and window frames.
- **Kitchens and bathrooms:** Large amounts of steam are generated in these rooms.
- **External walls:** Walls in unheated rooms and cold corners of rooms.
- **Wardrobes, cupboards, and behind furniture:** Especially where furniture is placed against an external wall, restricting ventilation

Condensation Explained: 4 Key Things to Consider

Insulation

Insulating your home can have a threefold benefit in tackling condensation problems:

- It helps to raise the surface temperature of walls, ceilings, and windows
- It contributes to a warmer overall indoor environment
- It reduces heating costs, making it more affordable to maintain a consistently comfortable temperature

Heating

Condensation is more likely to occur in homes that are not adequately heated. Try to maintain a temperature of at least 15°C in all rooms, as this will help reduce the formation of condensation.

Ventilation

Condensation will happen less if you allow air to circulate freely. Make sure all vents and air bricks aren't covered.

Reduce the moisture

Condensation in the home occurs when there is too much moisture in the air. Taking steps to reduce indoor moisture levels will help minimise condensation.

TOP TIPS

Keep your home warm

- Try to keep your home at a steady temperature where possible. Even a low, constant heat helps prevent moisture from settling on cold surfaces.

Let fresh air in every day

- Open windows for a short time each day to let moisture escape.

Keep lids on pans when cooking

- This helps reduce the amount of steam released into the air.

Dry clothes carefully

- Avoid drying clothes on radiators if possible. If you must dry indoors, open a window or use a well-ventilated room and keep doors closed.

Wipe away condensation

- If you see water on windows or walls, wipe it away to stop mould forming.

Leave space for air to move

- Keep a small gap between furniture and external walls to allow air to circulate and prevent damp spots.

Keep doors closed when needed

- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking or showering to stop moisture spreading around your home.

Don't block vents or air bricks

- These are important for airflow and help reduce moisture build-up.

Report any problems early

- If you notice mould, damp patches, or leaks, report them as soon as possible!

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