

# Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

## 14th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6)

**Tuesday 16 May 2023**

### **Damp and mould in private and social rented housing**

#### **Introduction**

1. The issue of damp and mould in social and private rented housing prompted considerable public concern and media interest following the death of two-year old Awaab Ishak who tragically died in 2020 as a result of a severe respiratory condition due to prolonged exposure to mould in his home.
2. Awaab lived in a housing association home in England. The coroner investigating the case said, “this “should be a defining moment for the housing sector in terms of increasing knowledge, increasing awareness and a deepening of understanding surrounding the issue of damp and mould.”
3. At its meeting on 2 May the Committee explored the extent of the problem in both private and social rented housing in Scotland with—
  - Aoife Deery, Senior Social Justice Policy Officer, Citizens Advice Scotland;
  - Ruth Gilbert, Member and Emma Saunders, National Organiser, Living Rent;
  - Shona Gorman, Chair, Central Scotland Regional Network of Tenants and Residents;
  - Debbie King, Head of Advocacy, Shelter Scotland;
  - John Blackwood, Chief Executive, Scottish Association of Landlords;
  - John Kerr, Co-Chair, Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO);
  - Carolyn Lochhead, Director of External Affairs, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)
4. The purpose of this session is to follow-up on the issues raised at the meeting on 2 May with:

- Rosemary Agnew, Ombudsman, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman;
- Callum Chomczuk, National Director, Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland;
- Nicola Marcus, Assistant Director of Regulation and Helen Shaw, Director of Regulation, Scottish Housing Regulator;

and then with—

- Paul McLennan, Minister for Housing, Scottish Government
- Naeem Bhatti, Head of Fuel Poverty and Housing Standards Unit, Scottish Government
- Darren Knox, Fuel Poverty & House Condition Analysis Team, Scottish Government

5. A written submission has been provided by Living Rent to support the session. This can be found at the annex to this paper.

## **Background**

### *Causes of dampness and mould*

6. The [type and causes of dampness in the home are varied](#). For example:

- Penetrating damp can happen when water outside penetrates the building. This is most likely to happen from building faults such as broken pipes and gutters, missing roof tiles or poorly installed windows and doors.
- Rising damp can happen when water rises up from the ground into the structure of the building. This can happen where there is no damp proof course, or an existing damp proof course has failed.
- Condensation can happen when warm moist air comes into contact with cold surfaces and leaves drops of water on the surface. Poorly heated or ventilated homes can experience condensation. How a resident uses their home can affect condensation levels. [But in a report, It's not lifestyle, the English Housing Ombudsman warned English social landlords](#) to avoid inferring blame on residents due to 'lifestyle' when it is not often solely their issue.

7. Whatever the cause of dampness in homes the impact may be harmful to residents. Living in damp and mouldy housing can [lead to poor health](#).

8. [The latest Scottish House Condition Survey, published in 2019](#), estimated that relatively few of Scotland's homes suffered from dampness and condensation. Ninety-one per cent of all homes in all tenures (social, private rented and owner occupied) were free from damp or condensation. Around 54,000 were estimated to have rising and/or penetrating damp homes and around 192,000 homes were estimated to have condensation.

9. [During a portfolio question time, the Cabinet Secretary for Social Housing, Justice and Local Government said that](#) the survey showed that 99% of social homes were free from damp and 86% were free from any signs of mould.

*Existing legislative framework in Scotland*

10. Currently, homes in all tenures should meet the Tolerable Standard which includes that the home is "[substantially free from rising and penetrating damp](#)". Councils have duty to ensure that all homes in their area meet the Tolerable Standard and have powers to make owners undertake necessary work. [Only a small proportion of all homes, around 2% or 40,000 homes](#) are estimated to be below the Tolerable Standard.

11. Social landlords have a legal duty to ensure that the properties they let are wind and watertight and in all other respects 'reasonably fit for human habitation'. In addition, social landlords must ensure that the properties they let meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), which includes that they meet the Tolerable Standard (including being substantially free from rising and penetrating damp), have adequate ventilation and be suitably insulated.

12. If a tenant is living in a damp property and thinks that their landlord is not taking appropriate action to deal with the problem, they can complain to their landlord. If they are not satisfied with how any complaint is addressed, then they could complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

13. The Ombudsman would consider, for example, whether the landlord followed their own procedures and whether their actions were reasonable. The Ombudsman will report on the case and could also make a recommendation to redress a financial loss or cost. Residents could also take a case to the Sheriff court. There is no published information on the number of cases the Ombudsman has considered about dampness in social housing. There are some published [investigation reports](#) and [decision reports](#) that involve in some way damp social housing, although most of these do not appear to be recent cases.

14. Tenants may also take legal action when problems have not been resolved satisfactorily.

15. [The Scottish Housing Regulator \(SHR\) has responsibility for monitoring social landlords' compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. It](#)

[does not have a role in dealing with individual complaints from tenants but will investigate if there is a potential 'significant performance failure'](#), such as where the social landlord has failed to take action in a way that puts tenants' interests at risk and this significantly affects a number of the landlord's tenants. It has a range of regulatory powers to intervene where a landlord's performance is poor.

16. [The SHR's most recent report on the Scottish Housing Charter](#) showed that:

- Existing tenants' satisfaction with the quality of their homes decreased to 85% from 87% - LAs 81%, RSLs 86%
- Percentage of homes that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard decreased to 75% from 87% - LAs 70%, RSLs 80%
- Percentage of homes compliant with EESSH decreased to 88% from 89% in the previous year - LAs 83%, RSLs 93%

17. The report is not specific about the extent to which dampness might have impacted on SQHS failure rates. The report states that:

“Some landlords reported delays in carrying out electrical safety inspections, installation of interlinked smoke and heat detectors and upgrades to improve energy efficiency; all of which now form part of the SHQS. Landlords told us that they had experienced difficulties both gaining access to tenants' homes, because of the pandemic, and securing materials to complete the work. Many of the landlords who reported an increased level of SHQS failures confirmed that they have plans in place to address these issues during this reporting year.”

18. [The SHR wrote to all social landlords in December 2022](#) to ask all governing bodies and committee to consider the systems they have in place to ensure that their homes are not affected by mould and dampness and they can identify and deal with any reported cases of mould and damp timeously and effectively.

19. The Regulator has also worked with the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO), the Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) to [issue a briefing, published in February 2023](#), on how the sector can respond to damp and mould. For example, it encourages landlords to be proactive in addressing problems, focus on the root causes of dampness and encourage tenants to report problems. It also advises on data management.

20. The design of new homes, such as ensuring adequate ventilation and drying spaces, can be an important factor too. For existing homes, social landlords may have already, or will be retrofitting their homes.

*Private Rented Housing*

21. Private landlords must make sure that their homes meet the “Repairing Standard”, as set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. This includes that the property should meet the Tolerable Standard. Therefore, privately rented homes should be substantially free from rising and penetrating damp.

22. The Repairing Standard was updated on 1 March 2019 to clarify existing legislation and to introduce new elements. Landlords have been given five years to carry out work to bring housing up to meet these new elements, with a statutory deadline of 1 March 2024. The [Scottish Government published new guidance](#) on the Repairing Standard including advice on dampness.

23. Tenants can apply to the First-tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber) if they think that their landlord has not met the Repairing Standard (tenants must notify their landlord of the problem first and give them time to fix it). Local authorities can also make an application to the Tribunal with, or without the tenant being a participating party to the application.

24. [The Tribunal’s Annual Report 2021-22 noted that there were 182 applications \(5% of all applications to the Tribunal\) concerning repairs cases.](#) It’s not clear how many of these applications included issues related to dampness. [The Tribunal’s 2019/20 report](#) noted that of the 179 Repairing Standard applications made, around a quarter (27%) were from councils as third parties and [only a few councils in Scotland](#) appear to make Repairing Standard applications to the Tribunal.

*Scottish Government plans for a new housing standard*

25. The development of a new common housing standard was outlined in [Housing to 2040](#). The Scottish Government planned to consult and publish a draft standard in 2023 and progress legislation in 2024/25. However, it appears this consultation has been delayed. It is not clear the extent to which any future changes to house condition standards might relate to the issue of dampness.

More information on housing conditions and standards can be accessed via the following link:

[Housing conditions and standards \(updated\) | Scottish Parliament](#)

**Next Steps**

26. Informed by the evidence taken at this meeting and at its session on 2 May the Committee will consider its next steps on this issue.

**Clerks,  
Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee**



# LIVING RENT: EVIDENCE MOULD AND DAMP

**Living Rent** is Scotland's tenants' union. We support tenants across Scotland to organise against the individual housing issues that they face and campaign nationally to improve tenants' rights and address the housing crisis that plagues Scotland.

## **The impacts of mould and damp in housing**

After the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, there has been greater awareness of the impact of damp and mould on people's health, most notably younger people. However, mould and damp continue to be a persistent and debilitating problem for huge numbers of tenants in Scotland, with landlords often blaming the growth of mould and damp on tenants' lifestyle rather than recognising and addressing the structural issues causing mould and damp.

Living with mould and damp has long term health consequences for residents. The NHS links the presence of mould and damp in households with cases of asthma, eczema, allergies, general poor health and, in some extreme and tragic cases, permanent damage and dramatic health consequences.<sup>1</sup> Exposure to mould and damp is a national health emergency which needs to be addressed urgently.

Living with mould and damp can have a significant impact on tenants' social wellbeing as well. People feel they are unable to have guests in their home, receive help from older relatives or have children's friends over due to the potential exposure and consequent health effects. Our members have outlined the consequences of mould and damp on jobs and education because it has damaged professional outfits and uniforms, as well as people who have suffered from the ongoing stress and shame of living in substandard conditions impacting people's confidence at work.

## **Context:**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2022/12/05/dampness-in-scottish-social-housing/>

According to the latest Scottish House Condition Survey (2019), nearly one in ten (9%) of all homes (social, private rented and owner occupied) suffer from mould and damp.<sup>2</sup> Recent figures are likely to be higher due to the recent cost of living crisis. For instance, *The Sunday Post* outlined that figures obtained from 22 councils detail 14,451 reports of mould or dampness in 2021-22 compared with 12,099 in 2020-2021, an increase of 19%.<sup>3</sup> Similarly Scotland's largest social landlord, the Wheatley Group estimates that between one in ten and half (10-50%) of all homes are affected by damp, with this being more prevalent in social housing and low-income communities.<sup>4</sup>

### **Landlords' responses**

In our experience of working closely with people impacted by mould and damp, landlords consistently blame tenants for lifestyle choices such as “steaming potatoes” or “showering too much” and reduce the problem of pervasive mould and damp to ‘condensation issues.’ At best, landlords simply wash the wall and paint over the mould to visually improve the situation. Whilst social and council landlords have committed to tackling issues more proactively, our members frequently experience ongoing struggles to have their issues be taken seriously. In the private rented sector, tenants face additional challenges as they often are threatened with or face eviction if they try to get their landlord to appropriately respond to the presence of mould and damp.

### **Impact of cost of living crisis and Awaab Ishak's death**

Up to now, our members have frequently reported that they managed the presence of mould and damp by handling it themselves (leaving windows open all the time, cleaning all the mould every week, etc) or have just given up on reporting it, given the ongoing gaslighting they faced. However, in the last few months there have been two significant changes.

First, the increase in the price of energy has meant that the ability to open windows to allow airflow and then re-heat the house has become prohibitively expensive. Second, the coroner's report of Awaab Ishak's death clearly linked the presence of mould to the child's death. This was the first time that there was a public and widespread recognition of what tenants have always felt: that mould in homes is a public health issue despite it being repeatedly ignored.

These two factors mean we believe that tenants are both less likely to be able to mitigate against the worst aspects of mould and have been more confident to report cases of mould and damp and fighting for their basic rights, as they can clearly point to the recognised health consequences of living with mould and dampness.

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<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-house-condition-survey-local-authority-analysis-2017-2019/pages/9/>

<sup>3</sup> The Sunday Post, 8th of January 2023, Social housing tenants hospitalised as reports of damp surge by 20% <https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/social-housing-tenants-hospitalised-as-reports-of-damp-surge-by-20/>

<sup>4</sup> Group Managing Dampness, Mould & Condensation Policy, Wheatley group, March 2023, p.3

## **The legislative context**

Social landlords have a legal duty to ensure that the properties they let are wind and watertight and in all other respects ‘reasonably fit for human habitation’.<sup>5</sup> In addition, they must ensure that the properties they let meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), one aspect of which is that homes must be substantially free from rising and penetrating damp.<sup>6</sup>

In private rented housing, the tolerable standards outline that a ‘house meets the tolerable standard if the house is substantially free from rising damp or penetrating damp.’<sup>7</sup> Finally, there has been legal precedent to ensure that tenants should not face extortionate heat bills or inhabitable homes.<sup>8</sup>

However, as a union, we believe that the current legislation is failing tenants in a number of ways:

- Landlords often use the pretext of ‘condensation’ to avoid taking responsibility for mould and dampness and blame tenants’ lifestyles for causing condensation.
- Landlords often delay repairs and, in the private rented sector, may resort to threats of evictions or actually enforce eviction to avoid fulfilling their responsibilities.
- Tenants face a number of hurdles and need significant legal help to access justice and win repairs. The legal framework puts the onus of ensuring standards are upheld on the weaker party (tenants) rather than landlords who face very few practicable penalties if they fail to uphold standards and/or address repair issues in a timely manner.
- There is no statutory guidance regarding how to handle repair issues following which timelines. At best, there seems to be ‘best practices guides’ that only apply for social and council housing.
- There are no guidelines for amounts of compensation that a tenant can seek for a landlord failing to maintain the housing decent standard. Tenants struggle to receive any compensation, for either material damages or health damages.

## **The changes Scotland tenants’ need**

Overall, our vision is that tenants should be able to live in homes that are free of mould and damp and that they can afford to live in, i.e. with genuinely affordable rents and energy costs. Landlords need to ensure that all housing stock is free of mould and damp and face hefty fines if they fail to act promptly and effectively. Landlords should stop blaming tenants for lifestyle issues, as blame can reproduce discriminatory beliefs, notably racist tropes.

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<sup>5</sup> Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 : <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2001/10/schedule/4>

<sup>6</sup> SHQS technical guidance:

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2016/06/shqs-technical-guidance-for-social-landlords/documents/shqs-technical-guidance-social-landlords-pdf/shqs-technical-guidance-social-landlords-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/SHQS%2BTechnical%2BGuidance%2Bfor%2BSocial%2BLandlords.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Implementing the housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Parts 1 and 2: Advisory and Statutory Guidance for Local Authority

<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20171002000546/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/03/25154751/6>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.glasgowtimes.co.uk/news/23284236.mike-daily-dont-suffer-silence-renting-damp-home/>



Tenants need clear and statutory guidance in the private and social rented sector regarding how their complaints regarding mould and damp will be handled. Landlords should be bound to strict timelines to implement repairs with fines attached for failure to abide by them, and tenants should be able to access compensation for damages and health impacts. Just like with unsecured deposits, landlords should face automatic fines for failing to handle mould and damp issues. Overall, the government should act with public health in mind which will ensure the wellbeing of tenants. By acting to prevent illness rather than treat the impact of mould and damp the government will ensure tenants are able to live in homes fit to live in and ease pressure on the NHS. Landlords should be made to comply with a health and safety approach to mould and damp, as exposure to mould and damp may have similar long term health impacts as exposure to dangerous chemical substances.

See more specific suggestions below, which we hope can be interesting for the committee to consider.

### **Private housing:**

1. **Clear standards:** *Ensuring that mould and damp are both part of the ‘Tolerable Standards’ combined with a mould and damp checks at the start of a tenancy just like there are currently risk assessments regarding Legionella.*
2. *Having **clear guidance** regarding how landlords should handle complaints of mould and damp, with **a standardised timeline** for addressing issues and **compensation** for each day that the problem fails to be addressed.*
  - As soon as an issue of mould or damp is reported, the landlord or letting agent must carry out an inspection. This inspection is solely for the purpose of documenting and assessing mould and damp. Inspection notes and next steps should be shared with tenants and the situation monitored:
    - Issues reported could be categorised in terms of the seriousness of the issue and this categorisation should inform the timeline of actions. ‘Seriousness’ should be assessed on objective criteria such as the extent of the area impacted, the humidity levels, the evolution of mould/damp, and the health impacts.
    - Where there is a dispute between landlord and tenant on the seriousness of damp and/or mould, there should be a clear mechanism/guidance for tenants to get a second opinion from the local Environmental Health services.
    - For more serious issues, a professional survey should be sourced, with clear steps suggested and implemented.
    - If structural repairs are required, tenants should be supported to find alternative temporary accommodation if required to move with rent rebates/alternative accommodation being paid for by the landlord.
    - If the issue is condensation because of a cold bridge/lack of insulation (which would also often be seen through the EPC rating), retrofit works should be considered in line with a broader strategy to retrofit Scotland’s housing stock.
    - Once the issue is ‘treated’, a 6-month check should ensure that the issue does not re-emerge.

This guidance should work with a clear compensation scheme for tenants if landlords fail to act diligently and follow the statutory timeframes. Compensation should take the form of:

- A rent abatement, based on timescale of delay (eg. 25% rent rebate for 1 week delay, 50% for 1 month, 100% for 2 months)
- Compensation for stress, impact on health and any lost or damaged property, as documented by the tenant.

In order for this process to be effective and incentivise landlords to do the repairs, after lodging an application at Tribunal, tenants should immediately be able to start withholding the proportionate amount of rent.

### 3. **Penalties** for landlords who fail to take appropriate action

Landlords who fail to appropriately handle mould and damp complaints (e.g. fail to follow the timescale outlined in the repair guidance) should face fines of up to three months rent and not be able to raise rents for at least a year. Information regarding outstanding repairs and complaints must inform the rent adjudication decision. Tenants should be able to raise mould and damp issues with the local authority as well.

### 4. **Protections** for tenants against evictions

To ensure that tenants are able to raise complaints regarding mould or damp without fear of retribution, tribunals should cancel any eviction proceedings that were initiated against tenants 6 months after they have raised a complaint regarding mould or damp, unless in exceptional circumstances.

### 5. **Greater power for local authorities** to enforce standards and easier access for tenants to seek local authority support

Local authorities should have the power to:

- Investigate issues when landlords are failing to address mould or damp complaints.
- Issue fines paid to the council for failing to maintain home to the repairing standard.
- Consider the existence of complaints when renewing landlord registration or if there is an application to change the use of housing.

This should be enabled by having a dedicated local authority team for outstanding housing issues, which works closely with environmental health to provide training on identifying issues related to mould, damp and compensation and the different categories of issues.

### 6. **Clear monitoring of the situation and database of issues**

Letting agencies and landlords should ensure that they have a log regarding properties that they manage or rent that mentions issues such as mould and damp to be able to provide such a history to new tenants and for best solutions to be selected if issues re-emerge.

## **Social and council housing:**

1. **Clear standards:** Ensuring that mould and damp are both part of the 'Tolerable Standards' combined with mould and damp checks at the start of a tenancy just like there are currently risk assessments regarding Legionella.

2. Having **clear rules** regarding how landlords should handle complaints of mould and damp, with **a standardised timeline** for addressing issues and **compensation** for each day that the problem fails to be addressed.

For instance:

- As soon as an issue of mould or damp is reported, the landlord should carry out an inspection. This inspection should be solely for the purpose of understanding mould and damp. Inspection notes and next steps should be shared with tenants and the situation monitored:
  - Issues reported could be categorised in terms of the seriousness of the issue and this categorisation should inform the timeline of actions. 'Seriousness' should be assessed on objective criteria such as the extent of the area impacted, the humidity levels, the evolution of mould/damp, and the health impacts.
  - Where there is a dispute between landlord and tenant on the seriousness of damp and/or mould, there should be a clear mechanism/guidance for tenants to get a second opinion from the local Environmental Health services.
  - For more serious issues, a professional survey should be sourced, with clear steps suggested and implemented.
  - If structural repairs are required, tenants should be supported to find alternative temporary accommodation and/or decant flats.
  - If the issue is condensation because of a cold bridge/lack of insulation (which would also often be seen through the EPC rating), retrofit works should be considered in line with a broader strategy to retrofit Scotland's housing stock.
  - Once the issue is 'treated', a 6-month check should ensure that the issue does not re-emerge.

This guidance should work with a clear compensation scheme for tenants if landlords fail to act diligently and follow the statutory timeframes. Compensation should take the form of:

- A rent abatement, based on timescale of delay (eg 25% for 1 week delay, 50% for 1 month, 100% for 2 months).
- Compensation for stress, impact on health and any lost or damaged property, as documented by the tenant.

Finally, in the situation where the mould/damp has had an impact on the tenant's health or the health of someone in the household, the household should receive extra medical points on any application for housing transfers.

### **3. Monitoring of issues and housing stock**

Landlords must ensure that they have a log regarding properties that they manage or rent that mentions issues such as mould and damp to be able to provide such a history to new tenants and for best solutions to be selected if issues re-emerge. This file should be easily accessible for housing officers.

### **4. Specific funding for retrofits**

In some instances, mould and damp issues arise because of whole block structural issues (e.g. poor insulation, roof leak, rising damp). In these instances, local authorities and social landlords

should be able to access specific Scottish Government funding to retrofit the block promptly, rather than waiting until it is 'up for retrofit' in the social landlord or council timescale.

### **5. Clear ventilation standards**

As part of the ESSH standards, clear ventilation standards should be followed to prevent condensation and trapped moisture issues to emerge. Across social and council housing, ventilation should be modernised and landlords should fit measurement instruments to support tenants to monitor the situation, eg. humidistat.

### **6. Training and guidance**

Staff members should have clear training and guidance regarding how to handle these issues and there should be specialist teams to handle mould and damp issues, who have training regarding identifying the issues with contractors who understand how to address them.

### **Mixed tenure blocks:**

In addition to these suggestions, when the issue is a structural issue in a mixed tenure block (e.g. roof leak), there should be additional measures. These are suggestions from the union which we would be interested in hearing further about:

- Residents of the block (tenants and owner occupiers) should be able to effectively hold the factor to account regarding repairs through clear penalties for factors failing to fulfil their responsibilities and/or the local authority should act as a factor of last resort, organising the block repairs and then reclaiming costs from other landlords and/or owner occupiers.
- If wider retrofits are necessary, the Scottish Government should enable more grants for low income homeowners to participate in mixed-tenure improvement schemes, in order for them to be able to contribute to block retrofits rather than face high debt or being forced to leave their home.

### **Overall:**

Mould and damp issues can be both exacerbated by poor insulation and energy performance, but also by substandard retrofit work. As a result, the retrofit agenda needs to be a clear priority for the Scottish Government, with both funding for local authorities and social landlords and low income owner-occupiers and penalties for private landlords who fail to maintain homes.

### **A few stories from the last four months regarding mould and damp, pictures not provided to ensure anonymity**

- **Private tenants in Aberdeen:** The two tenants moved in January. They reported the presence of serious mould in February. The letting agency's response was to provide a standard document regarding 'combating condensation'. After several insistent emails from the tenants, there was finally a maintenance visit. Nothing happened, and the mould continued to spread. In the meantime, the agency continued to blame tenants for lifestyle issues. Finally, they realised that the issues were more serious and organised a professional visit. Tenants were then served notice in April. After four months of issues, with mould having an impact on the tenants' health, ability to work and their properties, they have had no compensation and are now evicted.

- **Private tenants in Glasgow:** This private tenant and her children had to face extreme damp and black mould in her home. For five years she tried to raise the issue through conversations and on the phone with the letting agent, whilst the issue only got worse. The mould and damp exacerbated her pre-existing health conditions which impacted her ability to work. The landlord blamed the tenant and her children, telling them to clean the mould, be careful when showering, open windows and put heating on full blast, despite the second floor of the house having no heating. They blamed the tenant for failing to look after the property, and issued an eviction notice.
- **Block in Glasgow:** In the block, there is mould in extensive areas and in common areas, because of long standing water and structural issues. The landlords are failing to do any meaningful steps, pointing to the responsibility of the factor which is waiting for the landlord to pay for repairs. As a result, tenants and homeowners are facing extreme damp and mould, without any recourse for action and ongoing serious impacts on their health.
- **Council tenants:** A council tenant moved with her young children in summer 2021 and raised the issue of mould and its impact on her children several times, but nothing was done. Finally in March 2023, a report was completed with the recommendation that she wipe down the mould, and then repaint the wall herself. There was nothing suggested about structural issues and no support regarding doing this work.
- **Private tenants Edinburgh:** One family living in the private rented sector who rented through a letting agency had black mould in the bedroom and bathroom. They also had no heating for ten years. They were unable to bathe the smallest child in the bathroom due to the extent of the mould. Despite reporting the mould at every inspection, the landlord said that the reason the necessary repairs were never completed was because they never called or emailed after the inspections despite being told that the mould had been noted by their landlord, and so technically there was no 'paper trail'.
- **Council tenants:** One family had rising mould and damp that also affected the children's beds. The mould and damp contributed to their children getting asthma and health issues. Despite the tenants repeatedly raising the issue for two years, the issue was never taken seriously. The council claimed that they hadn't heard about the issues and blamed the tenants lifestyle choices and the lack of heating as reasons for the mould and damp. This was despite clear evidence that it was a structural problem and surrounding houses were impacted.
- **Social housing tenant Glasgow:** One tenant had mould and damp that started when his bathroom ceiling collapsed due to flooding upstairs and damp spread throughout his home. This caused damp to spread from the bathroom to the kitchen. Due to poor repairs, the ceiling then collapsed again. This was exacerbated by windows being defective and

allowing air ingress. The housing association failed to adequately fix the repairs and blamed the tenant for failing to facilitate the issues being fixed.