

- Damp Control
- Timber Preservation
- Structural Waterproofing
- Structural Repair
- Invasive Weed Control
- Flood Protection/Resilience
- Flood Restoration
- Residential Ventilation
- Ground Gas Protection

Jim Shannon MP and members of the All Party Healthy Homes and Buildings Parliamentary Group

Dear Mr Chairman,

As a regular attendee, follower and supporter of the work of the Healthy Homes and Buildings Parliamentary Group, I was hoping that you may consider a matter of growing concern as we go into the colder winter months during the current crisis.

Your committee knows all too well how many of our houses and flats are ill-equipped to deal with “normal” levels of moisture loading in the winter. The results are mould, condensation, miserable living conditions and ill-health. This problem is often made worse for households where the quality of building is poor and fuel poverty prevalent.

It is our belief that the restrictions in our movements necessary to prevent the spread of the virus, coupled with greater numbers of home workers and people made economically inactive and furloughed, is all adding to the normal moisture stress placed on many homes at this time of the year. At the same time, many of those who are occupying buildings are struggling to pay for fuel. The inevitable result is damper, colder homes with higher rates of daily occupation.

Without action to make people aware of the risks of overcrowding, poor ventilation, and inadequate heating, we could be heading into an unrealised and deeper public health crisis. One that that could, to some degree, be avoided by taking some simple and cost-effective actions. What is needed though, is a programme of public education and awareness around improving indoor air quality that is delivered very quickly.

We have no claim to medical training, but from media reports we understand that the virus can be more prevalent in situations where people are packed together, in cold environments and where ventilation is poor. These conditions are also often the pre-cursors to mould and condensation. It may then follow that dwellings that are safe from mould will be less favourable to the proliferation of Covid and that unless steps are taken to improve the living conditions of those in the poorest houses, the disparity in infection rates will widen.

What we would urge the APPC to consider is the need for clear public messaging to help households reduce the risk of mould and condensation over what will inevitably be an extraordinary winter. In the longer term, we know that the technology and techniques now exist to assess the adequacy of ventilation in dynamic situations and properly understand moisture risk and imbalance of homes and buildings before and during occupation.

We believe your group could press for the use and adoption of such techniques to prevent problems before they cause harm and to properly understand and fix problems appear.

I would be happy to expand on some of the issues raised above, provide access to our information resources such as the [guidance and information booklet](#) that we supply to landlords and tenants currently to help reduce the effects of condensation and we would be open to introduce the committee to some of the emerging technologies (some joint funded by Government through innovate UK) that are making the evaluation of air quality and moisture risk in homes, cheap, reliable, simple and effective.

Yours sincerely,



**Stephen Hodgson**  
Chief Executive Officer