

CPD

Awaab's Law – A Guide to Compliance

For



By

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BUILT ENVIRONMENT JOURNAL

Building pathology



Guidance helps owners and tenants tackle damp and mould

BUILT ENVIRONMENT JOURNAL

Building pathology



Understanding current building safety duties

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Building control



Guidance gives consumers lowdown on spray foam insulation

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Building surveying



Why UK Parliament works may cost billions more



Shortlisted

RICS Matrics

Young Surveyor

of the Year 2017

Sam Piplica • You
Chartered Building Surveyor | Property Investor. I advise on property matters ...
1yr • 🌐

Had the pleasure of being on a panel today at Chartered Association of Building Engineers Built Environment Live today with Alan Milstein, Hilary Grayson and Ieon Ivermore.

I'd like to think I delivered what the people wanted - horrible photos, people focused stories (because what's the point of buildings if they don't work for people) and technical detail.

Oh the tension in the audience when I mentioned Approved Document B, and then when on to say the specific subsection and diagram I could tell they loved it. It's exactly what the people paid for! (it was a free event...)

Finally got to meet Gavin Dunn and Richard Harral in person and demonstrate how I'm not just a virtual reality AI generated image.

Photos of the group, the programme and the space before the presentation. We didn't do it to a completely empty room!

RICS MATRICS

Finalist

Building Surveying

SAM PIPLICA

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YOUNG SURVEYOR AWARDS
2021





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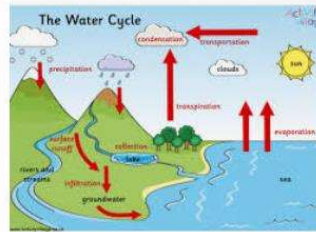
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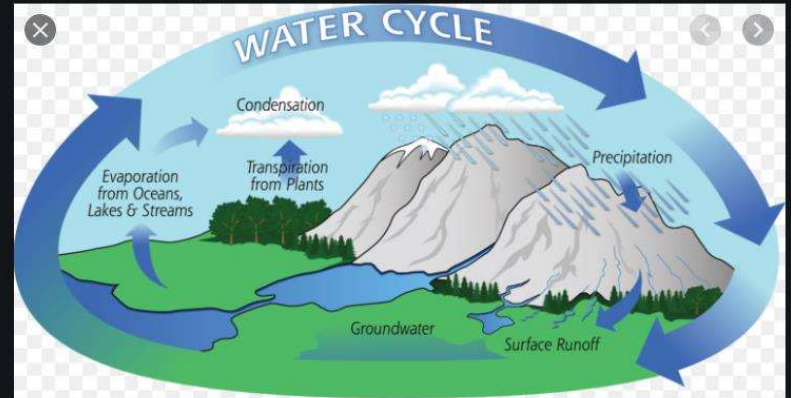
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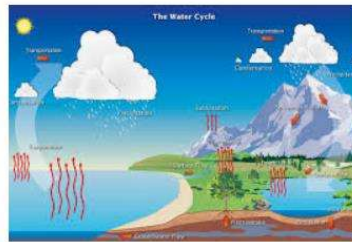
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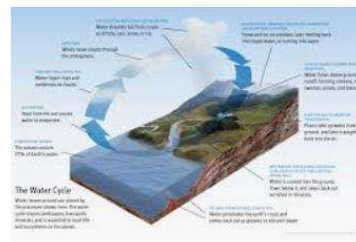
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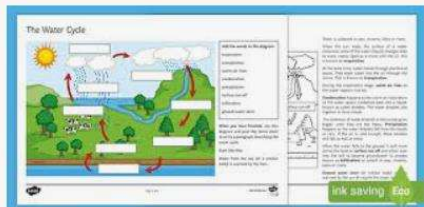
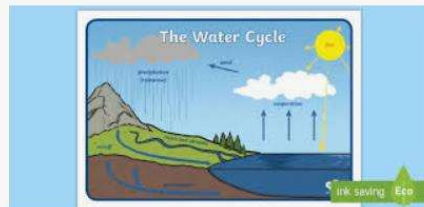
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conserve-energy-future.com



The Water Cycle
earthobservatory.nasa.gov



Water cycle - Wikipedia
en.wikipedia.org



The stuff you need to know depends on your role

1. Introduction to Laws and Guidance - **everyone**
2. Understanding different types of moisture – **everyone but at different levels**
3. Building types and relationships with moisture **everyone but at different levels**
4. Working to guidance
 1. BS 5250 – **Building surveyors**
 2. Joint Position Statement – **everyone but at different levels**
 3. RICS consumer guide – **Forward to everyone**
5. What is Damp, Mould and Condensation – **everyone but at different levels**
6. Different types and aspects of mould – **Depends on situation**
7. Understanding the causes of moisture problems – **everyone but at different levels**
8. Working out moisture problems – **everyone but at different levels**

Define what you need to know in your role and act on that.

I cannot cover in detail today, so use this list for further reading.



Death of Awaab Ishak

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Awaab Ishak, a two-year old child living in a one-bedroom flat at the Ilminster block on Rochdale's Freehold estate,^{[2][3]} died in December 2020 as a result of a severe respiratory condition. In 2022, a coroner at Rochdale coroner's court ruled that this was caused by prolonged exposure to **black mould** in his home^[4] which had "inadequate ventilation and was not equipped for normal day-to-day living activities which led to excess damp and condensation".^[5] Awaab's death led to a change in the law, known as "**Awaab's Law**".

Background [edit]

His father had complained to [Rochdale Boroughwide Housing](#) about the mould in 2017 and was told to paint over it. His father and mother, who moved to the UK from Sudan in 2016 and 2017 respectively,^[4] said they had "no doubt at all" that they were treated poorly "because we are not from the country and are less aware of how the systems in the UK work".^[5] In June 2020, his father instructed solicitors and initiated a claim over the problem.^[6] In December 2020, a surveyor described the conditions at his home as "unfit for human habitation".^[7]

Coroner's report [edit]

The coroner's report stated that there was an evident gap in the information-sharing between health visitors/midwives/early help services and the GP. Health visitors had raised concerns in July 2020 and the community midwife completed a special circumstances form in September to children's services highlighting the issue. Dr Caroline Taylor, chair of the [National Association of Primary Care](#) said "We all write letters to the housing association and we tell our patients we don't feel like it will make any difference." Middleton [Primary Care Network](#) – neighbouring the estate – is proposing that social prescribers will be sent to assess patients' housing conditions to strengthen a GP's case to local agencies.^[8]

Awaab Ishak



Awaab Ishak, aged 2

Born	2018 ^[1] Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England
Died	21 December 2020 (aged 2) Royal Oldham Hospital ^[1]
Cause of death	Acute airway oedema with severe granulomatous tracheobronchitis due to environmental mould exposure ^[1]

Resources for the Act and Regulations by Lawyers

RICS and Weightmans LLP put out a webinar. For a more in-depth legal overview.

Slides

<https://communications.weightmans.email/16/3955/upload/rics-surveyor-guidanceawaab-s-law-training.pdf>

Webinar

<https://weightmans.wistia.com/medias/s3jio7ta5d>

I'm not a lawyer so I'm not giving in depth legal overviews.

Awaab's Law was introduced in July 2023 as part of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act:

- Requires landlords to fix reported health hazards within specified timeframes. This now is an implied term in social housing tenancy agreements
- Amends the implied repairing obligations in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. A new section 10A is inserted in respect of social housing tenancies only. It implies a term that the landlord will comply with all prescribed requirements that are applicable to that lease.
- The secretary of state then makes regulations which require the landlord to act in respect of prescribed hazards within specified timeframes.

So what are the timeframe?

Timeframe

The new legal duties

1. The landlord must fix **emergency** health and safety hazards within 24 hours of reporting.
2. The landlord must also investigate **significant** hazards (damp and mould) within 10 working days of being notified and then make properties safe in 5 working days of the conclusion of an investigation.
3. For both types of hazards, the landlord must also write the findings to tenants within 3 working days of inspection.
4. For longer-term/preventative works: begin within 5 working days, with full start within 12 weeks

Timeframe

“working day” means any day other than—

- a Saturday or Sunday,
- Christmas Day or Good Friday, or
- a day which is a bank holiday under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 in England and Wales.

But what is an **emergency** hazard and **significant** hazard?



Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025

- “**emergency** hazard” has the meaning given in regulation 3
- “emergency hazard” means, in relation to a social home, a relevant hazard that poses an imminent and significant risk of harm to the health or safety of an occupier of the social home

Reg 3(2) - “relevant hazard” means a hazard affecting a social home that is a “prescribed hazard” where:

- in relation to a **significant** hazard, the risk of harm is associated with exposure to **damp, mould or fungal growth**, or...

There are more relating lack of space, deficiencies, etc.

Linked to the Housing Act 2004

- “prescribed hazard” has the same meaning as in section 10 (see section 10(2) and (3))
- S10(2) “prescribed hazard” means any matter or circumstance amounting to a hazard for the time being prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 2 of the Housing Act 2004.
- s10(3) The definition of “hazard” in section 2(1) of the Housing Act 2004 applies for the purposes of subsection (2) as though the reference to a potential occupier were omitted.
- **So “prescribed hazards” are the same as apply in the context of fitness claims.**

Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements)(England) Regulations 2025

- “significant hazard” means, in relation to a social home, a relevant hazard that poses a significant risk of harm to the health or safety of an occupier of the social home.
- “significant risk of harm” means a risk of harm to the occupier’s health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency (but not within 24 hours);

(Reg 3(1) (a) and (b) respectively)

- “emergency hazard” means, in relation to a social home, a relevant hazard that poses an imminent and significant risk of harm to the health or safety of an occupier of the social home
- “imminent and significant risk of harm” means a risk of harm to the occupier’s health or safety that a reasonable lessor with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe within 24 hours.

But only relevant parts applicable to social housing and only applicable to England - there are equivalents in other countries

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a framework used by local authorities to assess housing conditions. There is a list of 29 prescribed HHSRS hazards, including **damp and mould**, excess heat and cold, risk of falls and electrical hazards.

Hazards are divided into category 1 and 2. Category 1 hazards are the most serious where a local authority must take action.

The definition of hazard used when determining unfitness is any risk of harm to the health or safety of an actual occupier of a dwelling. This can arise from a deficiency in the dwelling, or any building or land in the vicinity.

A home is unfit for human habitation if it is defective to the point where it is not reasonably suitable for occupation. This can be understood to mean an occupier might be injured or experience injury to health as a result of ordinary use of the property.

Damp and mould and excess cold might amount to a category 1 hazard.

How the Renters' Rights Act 2025 Relates to all this

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 complements the existing 'Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018' (HFHH Act) by introducing further, more proactive measures:

- **Decent Homes Standard:** The 2025 Act provides for the application of the Decent Homes Standard (currently only applicable to social housing) to the private rented sector. This is a different, more comprehensive set of criteria for property conditions than the HFHH Act's minimum standard.
- **Awaab's Law:** The Act will extend Awaab's Law to the private sector, requiring landlords to address serious hazards (like damp and mould) within strict, specified timeframes.
- The key difference is that the HFHH Act provides a legal route for tenants to seek redress through the courts if a property is already unfit, while the Renters' Rights Act and its associated regulations (Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law) introduce mandatory, proactive duties and strict deadlines for landlords to prevent properties from reaching that condition in the first place, with enforcement powers for local authorities

What you do to comply

Property Inspections by the property manager

- **Regular inspections** - Frequency dependent on several factors
- Set down principles and processes
- Understand importance and priorities
- Understand how to deal with it
- Be trained and competent – this is different to a building survey inspection, and has the necessary resources

Building survey inspections, to be competent you must know

- Construction type
- Property age
- Materials
- Changes which have taken place
- Moisture performance
- Potential weaknesses
- Normal / abnormal use
- What a problem looks like
- Working out causes of problems
- Working out solution

Guidance — BS 5250: 2021

1. The main UK guidance on moisture in buildings
2. Covers everything from designing new buildings, to analysing existing ones together with treating existing buildings
3. Everything is relevant - if you are analysing an existing building, get to understand what good looks like
4. Annex C Diagnosis of dampness problems - very relevant
5. Annex F Guidance for occupiers on how to avoid damaging condensation - very relevant
6. All buildings - different ages and types
7. Different types of moisture
8. Different sources
9. Optimum solutions



Management of moisture in buildings —
Code of practice

Guidance — Joint Position Statement

1. Survey / Inspection on purchase
2. Inspection on complaint of problem
3. Periodic inspections in maintenance and management
4. Survey / inspection for undertaking work
5. Design of work to buildings
6. Implementation of works to building

The biggest issue with this is that it's super basic.

You can only understand the risks and make the right decisions if you have the knowledge listed on the 'Regular Inspections' slide.

<https://www.rics.org/profession-standards/rics-standards-and-guidance/sector-standards/building-surveying-standards/investigation-of-moisture-and-its-effect-on-traditional-building>

Investigation of moisture and its effects on traditional buildings

Principles and competencies

Joint position statement, 1st edition, September 2022





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Video demonstrations of JPS application



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RICS 'Investigation of moisture and its effect on traditional buildings', a joint position statement (JPS2022) by RICS, [Historic England](#) and [Property Care Association](#), can be applied to all buildings.

Competencies and process apply to the investigation of moisture generally.

In this video, I investigate blown plaster.

It's a relatively straightforward investigation, but gave me an excuse to talk about the JPS again.

My ask for you to takeaway from this is,
- if you do not investigate moisture or it is outside of your area of competence, please consider your choice of wording in your report. I.e instead of recommending a "damp survey", recommend getting a JPS compliant survey and investigation.

Repair guides I forgot the numbers of in the video.
BRE Good Building Guide 7 on replacing failed plasterwork, and
BRE Good Repair Guide 18 on replacing plasterwork.



96

11 comments · 3 reposts

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sam-piplica-0106b71a_rics-investigation-of-moisture-and-its-activity-7209201251379466242-3qps?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAAQE0kwBX5XEuXA0wgZ_G3zCxBY0xSqasil



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The competencies and process apply to the investigation of moisture generally.

In this video, I investigate a floor void which I frustratingly didn't identify MONTHS ago, and but luckily identified before installing new insulation and floor coverings.

As a caveat, this video doesn't include all information/thought processes, i.e. I don't even discuss drainage, ground conditions, option appraisal of all remediation works. I don't explain why everything is or is not an issue. It very much relies on the viewer having knowledge/understanding of moisture and it's relationship with building materials. I.e. I assume the viewer understands what 73% RH in the floor void means.

It's a not-so-quick overview to demonstrate the JPS2022 in action.
I'll post a couple of photos in the comments to show external areas.



63

12 comments · 2 reposts

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/sam-piplica-0106b71a_rics-investigation-of-moisture-and-its-effect-activity-7143220266301624320-kO8r?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAAQE0kwBX5XEuXA0wgZ_G3zCxBY0xSqasil



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[Home](#) > [Consumer guides](#) > [Damp and mould](#)



Damp and mould

16 June 2025



Professor Michael Parrett FRICS

Consultant Building Pathologist, Michael Parrett Associates

RICS would like to thank Professor Michael Parrett FRICS for his help producing this consumer guide and for providing the photographs.

[Michael Parrett Associates](#)

This consumer guide helps owners and occupiers of residential property to manage and maintain their homes.

<https://www.rics.org/consumer-guides/damp-and-mould>

What is 'damp' in buildings?

Damp can be described as 'excess moisture that should not be there'.

If any part of your home

- is not dry to the touch
- has mould growth or
- has a musty smell

you should investigate.

Ref	RH (%)	Typical Effects
1	100	Saturation percentage
2	>96	Mould can develop on glass wool
3	>90	Bacteria can multiply: mould can appear on brick and painted surfaces
4	>85	Dampness stage; materials may become visibly damp or damp to touch. Timber decay occurs
5	>76	Mould can develop on leather. Multiplication of mites greatest above this level
6	>70	Viability of mould increases markedly
7	65	Maximum optimal comfort level for humans
8	40-50	Minimum survival level for dust mites
9	45	Minimal optimal comfort level for humans. Electrostatic shocks more likely below this level

Explanation of condensation

- Air is saturated
- Cannot contain any more moisture without condensing
- Relative Humidity (RH) = percentage of moisture in the air
- 100% Relative Humidity = Condensation
- Air is cooled on meeting a cool surface
- The temperature at which it condenses is known as Dew Point

Explanation of mould

In summary: Mould - what is it caused by?

- Moisture persistently high levels of RH
- Lack of ventilation
- Mould is a naturally occurring organism which plays an important role in the eco system. In essence in nature its part of the recycling process by breaking down dead organic matter but is a problem indoors.
- Mould spores travel indoors on clothing, shopping bags, and such like. Spores can also come in through windows and the like.
- They are almost invisible, but when they settle on surfaces with a degree of moisture vapour on it, they can begin to reproduce within 24 to 48 hours.

If anyone diagnoses a mould type from a visual inspection, it's a copy and paste job. You cannot do it. Which of the over 100,000 different types of moulds have they diagnosed without a lab test?

You don't always need a lab report. Just know the REMOVAL process is the same!

Cleaning Small Areas of Mould (DIY or Tenant-Safe Method)

- For non-porous surfaces (e.g. tiles, glass, metal, uPVC, paint):
- Prepare a mild cleaning solution:
 - Detergent + warm water (general cleaning) or White vinegar (80%) + water (20%)
- Apply the solution with a cloth — don't spray directly (reduces airborne spores).
- Wipe the area thoroughly, then rinse and dry.
- Dispose of cloths or paper towels afterwards.

For persistent mould, use:

- Mould-removal products with fungicides (BS EN 1650 compliant).

Professional Remediation

For significant or recurring mould:

Use a specialist contractor (with COSHH and HSE-compliant process).

They may use:

- HEPA vacuuming
- Biocidal fogging/misting
- Containment and negative pressure systems



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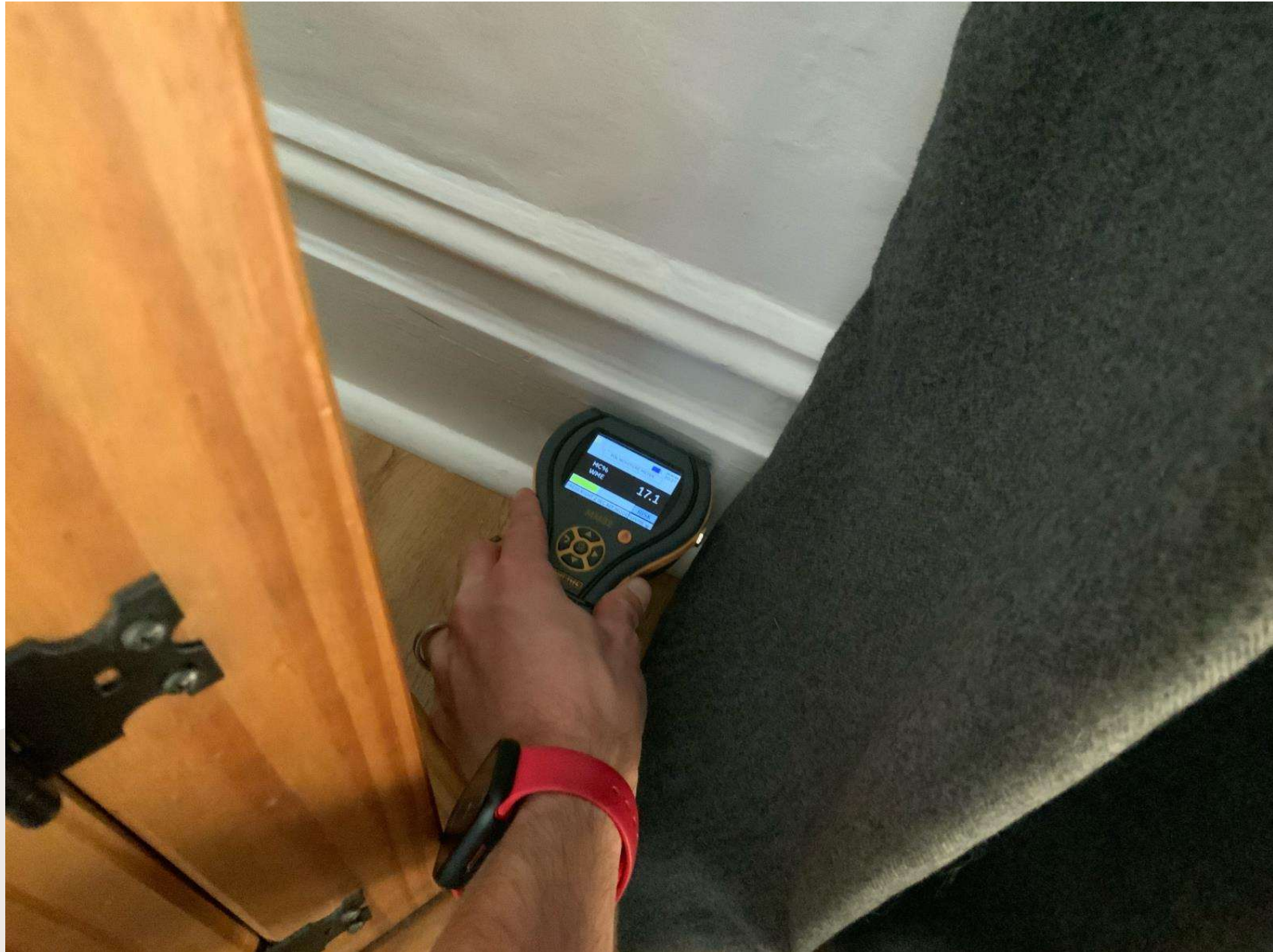




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new air brick in this
area. the rear is
concrete floor.



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Can't explain

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Referrals

Pre-Purchase residential



Specific/Single defect, Workmanship/Quality inspections

Photographic schedule of condition - *Just like recording damage when leasing a car*



Party wall act - Loft conversion, extension, re-roofing, new cladding

Expert Witness - Construction disputes - Contractors falling out, Trading Standards - Builder's taken cash and ran. Workmanship Quality or Building Regulations compliance.



Party Wall – Commercial Development, Loads of Owner (neighbours)

Expert Witness on a big job - Development, School, Hospital – Typically comes from a solicitor



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<https://propertyinvestorsnetwork.co.uk/meetings/great-north/>

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6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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I'm becoming the host in January 2026, and changing the venue to the Holiday Inn, Washington.



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