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| Person | Time | Speech |
| JF | 00:00 | Ok, so that’s yep so that’s recording now, great. So yeah so I just wanted to start with some background questions, so how long have you lived in the flat? |
| Cal | 00:11 | Since, I think a year and couple of months, so I moved in in late September 2018, 19, 2019 so yeah a bit more than a year. |
| JF | 00:22 | 2018? |
| Cal | 00:23 | Sorry, 19, 19. |
| JF | 00:25 | That’s.. |
| Cal | 00:26 | 18, no sorry 2018! Yeah it was 2018 when I moved in so it’s been a year and like, a yeah a bit yeah, like 4 months. |
| JF | 00:34 | Ok cool, and um could tell me, oh do you own the flat? |
| Cal | 00:36 | Yes I own the flat, yep, yep. |
| JF | 00:38 | Um and could you tell me a bit about why you chose to buy this place? As opposed to anywhere else? |
| Cal | 00:45 | I think for me it was location and just like, it was like the location in a way and just like affordability so these were the main reasons I chose this place. |
| JF | 00:57 | Mm ok, and was there like in terms of it being like this style of building, did you seek out any particular kind of building, like a particular kind of flat or, not really? |
| Cal | 01:08 | I think I like the design of the, I mean I looked for particular but I think within what I wanted to buy it was like, I think this in terms of design and I suited it the most. |
| JF | 01:22 | Mmm mhm, ok cool. And oh and how does it compare to where you were previously living? |
| Cal | 01:27 | In which, sorry, which way? |
| JF | 01:28 | So like um, in like previous places that you’ve lived have they also been flats or have you lived in like houses, or? |
| Cal | 01:36 | Ok, sorry I wasn’t sure exactly where, what are the angles I should come from. So I lived in both like in houses and flats so and yeah, but they were like houses shared, like shared space and that was the kind of the scenario. |
| JF | 01:58 | So like with flatmates and stuff? |
| Cal | 02:00 | Yeah, so this is the first time I properly lived by myself, except being in uni where I was, I had my own room in a dorm, but that was different context, there were some shared facilities like kitchen and so on. |
| JF | 02:15 | Yeah, ok cool. And are there things that you particularly like or dislike about this place in comparison to other places that you’ve lived before? |
| Cal | 02:24 | I have to say that are only, from my point of view I have, they were great, all the places that I lived and I enjoyed them um but I like having the freedom of having my own space, having my own, the freedom of owning the place and not having to negotiate or depend, just the independence it brings, negotiate or depend on the space or facilities or as it used to in other, in other shared accommodation. Yeah. |
| 02:55 | JF | Ok, and is there anything you dislike in comparison about living here to previous places? |
| 03:05 | Cal | I think the only, I think dislike would be a bit kind of much to say from my point of view, but like for example in my previous flat where I had a big balcony and having that, and there was and all the other places that I, not all of them, some of the places that I lived before they had big windows, and I’m happy with the size of these windows, but the others were like for example the previous, my last room basically the whole side of the room was just like a big window, literally it was like a door that was sliding and you just go into the balcony and I like that kind of direct contact with the outdoor space, and I think particularly in this case of my flat, because it’s ground floor, I would like maybe to keep the widow much more open, but because it’s ground floor sometimes feel like, can I leave it open? Or… but that was like on the third floor so there was no issue of any possible intruders or, that’s why I think this one, it feels like I have to be a bit more aware, that’s all. |
| 04:12 | JF | Mm yeah, ok so that’s like a security consciousness? |
| 04:14 | Cal | Exactly security, it’s not so much about obviously, where I used to live it’s possible but it’s not more like, I’m aware that if I leave it open and just go and take the bin, something can happen, whereas in the other place, I could just easily go out without needing to think oh I need to lock the door of my room, or the door for the balcony because no one would come in. |
| 04:32 | JF | Mm ok yeah so would you, have that balcony door open a lot then in the previous one? |
| 04:37 | Cal | Yeah, especially in the spring and summer, I just like the idea of having fresh air and it just, and having that contact with the outdoor in that sense, yeah. |
| 04:48 | JF | Ok, and then in terms of like being actually in the flat in an average week like do you work in the office, or, what’s your schedule like? |
| 05:01 | Cal | Yeah so I work in an office, just a classical like 9-5, Monday to Friday job. So that’s kind of how I work. |
| 05:09 | JF | Ok cool, and then when you are here so in the evenings and weekends, what kinds of things do you tend to be doing when you’re at home. |
| 05:17 | Cal | I think it’s just when I’m at home I just cook myself some dinner, maybe just reading a bit or chatting with some friends on the phone or just like watching a bit of telly, there’s nothing out of the ordinary I would say. |
| 05:31 | JF | Ok, ok cool. Oh and can I ask if you smoke? |
| 05:33 | Cal | No I don’t smoke, of course you can ask but no I don’t smoke no. |
| 05:38 | JF | Um ok cool. Ok and then so yeah I wondered how you found the temperature in the flat? |
| 05:47 | Cal | I have to say I expected it to be higher, I would like it to be much more warmer naturally without putting any heating on. But I was surprised to see there was quite low, like it was quite chilly. And quite cold in the flat, so that’s how I find, at least in the winter. The advantage is though in the summer’s it can be quite cool, in a good way it’s nice, pleasant to be in the summer, doesn’t feel like it’s uh, at least this is my experience. |
| 06:18 | JF | Mmm ok cool, and do you so would say you find it, so in the winter you have to put the heating on? |
| 06:27 | Cal | Mm yeah. |
| 06:29 | JF | Um would you say it’s easy to heat the flat so it’s the right temperature, or do you find it easy or difficult to stay the right temperature in the flat? |
| 06:38 | Cal | To me, it feels like I can put the heating on and it warms up rather easily, but then when I say the temperature it reached, oh it’s warm, it reached a certain point, it doesn’t stay long in that kind of temperature, it just, again, it feels to me that it cools down rather quickly. |
| 07:06 | JF | Mmm ok. And do you notice the temperature changing at different times of the day? Like do you like it different temperatures at different times of day or? |
| 07:18 | Cal | I think maybe in the morning because I mean I woke up and if I’m quite warm since slept and I’m under the duvet I don’t mind when I just freshen up the place I just open up the window to kind of cool it down, I don’t mind or if I just, if I take a shower then I’m warm and I don’t mind having cold temperature, but I think towards the evening I when I come home I think after once I’ve settled in the flat then I realise that actually it’s quite chilly and then I put the heating on, yeah. |
| 07:50 | JF | And what about in the summer, did you ever find it hard to stay cool enough? |
| 07:55 | Cal | I didn’t experience, I felt like all the time just having the windows open was enough, I didn’t need a fan or any extra kind of extra, any cooler, things to cool me down. |
| 08:11 | JF | Mmm ok cool. Umm and then so in the summer you would you tend to have, when would you open the windows and close them, or would they be open all the time? |
| 08:24 | Cal | They were open mostly I would open them only when I was coming home in the evening, yeah, and when I say opened they were just the ventilation so it wasn’t, very very rarely I would open them completely. |
| 08:38 | JF | So they were just tilted sorry? [But motioned for tipped] |
| 08:39 | Cal | Yep, just when I say ventilation just tilted yeah. [Motion for tipped] |
| 08:42 | JF | Ok and you wouldn’t often open them the other way? [Motion for opening like a door] |
| 08:46 | Cal | Yeah no very rarely. |
| 08:48 | JF | Yeah um and then so would you sleep with them open as well, or? |
| 08:52 | Cal | Yeah, yep most of the time I would sleep with the window open yep. |
| 08:55 | JF | Mmm mhm and then would you close them? Would you close them at all or would you just leave them open? |
| 08:59 | Cal | I would close them while I was away at work and then open them again when I would come home. |
| 09:05 | JF | Mhm and when you were closing them when you left the flat, what was that, was that for security? |
| 09:12 | Cal | Yeah for security reasons yep. I wouldn’t just leave the, although I think it’s hard to do anything but just for, just being secure, yeah. |
| 09:22 | JF | Ok cool. Oh and in your previous place when it was on the third floor, would you have done that in the same way? Would you have closed the windows when you weren’t there? |
| 09:31 | Cal | Yeah, I would have done the same, yeah. |
| 09:33 | JF | Ok cool. And ok, and then so yeah I’m interested in what you think, like how you find the air in the flat? |
| 09:46 | Cal | Mmm? |
| 09:47 | JF | Like in terms of whether you find it kind of fresh or stuffy or humid or if you find smells linger or… |
| 09:54 | Cal | Yeah.. um I find I think like I think I can sometimes feel like when I come home that maybe it’s a bit stuffy, like maybe because there I wasn’t in, and that’s why I was asking sometimes I was wondering if the ventilation works properly so I kind of was opening the window just to freshen up a bit at times. And just, I think I mentioned it before but I find that in the morning, I find kind of, at least, my experience I find the air quite dry or I feel my mouth is quite dry and I notice that experience only here so this is without the heating on so it wouldn’t be like oh because it’s too hot or because the heating, and I noticed to have this kind of experience only when I live, when I sleep here, for example if I visit my parents or if I travel somewhere else I don’t have that sensation in the morning I feel like oh I need to really drink some water because I’m dehydrated and I feel my mouth is really open sorry my mouth is really dry. So, that’s what I notice in terms of the air… um in terms of type of the air, and so yeah I think that’s kind of my experience yeah. |
| 11:11 | JF | Ok yeah, and then so when you when you come in and you notice it feeling a bit kind of stuffy, could you say a bit more about how you sort of notice that, like what that is like? |
| 11:26 | Cal | Sorry, which, I’m just trying to understand the question? |
| 11:30 | JF | That’s fine, yeah so when you come into the flat and it feels a bit stuffy, how can you kind of tell that it’s stuffy, like what? |
| 11:38 | Cal | I think it’s just for me, it’s the smell, it feels like oh it feels like closed air inside, like it’s been closed air there hasn’t been any ventilation, yeah or sometimes I come in and it’s next to the bin and it feels like oh I need to go and check the bin, so there could be a bit of that sometimes, but I think that’s mostly how I notice, so I feel that I get a tap that the, yeah, that the air is a bit funny. |
| 12:08 | JF | Mmm yeah, so then when you notice that you just would open the windows up? |
| 12:13 | Cal | Yeah, yep. |
| 12:14 | JF | Ok cool. Um and do you notice that the same in the summer as the winter? |
| 12:23 | Cal | That’s a good question, umm, I would say so, I mean I didn’t notice a difference so it’s hard to tell so maybe that’s why I assume that there wasn’t any difference uhh between the two. I think in terms of the air, also which I mentioned before is it feels to me that the spaces between the door and the bottom like brings a bit of like a draught. Obviously in the summer it’s perfect because it’s nice it cools it down, but in the winter I believe that might make it a bit cooler in terms of temperature, instead of keeping the temperature warm. |
| 13:06 | JF | Mmm, ok yeah. And then so I wondered about if there are any particular circumstances when you notice the air in the flat being particularly not nice? If there are any times when you felt like yeah there was bad air quality? |
| 13:31 | Cal | That’s a good question, um, I haven’t, I think in terms of the only times I think I mentioned before there was the air quality was not good, is like when I come in, it’s not necessarily that it’s bad air quality but it feels oh this place needs to be you know freshen up, or when I travelled for example, like when I was away in summer for a couple of weeks and then I also turned off the ventilation and then I came in and felt like oh this place needs a bit of fresh air, then but those are the only moments that I felt like the air quality wasn’t it didn’t feel nice. I think also when I travelled long and also there was no ventilation. |
| 14:17 | JF | Mmm yeah ok cool and then have there been any circumstances where you’ve noticed it being particularly good? |
| 14:22 | Cal | Uhh I wouldn’t say so, so no, I’m not able to say. |
| 14:31 | JF | Yep, ok fine. And what about I just wondered in either in other places that you’ve lived or other places that you might have gone, like to friend’s houses or offices, have you ever noticed particularly bad air quality anywhere? |
| 14:46 | Cal | Umm I think, the only times there were other places where I maybe stayed or… is I think it’s when again it’s just when maybe you’re in the bathroom when there wasn’t like you know good ventilation I did feel a bit like oh this is a bit you know, it needs a bit of fresh air inside. I think those are the only times when I felt. Oh and I think there was another time, I think just in the offices because you, all the offices that I’ve been to they didn’t have windows and it felt, not necessarily that there was bad air quality, but just it felt that having only the air conditioning or the ventilation bringing fresh air, it felt a bit artificial, I’m not sure if it actually was bad air quality but it was artificial kind of the way it felt, the air, and sometimes felt oh it’d be nice to just open the window and have kind of fresh air, instead of being something just ventilated through the yeah tubes or whatever, the system yeah. |
| 15:55 | JF | Mmm ok cool. And then umm what do you think, what what would have been nice about having, being able to open the window, like how would that have been different? |
| 16:08 | Cal | For me it’s just having the feeling of breeze of fresh air coming in, and just that I think I would say, yeah. |
| 16:17 | JF | Mmm yeah ok cool. Yes, ok. Yeah and then so after you’ve been away, would you often switch the ventilation system off if you were going away? |
| 16:31 | Cal | Yeah when I go away for example more than a couple of days I would switch off the ventilation. |
| 16:39 | JF | Mmm ok, why do you do? |
| 16:40 | Cal | I think it’s, that’s a good question, I think it’s just for, maybe I should leave it on, I think just for security reasons in a way, let’s say something happens because the electricity’s on and in case I’m not at home I would not be able to respond so that’s why I think if I travel more than like you know, three days then I would usually switch it off. |
| 17:02 | JF | Ok, would you switch other things off as well when you go away? |
| 17:04 | Cal | Yeah so I switch off like most of the appliances, if, again if it’s only for a weekend then I would leave the fridge on, but when I travel for couple of weeks because, yeah.. |
| 17:17 | JF | Yeah because there’s no food in there [laugh] |
| 17:18 | Cal | Yeah exactly. |
| 17:19 | JF | Yeah ok, ok cool. Ok, oh and then so, ideally how do you like the air in the flat to be? |
| 17:35 | Cal | I like it when it’s fresh, and by fresh I mean just like to feel that it’s you know it’s been circulated, it’s like and it’s not a bit stuffy or this or how I like it. I personally don’t mind it if it’s a bit cooler in general, maybe not in the winter because it’s cold outside, but usually I like when it’s a bit fresh, crisp in a good way, not cold but crisp air, so that’s how I would prefer to have it. That’s why maybe in the previous flats I was keeping the window open often open. |
| 18:09 | JF | Mmm yeah, ok cool. And also, yeah sorry I was going to ask, in the winter do you ever open the windows as well? |
| 18:16 | Cal | Yeah I open the windows like just to kind of freshen up the air or just for example if I’m cooking you know, get the smell out. |
| 18:28 | JF | Mmm yeah ok and then so if you open them in the winter when would you, like how would you know how, how do you choose how long to keep them open for? |
| 18:36 | Cal | I think it depends, like sometimes I keep it open, like for example if I’m cooking then I’ll keep it as long as I feel like the smell kind of was kind you know ventilated, taken out. Just until I feel like I’m happy with how it feels like, or maybe if it’s too cold that would be another reason I would close the window, like ok I think it’s cold enough, cold enough in the sense that I’m freezing, I need to close the window regardless how it is, in that sense. Yeah. |
| 19:09 | JF | Yeah, ok cool. And then umm, I can’t remember if you said, do you tend to open them in the mornings, is that? |
| 19:19 | Cal | Yeah I open them in the mornings also in the winter, so also again just to kind of you know after a night just to kind of get some fresh air. |
| 19:26 | JF | Mm ok cool. Ok, and do you ever find that you get condensation anywhere? |
| 19:38 | Cal | I have to say happily I haven’t noticed any, not in the toilet or in the bathroom, or not in the flat, I have to say I’m happy with that, yeah. |
| 19:47 | JF | Ok, cool. Have you had problems with that in previous houses ever? |
| 19:52 | Cal | Umm I think it was just sometimes when, maybe also because when I take showers I don’t like, the water is not that hot, so that’s why it doesn’t make a lot of steam and I then I just like having the windows open just like kind of hopefully the steam gets out at the same time, but I think it just, again in my last flat I wouldn’t say it was condensation but it was just sometimes my flatmate he used to take like really really hot showers and then I think it just felt that the it needed a bit more kind of just to let all the steam to kind of get out of the bathroom and then the walls were a bit wet, but I wouldn’t say it was actually condensation. |
| 20:50 | JF | Yeah… ok cool, and then so when that would happen, what would you to do kind of get rid of the…? |
| 20:57 | Cal | I would just like, again maybe let the door open to the bathroom and maybe some of the doors in the flat, just kind of to get fresh air inside. But like there’s no condensation in the flat either when I wake up or when I cook or in the morning the windows are really dry which I’m really happy with. Yeah. |
| 21:13 | JF | Mm ok cool, yep. Um ok and um oh and so, do you find it easy or difficult to get rid of smells or humidity from the kitchen or bathroom? |
| 21:25 | Cal | I would say it’s fairly ok. It’s like yeah, it would say yeah my experience, yeah it’s not really instant but it’s alright. It’s not that difficult. |
| 21:42 | JF | So is there anything you have to do to get rid of them? |
| 21:46 | Cal | Usually I use the, the not ventilation… |
| 21:52 | JF | The extractor hood? |
| 21:54 | Cal | Yeah exactly the extractor and open the windows yep, either this side or both sides, depending on how much I cook and what I cook and so on. |
| 22:03 | JF | Ok. So if you, when would you open more of them? |
| 22:11 | Cal | I think it depends what I cook, like you know how smelly it is, you know if you fry a lot of onion or I do a curry and there’s you know garlic and onion and then it’s like ok, it’s a nice smell but I don’t want to have it all night! And then it’s like I need to open the windows and put the extractor on a high speed, I think that’s what I would do. Or if I have to cook maybe like several dishes, then again I would keep it open as well. |
| 22:40 | JF | Ok, cool. Yeah and ok, ok and do you find that if you’re cooking something here will you smell it all over the rest of the flat or, do the smells travel around? |
| 22:59 | Cal | I feel they travel around and what I find and maybe this is my observation, not sure if [girlfriend] would see it differently, but to me it kind of feels like I don’t know why but the air kind of, although I have the windows open here [in the living room], or even if I don’t have them open it feels like the smell travels towards that direction [into the bedroom], like the side of the sleeping area instead of where this side with the kitchen and the living room. |
| 23:27 | JF | Mm ok yeah. Ok. And then so if you were cooking would you open… if you were only going to open one window? Would you do one of these [living room]? |
| 23:36 | Cal | I would open usually this side [gesturing right side living room], yeah |
| 23:43 | JF | Um ok, yeah. Ok and then so if you feel like the smells have kind of gone over in this to here [bedroom area] would you do anything, do you try and do anything to get rid of them in that area specifically? |
| 23:57 | Cal | I would open the window that side [bedroom], yeah. |
| 23:59 | JF | That side, ok cool. And do you find that the air sort of lingers in any bits of the flat? |
| 24:10 | Cal | I wouldn’t say so… I haven’t noticed. |
| 24:13 | JF | Ok cool. Yeah. Oh and is there anything you do to kind of introduce other smells that you like or want into the flat? |
| 24:23 | Cal | What I sometimes do is like, I have in the bathroom I have those kind of car fresheners, just to give it a bit of you know different smell [laugh] in the bathroom, that’s kind of what I do, or just have a spray in the bathroom, I think that’s it. But I wouldn’t use anything in this part of the flat [everywhere else], this area. |
| 24:46 | JF | Mmm ok cool. And so, [checking notes] ok so we’ve talked about that a bit already, so when you are wanting to get more fresh air into the flat, I just, I wondered if you could say anything about what’s kind of desirable about the outdoor air, like what’s good about the outdoor air? |
| 25:12 | Cal | I think it’s just, it’s crisp. It’s like it feels that it’s fresh in many ways, it’s like because it’s coming from the outside. And that it’s, yeah the temperature is a bit, it cools down if the, if it’s hot in here and just brings a bit of new, you know, just new air inside. Yep, some fresh air inside, yep. |
| 25:40 | JF | Ok cool. Mmm ok, ok and then when it’s winter, do you ever find that there’s too much cold air coming in, if you’ve got the windows shut, do you ever find there’s too much cold air creeping in to the flat, do you ever notice…? |
| 25:57 | Cal | The only place I think is just, it feels like something, might be not properly working with the other window [bedroom] but then it feels like there’s a bit of a draught on the side of the window where I feel like it’s too much air, or there’s air coming in when it shouldn’t come in. That’s all. |
| 26:18 | JF | Mm right, so around the window frame, in the bedroom? |
| 26:22 | Cal | In the bedroom yeah, but just only one side of the window, not the whole frame it’s just one side of the frame. |
| 26:30 | JF | Oh right, oh right, ok cool. Yeah do you notice it coming in anywhere else apart from that or is that the main bit that you notice? |
| 26:40 | Cal | That’s the main bit I haven’t noticed it in any other places. |
| 26:43 | JF | Ok, and yeah is there anything else you kind of do to try and affect the air in the flat? Is there anything… |
| 26:56 | Cal | I wouldn’t, I think anything else than I’d just said before, no. |
| 27:01 | JF | Ok, or if you do anything else to kind of clean the air? |
| 27:06 | Cal | Not, I’m, I, I’m happy to learn if there are some things that I could do but not, no I don’t do anything else, no. |
| 27:15 | JF | Ok, ok cool. And I yeah, so I also wondered what your opinion is about the outdoor air quality here? |
| 27:25 | Cal | I have to say, I don’t have necessarily an opinion, I, at least from what I read, sometimes it feels maybe because it’s close to the main road it’s not necessarily the most fresh air, but at the same time, from what I read online it’s not actually, it’s a bit better compared to other areas of London they say, at least in [this area of London], so that’s what I noticed at least from what I read, not that I could tell a difference in a way. I could tell the difference when I’m inside London and outside London I can then, for me it’s quite obvious, like I feel the difference but if I’m here in [this area of London] or I just maybe go somewhere else. I think, actually sorry I’ll take that back, where I feel that the air is much more fresh or, not necessarily, I wouldn’t say it’s necessarily clean because I can’t say that, but it feels that it’s a bit different and much more fresh when for example if I’m somewhere next to the Thames. So for example when I was somewhere like for instance in Greenwich or Canary Wharf because they’re close to the river and it’s a bit of a breeze it feels that the air is much, you know… fresh. If it’s less pollution I wouldn’t be able to say that, but just because of that proximity to the water and that breeze, it feels different to me. And then kind of [this area of London] where it’s like in a way landlocked there’s just no proximity to the Thames, as there would be for example in the places that I mentioned before. |
| 28:53 | JF | Mmmm yeah, ok cool. And so do you ever notice like when you’re right in central London do you ever notice like the air being, if you’re not next to the Thames would you notice the air being not that nice, or…? |
| 29:01 | Cal | Yeah, I think that that’s true, if you’re like somewhere in the centre of London like, Oxford Street or something, it feels that the air is like, you’re right, in that sense it feels, yeah the quality of the air is quite poor because of all the traffic and cars and yeah people and so on. And also obviously when I’m underground like in the tube it does the air doesn’t feel to be good and fresh either! Yeah. |
| 29:34 | JF | Yeah, ok cool. Oh and yeah, I don’t know if you, yeah I just wondered if you’d noticed any changes in how the outdoor air, like the quality of the outdoor air through the seasons? |
| 29:45 | Cal | It’s a good question… and I just, obviously subjective when I say this, but I think in spring and winter it feels to me that the air’s a bit more, especially in the afternoons it feels a bit more crisp and fresh.. but I again, it’s just I think I’m only making this conclusion because you asked me, I wouldn’t have noticed it before, that’s why I’m not sure how relevant it is what I just said! |
| 30:21 | JF | Mm yeah, ok. Yeah no sometimes it’s hard to yeah to get your, yeah, no I know what you mean though, you don’t always necessarily think things until someone asks you. |
| 30:30 | Cal | Yeah I never reached the conclusion like oh now it’s winter or autumn therefore the air is like this, it was just like now you mention it, I thought it in a way to me, maybe because I like spring and it feels like, you know because of a bit of warm but also it’s quite, also to me it feels maybe the air it’s much more fresh in the mornings.. like this morning, I’m just thinking now maybe there hasn’t been so much traffic overnight and therefore, I’m not sure, but this in a way it feels in part of the day, and in spring again, winter sometimes maybe because it’s much cooler in a way, but also autumn is sometimes cooler than spring so… I’m not sure again how… how much sense it makes what I say but, that’s what I noticed at least. |
| 31:14 | JF | Mmm, ok cool. And, ok and then so I wondered what you think about the indoor air quality here? |
| 31:24 | Cal | Umm, in terms of the flat or just the building or? |
| 31:28 | JF | The flat, yeah. |
| 31:29 | Cal | It’s, I mean again, it’s hard to rate it, I just, as I mentioned I’m in general I’m happy with it, I don’t feel that it’s bad quality, but the only thing is that I mentioned is that when I wake up in the morning it feels like oh it’s a bit dry from the air, or when I travel, but otherwise I feel it’s alright, yeah. |
| 31:53 | JF | Ok, and I wondered if you if you know of any causes of, or what can cause bad indoor air quality? |
| 32:01 | Cal | I wouldn’t be able to say, so. |
| 32:08 | JF | Ok, ok. Yeah cool. Oh and sorry, I just wanted to ask also you said, you mentioned you’d looked online about the air quality in [area], I just wondered where you’d looked for that information? |
| 32:18 | Cal | There’s an app that I used, it’s actually just for [area] and just kind of measures the air quality, you see.. so it’s just, it’s called [app name] so it’s like, quite, so this is air quality forecast, so this is low.. and then it just shows, so that’s what I looked just I think this is an app just for the borough I believe. |
| 32:48 | JF | Mmm ok, and does it vary, like sometimes does it show that it’s high or? |
| 32:51 | Cal | Most of the time, to be honest I haven’t looked that often but most of the time when I looked it just showed low, so yeah, again… to me if the air quality is low, if it means like it’s bad or, like obviously it should mean it’s bad but I don’t know if it’s like the pollution is low or just the air quality itself is low, that wasn’t clear to me. Because it’s like [app name] and it’s just like [both look at app]… air pollution expected to remain low, just because I remember it was about air pollution not air quality, that’s why because it can mean totally different things air quality is low, yeah so that’s why I mentioned, I remember they were measuring the air pollution, so that’s what they mean when it’s low, not the air quality. So that’s what I used just very randomly and occasionally. |
| 33:49 | JF | Just have a quick look at it? |
| 33:51 | Cal | Yep, yep. |
| 33:52 | JF | Ok cool, that’s fun. Ok, and um oh yeah I wondered if you could tell me about how the ventilation system works in the flat? |
| 34:03 | Cal | And, sorry what? |
| 34:05 | JF | So, yeah so when you’re switching off the ventilation thing, what does it do when it’s on? |
| 34:11 | Cal | [Hesitates… both laugh] |
| 34:16 | JF | Sorry, difficult question! |
| 34:17 | Cal | I mean I just, what I believe is just that it takes the air just in general circulates the air in the flat, that’s what I believe it does, yep. |
| 34:27 | JF | Yep, yeah, ok. And then so I just wondered if we could have a bit of a look at a few things together if that’s ok? |
| 34:39 | Cal | Yeah, sure! |
| 34:40 | JF | Yeah so we talked about the windows a bit already so, when you would open them, you said you mostly tilt them [but motion for tip] |
| 34:48 | Cal | Tilt them yep [motion for tip] |
| 34:50 | JF | Would you ever, sorry tip them, would you ever open them, how much would you open them? |
| 34:55 | Cal | So it’s usually only this one [left hand], I mean I can open the other one as well but because of the furniture [chair close to window] I can’t open it completely, so when I open this one it’s maybe til here, I mean I can open, just to give you an idea if that would help? |
| 35:07 | JF | Yeah sure, let’s have a look at it! |
| 35:08 | Cal | So usually I just as I mention open them like this [left hand window tipped], but then when I open it just open it like for example something like this. |
| 35:17 | JF | Ahh yeah ok, and then they come in quite a long way don’t they? |
| 35:19 | Cal | Yeah I mean I think they can go all the way, but I just don’t do it. And that’s how I keep it open when I open it completely. Otherwise I just you know, do it like this, and then I leave either one or both. |
| 35:34 | JF | Would you usually just do one, or would you do both more often? |
| 35:37 | Cal | Good question, I think it depends. I, it just varies I wouldn’t say so, it’s one or the other. I think you’ll be able to tell looking at the sensors. See the sensors what they say. |
| 35:55 | JF | Mm yeah, yeah. And the vent thing above..? |
| 35:57 | Cal | Mmm…? |
| 35:58 | JF | Do you ever have that open, or do you always leave that closed? |
| 36:01 | Cal | I, most of the time it’s closed but very rarely I leave it open. |
| 36:04 | JF | So, when you would open it, why would you do that? |
| 36:09 | Cal | I think it’s just I would do it for, I don’t know, obviously just for example if I leave some, dry some clothes and then I just then want to get some fresh air like to get them dried but without leaving the actual window open. Just to get a bit of air inside. Yep. |
| 36:29 | JF | Mmm ok. And then when would you close them after you open them? |
| 36:32 | Cal | I think just when I come home, so like for example if I open in the morning and I come from work and then I just open it, sorry close it, close it. |
| 36:41 | JF | Ok. Oh I was just wondering if anyone has ever given you advice about when to open windows and close them, like has anyone ever..? |
| 36:54 | Cal | Nope. I haven’t received any advice. |
| 36:56 | JF | Or, about the vents either? |
| 36:57 | Cal | Same, yep. |
| 36:59 | JF | Ok, and then… oh have you had vents in any other places that you’ve lived? |
| 37:12 | Cal | Yep, yeah I had… |
| 37:14 | JF | Did you use them… were they open or closed? |
| 37:17 | Cal | I, again, I used them the same I sometimes, occasionally, it wasn’t like regular how often I used them but most of the time they were closed, but sometimes I would leave them open. Yep. |
| 37:29 | JF | Mmm ok, would that be again if you were doing something like drying clothes, or…? |
| 37:33 | Cal | Or maybe just like without, I just wanted to get some fresh air without leaving the window open. Yeah. |
| 37:39 | JF | Ok, cool. Ok. Uhhh where am I? Sorry, just checking my questions.. |
| 37:45 | Cal | Yeah, no worries. |
| 37:47 | JF | Oh and so we talked about the cooker hood, could we just have a look at that? |
| 37:52 | Cal | Yeah, of course. |
| 37:58 | JF | Ok. So, would you, do you use it every time you cook, or? |
| 38:05 | Cal | Uhh.. yeah, I would say most of the time I cook, yeah I would use it but I mean when I just like, yeah I would say so yeah. |
| 38:13 | JF | Would you use it any time that you weren’t cooking? |
| 38:17 | Cal | No, I wouldn’t. I would use it only when I cook. |
| 38:22 | JF | And then, do you, when do you switch it off? |
| 38:28 | Cal | I think after I finish cooking, or maybe after I leave it for a minute or two, just you know to get rid of all the remaining cooking air and smell, but otherwise I would just, yeah, close it afterwards, I wouldn’t leave it too much after. |
| 38:44 | JF | How do you find the noise from it? |
| 38:46 | Cal | Annoying [laughs] |
| 38:47 | JF | Oh really [laughs] |
| 38:48 | Cal | Yeah it’s a bit annoying, I think maybe it has three kind of stages but the last one is the most annoying one, but it’s the most effective one as well. So.. yeah, this is how I use it, usually just the first or third speed, either just depending what I cook. Yep. |
| 39:08 | JF | Yeah ok cool. And have you had those in previous places that you lived as well? |
| 39:12 | Cal | Yep, yep. |
| 39:14 | JF | Yep, and would you have used those in the same way? |
| 39:17 | Cal | Yep, yep. |
| 39:18 | JF | And does it ever need any maintenance? |
| 39:23 | Cal | This one I know, sorry I’m just going to open this cupboard here [next to cooker hood], this there’s some, I think needs kind of, it has like service required [light on], just I think it’s yearly but it’s just kind of come and check that everything’s alright, but I need to actually get in touch with them. Yeah. |
| 39:44 | JF | Oh right ok, and who does that? |
| 39:45 | Cal | I have no idea because I think they’ve done it, if I look at the dates, they done it just before I, sorry this is when they came [maintenance date list], so I think they came before I came in and I think the next time they were supposed to come was actually like two years ago, like 2018 in October, but I just noticed only recently so I think I need to kind of give them a call and see, you know, how it works, because I have no idea. |
| 40:13 | JF | Yeah, yeah, and so would that be through the concierge then or would that be through the..? |
| 40:15 | Cal | That’s the thing, I have no idea what’s the procedure but I need to kind of ask, the… the landlords [freeholders?] how actually it works. |
| 40:28 | JF | Yeah, yeah.. ok cool. Ok, and then. Oh and yeah so these fans [ceiling], do you ever notice them making any noise, or anything? |
| 40:45 | Cal | They, I mean when I maybe, I hear them when I turn them off just a bit but I don’t find them too, not noisy at all. So I was wondering because in previous places where I lived they were very noisy, but this one they’re very very subtle which is fine, but also like, are they doing any work, are they working properly or not? But again, I wouldn’t equate just if it’s noisy it means it works. |
| 41:11 | JF | Yeah, yeah, it’s hard to know isn’t it? |
| 41:12 | Cal | Yeah, yeah. |
| 41:13 | JF | And, um, I just wondered as well if anyone’s ever given you any advice about these or, how to use them… or how they work…? |
| 41:26 | Cal | I think… when I used to live in my previous place, then there was some issue with, there was a bit of condensation in my room and I called the maintenance of the flat and then they looked and they said that there was just the.. not sure, wouldn’t say the gum, but like the rubber bit, not sure how you call it in English |
| 41:49 | JF | Ah, the seal? |
| 41:50 | Cal | The seal, yeah the seal, wasn’t working properly and they need to change it and they also they did a test just to see how the airflow in the flat was an issue, and he tested the extractors, not extractors but the ventilation bit and then they said they were working alright, but again I think they just used some paper to kind of see how its… |
| 42:12 | JF | To see if it was moving.. |
| 42:13 | Cal | Yeah, exactly. |
| 42:15 | JF | Ok, alright, ok. Ok. |
| 42:20 | Cal | So that was the only kind of advice, I mean I wouldn’t call it advice but just kind of, discussion I had about ventilation. |
| 42:26 | JF | Yeah, yeah. Ok cool. And then so did they fix the seal then after that? |
| 42:33 | Cal | They haven’t unfortunately. |
| 42:34 | JF | Oh yeah. Ok, ok. Ok. And then, just see where we are? Oh yeah, and then so I wanted to ask as well so, because this is a studio obviously so the only internal door you’ve got is the bathroom door. Do you close that, how do you use that door? |
| 43:02 | Cal | Most of the time I would say I keep it closed, I keep it open as I mentioned like shortly after I had a shower, just to get the steam or the moisture out of the bathroom. But most of the time I would say it’s closed, very rarely. And also because of the tiles, it keeps it, it’s very, it’s much more cooler in there than in here, and then I just prefer to kind of keep it open, sorry to keep it closed because of the cold come in the studio. Yeah. |
| 43:30 | JF | Yeah, yeah, ok. And um, how do you find it like being in a studio where there are no other internal doors? |
| 43:36 | Cal | It’s, I would say I’ve got used to it, because it felt a bit like I don’t know, different I would say at the start, but I felt like I can circulate much more freely not having to open and close doors, which I mean it’s an advantage in a way but obviously… I mean, so I would say it’s fine. Yep. |
| 44:01 | JF | Mmm… and so in previous places, would you have tended to keep doors closed, or open..? |
| 44:06 | Cal | Um.. I depends, like sometimes if I just wanted a bit of quiet or privacy I would close the door, but I think most of the times I would leave the door open from my door just for, you know, transparency and also just like I would leave it open because it was nice to have interaction with other, because I living with another only one mate in that place, so it was nice to just have the door open and just maybe sometimes chatting or so on. So that’s why I would leave it open. |
| 44:40 | JF | And then so would you close it or open it overnight? |
| 44:45 | Cal | I would keep it closed overnight in my previous place. |
| 44:51 | JF | Ok, ok, umm would you have done that in all previous places that you’ve lived? |
| 44:56 | Cal | Yeah, yep I keep it closed? |
| 44:58 | JF | Why would that be? |
| 44:59 | Cal | I think it’s just for privacy, just for like, in other places security, just to know, you know, you have the door closed and you know, that’s it. |
| 45:09 | JF | Ok, yeah, yeah. And I also wondered about other internal doors, like if you’ve had kitchen doors, would you ever have used those or would you have…? |
| 45:16 | Cal | Yeah I had kitchen doors in all the others, again I think I would, depending on if I was cooking or if there was noise I would keep it closed the door, close the door. So closed or open the door. |
| 45:29 | JF | Ok, so, sorry if you were cooking you would close it? |
| 45:30 | Cal | Yes, if I was cooking I would close it or if it was noisy I was keeping it closed but if was like I wasn’t cooking or it wasn’t noisy I would just let it open. |
| 45:42 | JF | Ok, and then so when you were cooking, would that be for smells? |
| 45:46 | Cal | Yeah for smells and just yeah. |
| 45:50 | JF | Yeah, ok and um, what about, I don’t know if you’ve had living room doors as well, would they have tended to be open or closed? |
| 45:59 | Cal | I think, well in my previous places the kitchen and living room were kind of together in one, it was like an open space, open plan kitchen and living room so it was the door to the kitchen and living room was the same. |
| 46:14 | JF | Yeah, ok yeah. Let’s see where are we? Ok, yep. So I also wondered just again about the windows sorry, so do you, I can’t remember if you said in the summer you sleep with them open or closed? |
| 46:43 | Cal | Yep, yeah. |
| 46:44 | JF | With them open? |
| 46:45 | Cal | Yeah but only the one to the sleeping area, I think very rarely I would have all three open, just for if I was a bit too hot, but usually I had only the one in the sleeping area open overnight. |
| 47:01 | JF | Yeah, ok but now it’s winter you keep it closed overnight? |
| 47:02 | Cal | Yeah, yes. |
| 47:03 | JF | Yeah and do you ever notice noise from outside when it’s open? |
| 47:09 | Cal | Yeah I feel the noise, the noise is much geater. |
| 47:13 | JF | And then yeah, I wondered sort of how you find it sleeping with the window open versus closed, like.. do you prefer? |
| 47:24 | Cal | If it affects my sleep? Yeah I would say definitely, I feel much better, it has its pros and cons because if the window is closed there’s no noise and it’s pleasant, but then also it feels, you know it gets a bit too hot and you know in a way, stuffy, because it’s hot outside, but if I leave it open it’s nice that it’s fresh air but then also means the noise comes in, but sometimes if I wake up and there’s a police or an ambulance car driving by and they’re in a rush having the alarms on. |
| 48:02 | JF | Yeah, ok yeah, so it’s a bit of a trade off then? |
| 48:03 | Cal | Yeah, exactly, so it depends, and sometimes I may, it might happen that I fall asleep with the window open, but if it’s noisy or it bothers me then I just wake up and close it. |
| 48:16 | JF | Close it, yeah ok. Yeah ok, yeah I think that’s probably let me just check… probably most of the questions I had. Oh yeah, so you’ve got this, you mentioned about this gap at the bottom of the front door and feeling a draught sometimes, is it the same with the bathroom door do you notice, is there a gap there? |
| 48:41 | Cal | Yeah, I know there is a gap there but I didn’t feel there’s a draught, only at this door [front]. |
| 48:52 | JF | Mmm ok, cool. Sorry, yeah I think that’s pretty much all of the questions that I had. Thank you for answering all of those! Oh I wanted to ask as well how you found it being involved in the research, like how was the process? |
| 49:26 | Cal | I think it was fairly smooth, I wouldn’t, there was nothing you know, wouldn’t raise any, I think it was alright, I have to say the equipment didn’t bother me at all, I was absolutely fine with the, and it was easy to be in touch and so I wouldn’t have anything to, just it was good. Yeah. |
| 49:47 | JF | Ok cool, and you didn’t, the noise from that one [IAQ] was it..? |
| 49:51 | Cal | I got used to it so I didn’t notice, so it didn’t bother me at all. |
| 49:54 | JF | Ok great, that’s good. Yeah and I also wanted to ask as well if you have any questions for me? |
| 50:03 | Cal | I think it’s just more like, how can I, what can I do to improve the air quality or is there anything I can do to kind of, the question I had about the air ventilation or just like if there’s anything I can do, like obviously I could buy like a door stopper [meaning draught strip], that I could use, but I think is there anything else I could do besides that to make sure that I conserve the air and that it doesn’t like, not to get a draught? I think that’s what I would like to learn and obviously like what comes out of the study in terms of my flat, was the air quality again any advice I could do to improve the air quality, I think that’s about it. |
| 50:40 | JF | Ok, yeah. So, yeah it does look like there’s quite a big gap at the bottom there so you could think about putting a draught excluder in if you wanted to. And the thing, so the way the ventilation system is supposed to work, so basically these little terminals are basically extract vents so they’re basically sucking air out all of the time, or they should be, we’ll check how much they are [both laugh] shortly. And then so the advice would be obviously if you’re sucking air out then it needs to be able to come in somewhere, so that’s what the vents are meant to be for above the window. |
| 51:18 | Cal | Right, I see now. |
| 51:19 | JF | So they’re supposed to be, supposed to be, well the advice in the building regulations is that they’re open all the time so you’ve got a constant background flow of air. Um, in practice, a lot of people don’t have them open all of the time, so um, yeah so when like you’re saying when you go away and come back and you notice it’s stuffy, it may be, it might be less so if you left them open I don’t know. |
| 51:42 | Cal | Yep, yeah that’s a good point. |
| 51:43 | JF | And yeah, what else? So when we were doing the blower door test in one of the other flats we noticed that there’s quite a lot of air leakage from the floor, so I don’t know if it’s the same here, you can see there’s a bit of a.. |
| 52:05 | Cal | Oh yeah, no I can see a bit of a space [between the skirting board and the floor]. |
| 52:07 | JF | Yeah, so it could be that you’re getting a bit of a draught through here as well. |
| 52:11 | Cal | Ok, so it was a lot of draught in my flat compared to the other one, or? |
| 52:14 | JF | Yeah, so we did see that this one was a bit more leaky than the other one that was the same layout as this, so from that test we can’t tell exactly where it’s coming from, but could be that it’s things like this, or oh, could we look at the window frame actually the this where you said it was a bit.. |
| 52:33 | Cal | Yeah, sure, let me show you. I never thought about that leak to come from that part [floor] I just assumed that it’s there [door], so it’s just this side, because I think, also you can hear the noise but it’s, it’s coming like it’s that corner, like if you put your hand you feel that there’s a bit of a draught, I don’t know if you feel it.. |
| 52:53 | JF | Oh yeah… |
| 52:54 | Cal | Like if you compare it to here, then there’s no draught at all. |
| 52:55 | JF | It does feel, yeah. |
| 52:58 | Cal | So I’m not sure if that’s the whole leak is from that corner, like the one you’re mentioning but definitely that feels, and also the noise. And I mean obviously I need to get it fixed, but I don’t know exactly how, why because I think it shouldn’t be even the noise or the air to come in. |
| 53:20 | JF | Yeah, I don’t know if there’s like a seal, could we just open the… |
| 53:24 | Cal | Yeah, I mean I could go from the other side, because I want to try to open and see if there’s anything that stops it from the outside to have a look, because I’ve never… |
| 53:35 | JF | Yeah, it does feel like it’s got a seal, but it might just not be quite sitting right, I don’t know. But I mean yeah that could be another reason that the airtightness was a bit different here than next door. Does that cupboard go to outside? |
| 53:52 | Cal | Yeah, it’s just, I mean you can have a look but it’s just a cupboard, doesn’t have any contact with the outside but it’s much cooler in that one obviously than in here. |
| 54:02 | JF | Umm yeah, so I guess those would be my top guesses for where your air is coming in, and also like you say yeah that does look like it’s quite a big threshold, the only thing is if you were wanting to sort of seal up some of these gaps is just you need to make sure that there’s still enough fresh air coming in, to keep the humidity and indoor pollutants in check, so that’s why the building is designed to have the vents open, but I mean it’s actually, you’ve got enough air flow through the kind of other cracks and stuff than you don’t necessarily have to, you just have to kind of see how it feels really. Yeah, but no and it’s definitely a good sign that you don’t see condensation, lingering and stuff, that’s a good thing. In terms of the measurements that I’ve collected, I haven’t seen anything in the data that looks particularly concerning in terms of the air quality, and the humidity I did see once or twice dropped quite low, so normally inside you want the humidity between I think it’s 30 and 70 % the relative humidity, and just once or twice it did quite low to that bottom end, so I’m not sure exactly sort of why that would be… yeah because you said you dry your clothes in the flat just on like um.. |
| 55:37 | Cal | Yeah, I don’t use the tumble dryer I just like let them hang, I hang my clothes and that’s how they dry. You think that would be one of the reasons to kind of..? |
| 55:48 | JF | No, I mean so that usually would increase the relative humidity quite a lot doing that so, |
| 55:54 | Cal | Yeah because the water from the clothes just evaporate. |
| 55:56 | JF | Evaporating, yeah and actually that can cause, if someone’s drying a lot of clothes, that can cause a problem because then you’ve got too much humidity which obviously can cause well if goes on for too long you can get kind of damp and mould growth and stuff so, um. But no, since you are drying the clothes, you would have thought the humidity would be ok, so I’m not sure what’s going on with that. And also I don’t know if it was at a time when you weren’t here as well or something too. Yeah, but yeah, in terms of, I haven’t done a great deal of analysis of the air quality data in terms of the NOx and the PMs, but just looking at the values there doesn’t seem to be anything that looks worryingly high. Yeah, which is good obviously. Yeah, was there anything, did I answer, was there anything else you asked me about? |
| 57:00 | Cal | I think just like, well you mentioned how the extractors work that they’re just taking the air out, but I was wondering is there a way to know that they are actually working properly or if you’re doing the test you did [blower door] if it would say anything or..? |
| 57:12 | JF | Yeah, so I’ll do a, I’m going to go and get a piece of equipment from the office in a second and I’ll bring it back and we’ll measure the flow rates through them, so then we’ll be able to see if they match what’s in the building regulations. But it’s not very easy to do that yourself… I mean one of the things you could do is the, like you were saying in the previous place where you put a piece of paper, then you can see if there’s, if it’s actually pulling any air in or not, but there’s not any other way you can really measure it unless you’ve got a piece of kit to do it. |
| 57:47 | Cal | Yeah I can imagine, yeah. |
| 57:51 | JF | Yeah, so no, it’s a bit, it’s tricky, especially because it’s nice that they’re silent isn’t it, but also you know, you don’t know what’s going on |
| 57:58 | Cal | Yeah, what’s happening, like if they’re working or not. |
| 58:04 | JF | But yeah, but yes I think that’s it. The only other thing just we mentioned I think about indoor air quality, so I think the kinds of things that can be sources of bad indoor air, can be things like obviously cooking if you’re not ventilating at the same time, smoke and, candles sometimes can cause bad indoor air quality as well, and also things like new furniture often give off a lot of volatile organic compounds, so VOCs. Yeah but I mean obviously all of these things I mean they’re not really really bad, it’s just you these are the kinds of things that can decrease the indoor air quality, um yeah, is there anything else I should mention there.. yeah and air fresheners can as well, release VOCs as well. Yes, but I think as well. And also pets can obviously cause like dander and stuff so. Umm yeah, I think, is that all of the questions you had? |
| 59:17 | Cal | Yeah, I think, yeah. |
| 59:20 | JF | Brilliant, ok I’ll go and get the fan measurement thing then. |