Time

Person

Speech

00:00

JF

Yep, so that’s recording now. So, how long have you guys lived here?

00:10

Aaron

Uhh, 2016. It was April 2016, so 2 and half years, no 3 and a half years.

00:19

JF

Uhuh, and, do you own the flat or is it rented?

00:21

Aaron

We own it.

00:22

JF

Own it, ok. And can you tell me a bit about why you chose to live here?

00:26

Alice

We moved from, we were living in [another area of London] before so we needed to be [region of London] generally, but we, we had to move from there and we were looking to buy, because we were just renting there and [current area of London is] quite accessible in terms of Central London, it’s like 8 minutes to [a Central London station] so.

00:52

JF

Ok, cool, and um, and how does this place compare to where you were living before in [previous area of London]? Like was it kind of a flat as well, was it a similar kind of layout as well?

01:00

Alice

Yeah it was a sort of mezzanine flat so it was a split level flat with two bedrooms. It was a much nicer flat I think [laughs] in a nicer location.

01:17

JF

Ok

01:18

Aaron

Yeah, I think that’s fair.

01:19

Alice

Do you agree with that?

01:20

Aaron

Uhh well, I no, I prefer this location like in terms of my, obviously my commute is I cycle so and getting into [office location] from here is way better for me and like I think, well we can go to [a park close by] at the weekends so I think it’s better.

01:47

Alice

That’s true, yeah. I suppose in terms of travel and accessibility this is better located, but I preferred the other flat.

01:56

Aaron

Ah, that’s fair, it was bigger right though, so.

01:58

JF

Yeah, ok, and so there are things that you particularly like or dislike in comparison then, do you think?

02:06

Alice

I think just size.

02:08

Aaron

Yeah I think that’s probably fair.

02:10

Alice

Umm… it probably was quieter there because we weren’t next to the train tracks.

02:17

Aaron

Uhh no like I don’t know, so it was quieter in a different way because we weren’t near the train tracks that’s true, but like all of the time you heard people like shouting and rowing in [previous area], which I don’t think hear, we don’t really get

02:30

Alice

Yeah I spose this is a much bigger building, so many more residents

02:38

Aaron

Yeah, ah no, I meant like outside, in [previous area] there was quite a lot of like, oh my God I’ve just got a whiff of myself [laughs]

02:46

Alice

[laughs] It was a nosier place

02:47

Aaron

Yeah I think just because it was a, because it was on like a development so I think it was just nosier from like, people-wise, but I don’t know

02:52

Alice

Yeah that’s true.

02:56

JF

Umm, ok, and then so and in an average week what’s your schedule like in terms of when you’re in the flat and stuff?

03:05

Alice

Yours will be easier to

03:06

Aaron

I leave at like so, Monday to Friday I leave at like no later than, the latest I’d leave here would be 7. And I get home like around 7, 8 I’d say most days. Depending on like work and gym and stuff. Yeah, and then yours is probably…

03:30

Alice

And then the weekend, we’d spend probably 6 hours of both days in the flat, the rest is like out walking or whatever

03:40

Aaron

Oh yeah, in and out yeah, seeing friends and stuff. And then your week days are a bit weird though.

03:43

Alice

Yeah, I tend to, so I’ll be here probably on average 3 days a week, and the days that I’m not I’ll be leaving at sort of 8 half 8 and getting back at like 6 so I spend more time in the flat.

03:59

Aaron

His [the dog’s] schedule is very similar to Alice’s.

04:02

Alice

Yep. [All laugh]

04:04

JF

Ok and then so then when you’re here during the day you’d be working mostly, and then in the evenings would you, what would you tend to be doing when you’re at home or at the weekends?

04:13

Aaron

Cook, hang out.

04:18

Alice

Yeah, dinner, television.

04:22

JF

Mmm mhm, ok cool, ooh and can I ask

04:24

Aaron

We read as well [Alice laughs], like the Odyssey and Homer

04:36

Alice

[Laughs] of course.

04:37

JF

[laughs] ok, and I wanted to ask, do either of you smoke?

04:38

Alice

No.

04:40

JF

Cool, ok and then so I

04:44

Aaron

This is going to be the best interview you do [all laugh]

04:51

JF

[laughs] ummmm… I wondered if you could tell me about the temperature in the flat, like generally?

04:54

Aaron

Hotter than the fires of hell in here, permanently, it’s like, way too, it’s permanently hot!

05:00

Alice

You are saying that because you’ve just been on a bike ride, that is patently untrue

05:03

Aaron

No, but like middle of the night it’s hot, during the day, like when I’m here, it’s hot, in the evening it’s hot. It’s just permanently, I mean it’s really good in the winter I guess but like it’s too hot.

05:13

Alice

It is a warm flat, we don’t need

05:18

Aaron

Well, you’re not allowed to turn the heating on but like

05:20

Alice

[laughs] we don’t need the heating.

05:22

Aaron

You own jumpers for a reason

05:24

Alice

Yep. Every now and then I want to, but that’s more because I tend to open the windows, because I like to have airflow in the house

05:33

Aaron

Greta Thunberg resents you.

05:34

Alice

At this time of year that makes it very cold, but we don’t really turn the heating on, literally like in the last six months I can remember turning it on twice.

05:44

Aaron

You turned it on twice?

05:45

Alice

For like a few minutes [laughs] yes. So yeah, it’s a warm flat.

05:50

JF

Ok, so you wouldn’t, you don’t have it like set on a schedule to come on, or?

05:53

Alice

No. There’s no need. No.

05:54

JF

No. Ok. And then in the summer was, does it get too hot then?

06:03

Aaron

I think, if we open the windows all the way, it’s fine right because like there’s a breeze coming through, but it can be really hot

06:11

Alice

Yeah, this summer we had the fan on a lot

06:13

Aaron

Yeah, yeah that’s true. Especially at night it was just way too hot, like it’s a hot

06:18

Alice

Mmm yeah I think the sun kind of hits these and obviously the windows are all on one side, and I don’t know it feels like a conservatory, it kind of just conserves the heat that comes in, so I find it very warm in summer, like I’d rather just be outside, quite a lot.

06:33

JF

Mmm right, and then so do you have a fan for is that just like an air fan?

06:39

Alice

Yeah one of those Dyson things, like a, you know what I’m going on about, it doesn’t have blades. That thingy.

06:50

JF

Yeah, that whatever it’s called. Does it do cooling, or is it just moving air?

06:53

Alice

I think it does cooling because it has like buttons that you can… is it though? Actually no, you just turn up the fan, it’s bladeless though it’s like this shape [long oblong], do you know what I’m going on about?

07:08

JF

Oh yeah, one of those things.

07:13

Aaron

This interview is now completely unusable. [all laugh]

07:16

JF

No, no, it’s not at all!

07:17

Alice

It has a heat function and a cold function but you it doesn’t have like degrees of coldness.

07:22

JF

Ok, yeah no I’m not sure I don’t know anything, yeah I don’t know they have cooling in them or not, I just don’t know. No, don’t think so.

07:31

Alice

I don’t think so, I think it’s just fan.

07:34

JF

Ok, cool. And uhh ooh yeah, so do you notice the temperature kind of changing throughout the day then, particularly?

07:44

Aaron

I think, well I mean I’m only in during the weekends during the day but I think it’s always pretty constant. In the summer it’s just always hot, in the winter it’s actually quite nice.

07:56

Alice

It’s well, yeah, I would say it’s colder at night in the winter, so yeah, mornings and evenings tend to be slightly colder, but generally, it’s not like significantly.

08:11

JF

Ok, cool. Ok and then in the summer then when it sometimes is too hot, would you find it difficult then to stay the right temperature would you say, or is that easy or difficult?

08:24

Aaron

I know what you mean, I think it’s quite difficult. In the winter I generally think the flat’s quite easy to, like it’s really liveable through the day I can just go about in like tshirt and shorts in the winter, but in the summer and stuff I think it’s really difficult to stay cool.

08:43

Alice

Yeah, like it requires a concerted effort I would say, like using a fan for example, whereas in the winter you wouldn’t need to do anything

08:50

Aaron

Concerted effort?

08:51

Alice

As in, it’s more than you would do in the winter, where you can just be. That’s all I mean.

08:58

JF

Yeah, ok cool. Ok, and then so I’m interested in what you think about the air in the flat as well, what you think about how the air is in general?

09:05

Aaron

Ummm

09:16

Alice

Ah, no thought you were feeling inspired. I don’t know, do you mean like the quality of the air?

09:20

JF

So I’m thinking things like kind of if you find it stuffy or fresh or you notice smells or if it’s humid or any of those kinds of things?

09:27

Aaron

I don’t ever think it’s, I don’t think it’s stuffy. Do you, oh you do? Ok.

09:32

Alice

[Nodding] Yeah. I do. But then I don’t know if I’m, like I say that’s why I tend to open windows, like I open windows, in the winter I’ll open them when I go out so the flat will get some airflow and then I close them when I’m in here so the flat doesn’t get too cold. But I find if all the windows are closed I then it gets stuffy. That would be very much more so in the summer. Less so in the winter.

10:00

JF

Right ok. And would you notice that sort of throughout the day, would there be particular times when you would feel like, oh no it’s a bit stuffy or?

10:09

Alice

Only if the windows have been closed for several hours. He’s [the dog] missed you [Aaron] a lot, you’re going to have to fuss him a lot, you’ve not been here! And then in terms of dryness or humidity, I don’t think I notice anything significant, no.

10:32

JF

Ok, uhuh. Ok, and would you say that’s the same in all bits of the flat, like sometimes feeling like it’s stuffy in the whole flat or just in different particular rooms or?

10:45

Alice

Uhh, just generally. The same. I suppose it would be marginally more stuffy in here, obviously because the kitchen so that’s generating extra heat and then obviously marginally more stuffy in the bathroom because it doesn’t have a window. It’s got a silent fan, but obviously post shower or anything it’s very, it takes a while for all of that steam etcetera to dissipate.

11:10

JF

Uhuh, and then so, I wondered if there are like any kind of particular circumstances when you notice the air in the flat being particularly good?

11:27

Aaron

Do you know what, in summer when we open we fully open the window in the bedroom and then we’re in here and we’ve just crack these, that is, that is quite good.

11:37

Alice

That is nice. I’m quite mindful that like the river is like literally right there, so actually in terms of, there’s a lot of foliage etcetera by the river, quite

11:49

Aaron

When that tree came in, that was a bit weird wasn’t it?

11:50

Alice

I just mean rather than having like the smog of London coming in the window, it’s quite, it’s like nature, it’s like having a bit of nature, so. Yeah, that’s nice, the fresh air in summer.

12:05

JF

Mmmm, ok and then so what is it about when the window is open in here?

12:08

Aaron

I just think there’s a really nice breeze coming through the flat. Well, but I guess we only get that in the summer because it would be Baltic if we opened that window in the winter.

12:21

JF

Mmm ok. And then do you ever notice the air being particularly nice in other places, like other buildings you might go to, like other people’s houses or, like is there ever, does anything sort of spring to mind?

12:37

Alice

No, I would say it’s more the other way round. Like I would really notice in an airconditioned building, I find that quite unpleasant.

12:50

JF

Mmmm ok, yeah so when it’s an air conditioned building, like what, what do you kind of notice about it?

12:58

Alice

Just like, I suppose it’s sort of recycled air isn’t it, it doesn’t feel very fresh.

13:05

Aaron

So I work in [name of office] and all of the windows are sealed so you can’t open any of them, and the air is circulated and its like it’s really, I find, especially in the winter because it’s generally chillier, but in the summer it’s awful when they’re recycling the air and it feels sort of really stagnant, whereas like having the windows open is a lot nicer.

13:34

JF

Yeah, ok so you don’t have a way in that building to kind of get the outdoor air in, basically?

13:42

Aaron

Do you want me to move him [the dog]?

13:42

All

[talk about the dog.]

14:14

Alice

No, no air can get into your building, except through the front door.

14:24

Aaron

Well, presumably there’s an air intake but it’s like recycled air, so.

14:31

JF

Mmmm yeah, ok. Oh, and have you ever noticed any circumstances here when you’ve noticed the air being particularly not so nice?

14:39

Alice

Mmm no I don’t think so. No, like I say, I think living by the river means that changes in temperature like are much more noticeable here, so cold fresh or in the summer the breeze, both are lovely.

14:57

Aaron

I don’t know how much effect this has but because the underground car park is ventilated, because of the it’s all open, I don’t know if that makes any difference or not.

15:09

Alice

That’s true actually yeah. I don’t know if you’ve been to the?

15:11

JF

I know there’s a car park down there but I haven’t seen it.

15:14

Alice

It’s, the air comes in from the back of the building here, yeah, it’s like completely ventilated by the outside. So I don’t know if that changes the overall airflow in the building or not.

15:35

JF

Mmmm ok. Ooh yeah, so like after you’ve been away if you’ve been on holiday and you come back into the flat do you ever notice the air when you come back into the flat after you’ve been away?

15:52

Aaron

No, really pointed answer, because Alice leaves the windows open when we go on holiday.

16:00

Alice

Yeah, if I didn’t I would notice, and it would be really stuffy.

16:02

Aaron

No, yeah, to be fair when we have before and we have closed the windows, or when I’ve gone after you’ve gone and I’ve closed the windows then it’s quite stuffy.

16:11

Alice

Stale.

16:12

Aaron

But um, yeah, generally speaking, you leave the windows open when we go on holiday so.

16:21

JF

Mmm yeah, ok. Could you say a bit more about what you mean by stale as well when you come back, how it seems…?

16:25

Alice

I suppose just whatever air has just been sort of stagnant and not moving and so it means that it just sort of minor smells and things that would be picked up from like I don’t know, food residue or stale water in the sinks and things like that, it’s all kind of just sat there and, so I assume that’s what it is. And I also wonder as well, I am very conscious of the fact that we have a pet and you know, often as the pet owner you don’t recognise that you might in fact be a very smelly person, and like I think it’s much more telling for other people coming into the flat, so yeah, when we’ve not been here, even kind of for example all of the pet hairs that are in the flat, I just think it all culminates to make quite a stale.

17:15

Aaron

Oh, yeah, like we won’t be offended, does our house smell like dog?

17:16

JF

No. I yeah

17:18

Aaron

Oh really?

17:19

Alice

I’m really conscious about it, like does it smell, because I don’t think we would know.

17:25

JF

No, I’ve never thought that, no.

17:27

Alice

That’s good [laughs]

17:27

JF

No. Yeah, um. Ok and so you would generally try and leave the windows open to stop that happening basically.

17:41

Aaron

Like you usually leave the bedroom one and one in here [living room] don’t you, something like that so.

17:44

Alice

Yes.

17:46

JF

Mmm ok, cool. [All talk about dog] Ok, and then so could you describe how you ideally like the air to be in flat?

18:19

Alice

[laughs] relatively cool and fresh, like I say, not like the same circulated air, I like there to be air from outside.

18:28

Aaron

I like there to be a breeze, I think.

18:32

Alice

[laughs] actual wind in the flat

18:33

Aaron

A breeze from the window.

18:37

Alice

And I think actually even like a degree or so cooler than I would like to be, do you see what I mean, as in, I’d rather wear jumpers

18:45

Aaron

Something to complain about

18:46

Alice

No, I’d rather wear jumpers than feel warm in fewer clothes. I’d rather have cool air.

18:56

Aaron

Just stick a scarf on, something like that.

19:03

JF

Ok cool and do you ever get condensation, do you ever?

19:09

Alice

Actually not here, no. I’ve not noticed.

19:11

Aaron

Used to be a bastard in the old place didn’t it?

19:12

Alice

Yeah.

19:13

Aaron

Yeah, not here, no.

19:15

JF

What would you do about it in, was there anything you would try and do about it?

19:17

Aaron

Used to bleach the, because it got, it was like really bad in the old place we had to like, we had to leave the windows open quite a lot, and that place was awful, it was like really cold, we had to like always, it was really bad, there was really bad damp, it’s not condensation, but there was really bad damp.

19:32

Alice

Yeah, it made it damp.

19:35

Aaron

We always had to like bleach the windows didn’t we

19:36

Alice

Yeah I remember cleaning that bit off quite a lot.

19:43

Aaron

It was really bad like around the skirting boards, or was it around the windows in the old place in [previous area of London], but it was exactly the same as this, it was just an old building they’d converted into something else.

19:52

Alice

Yeah, used to be [previous use of building].

19:53

Aaron

So, I don’t really get why.

19:54

Alice

But, those windows were enormous, like they went from like floor to ceiling and like I say it was split level and they were, I don’t know if that’s anything to do with it.

20:03

Aaron

Yeah that’s right, you’re probably right.

20:07

Alice

Yeah, but here I haven’t noticed any.

20:11

JF

Mmm yeah ok, and when there was the mould did you notice, how did you kind of notice that, or did that cause any issues?

20:18

Aaron

In the old place? Ummm I don’t know I guess we were just cleaning right?

20:26

Alice

It’s just black isn’t it, and it would just come up around the window frames.

20:29

Aaron

Yeah, because it was the same white PVC type windows as this and we could just see like on it.

20:39

Alice

Mm and even the it had like a much deeper sill than these windows, and that was a wooden sill so that PVC bit would have black around the edge and then there would be like creeping black on the wooden sill, so then you would really notice and that would require extra cleaning. It’s nothing compared to student living, I have to say, I had an entirely black wall, so I feel like we’ve been lucky since then!

21:03

JF

How was that, living with that?

21:05

Alice

It was horrible, I had like, I definitely feel like I had more kind of colds than I would normally have in a year, like it was yeah, really quite unpleasant and it was, you could smell it as well. But yeah, that was in [a different English city] and obviously terrible student houses [laughs].

21:30

JF

Mmmm. Ok. And then, sort of how easy or difficult would you say it is to get rid of smells or humidity from the kitchen or bathroom?

21:42

Aaron

I think just open a window in the kitchen.

21:46

Alice

It’s trickier at the moment because the hood on the oven has stopped working, this is not helpful, the hood on the oven’s stopped working some months ago, and usually I would use the fan to get rid of kitchen smells. So I find it takes slightly longer now because you need to open the window.

22:05

Aaron

But even that’s like, I think it goes quite quickly, but I don’t, I don’t know

22:13

Alice

I don’t know.

22:15

Aaron

I don’t know, the flat never smells of food though I don’t think. I mean I don’t know maybe I’m just used to it.

22:20

Alice

It did the other day when we didn’t do the washing up after dinner and we left it there overnight and then in the morning I felt like it was smelly in here. But that is our fault.

22:33

JF

Ummm ok, so you usually in the past you would have used the kitchen hood thing, to help.

22:41

Aaron

Like not just, in the past, like a few weeks ago, we just haven’t got it fixed yet.

22:46

JF

Right, ok. Oh ok, and then what about in the bathroom, do you find, does that steam up and clear easily or?

22:58

Aaron

Yeah, clears super quick. But it gets really if you have a hot shower and close the door.

23:04

Alice

Clears within about 10 minutes. Yeah, it’s very there’s condensation everywhere, it’s covered, but it seems to go within about 10 minutes.

23:11

Aaron

Yeah! Like our fan is like

23:13

Alice

I don’t know what it’s doing, if it’s doing anything.

23:14

Aaron

It’s probably doing, ah I don’t know what it’s doing but whatever it is it’s pretty good. Tiny little fan, doesn’t make any noise.

23:23

JF

So, you never hear the fan at all?

23:24

Alice

No, it’s no. I think you’ve probably, if you’ve been in the bathroom with the light on it’s not, I don’t, it’s not noticeable.

23:33

JF

No. Yeah. Ok cool. Umm so do you, I guess maybe we’ve sort of covered this already, but do you find that air sort of lingers in any bits of the flat at all or is that not an issue?

23:46

Alice

I’d say marginally more so in the kitchen area, but otherwise no.

23:52

Aaron

But, is that air or just smell of like food? I don’t think air lingers anywhere.

23:55

Alice

Oh I see. No. No I suppose that’s probably just from where you’ve been cooking.

24:05

JF

Mmm yeah, ok. And so do you ever find there are circumstances in which you need to bring in more fresh air into the flat?

24:14

Aaron

Only in the summer when it’s hot.

24:17

Alice

Yeah.

24:24

JF

Ok, and would you do that similarly in both rooms? Like would you tend to have both the windows open in here and in the bedroom, or would you do that differently?

24:37

Alice

In the summer, yeah.

24:39

Aaron

Yeah because it makes quite a nice flow, doesn’t it that’s then quite cool if you have both windows open

24:47

JF

And then in the winter?

24:49

Alice

I usually just keep one of either the bedroom or in here, just one.

24:55

JF

And then, so at night time would that be the same, would you tend to keep?

24:57

Alice

No, in the winter I’ve just been closing them at night, because it’s just too cold. But in summer I would leave on in here [living room] open, because the noise would be too much in the bedroom if we had the window open at night.

25:10

Aaron

No, we had the window open all summer.

25:14

Alice

Sometimes, but it’s noisy. No, because we use the fan in there.

25:21

Aaron

I don’t know. Oh yeah you’re right, sorry. No, you are right we don’t sleep with window open.

25:26

Alice

I would, I would rather sleep with the window open, it’s literally just the noise.

25:29

Aaron

I think we’ve done it a couple of times. Yeah we’ve done it a couple of times but not that many, I think you’re right but

25:35

Alice

And everywhere else I’ve lived I would usually sleep in a bedroom with the window open, I feel much more comfortable sleeping with a window open. But it’s just, yeah, noise.

25:49

JF

Mmmm. Ok, so is that, do you think that’s something that you’ve always done sleeping with the window open?

25:53

Alice

Yeah.

25:59

Aaron

You lived in a bloody tent in [a different country]. So, you’re just, bit weird aren’t you.

26:05

Alice

I just, I yeah, I like the outside being in. And I feel, perhaps, irrationally even claustrophobic if windows are closed for too long or anything like that. I prefer sleeping with like moving air I think, it’s just more comfortable, I think.

26:27

JF

Do you think that’s something that your parents would do as well, like do you think that’s a habit you got from them or is that sort of something you picked up spontaneously?

26:39

Alice

No, it’s just something I, yeah.

26:46

JF

Yeah, ok, oh, is there a, so we mentioned about kitchen smells and stuff is there anything you do to sort of introduce other smells into the flat that you like or want or?

27:01

Alice

Yeah, I’ve got a plug in, out in the corridor, I usually only when I leave that flat I open a window and turn that on, and then when I come back in the flat, because I find it’s quite strong smelling and I don’t really like it, but as I said, I’m conscious of having a dog, so especially like if other people are coming here I would like put the plug in on so that hopefully it doesn’t smell awful and I also had for a while a diffuser, which was actually more when the dog was really ill and there were saying about having more water in the air, and I used to put lavender oil in that, which was alright. But um.

27:44

Aaron

This is why he’s so wet.

27:45

Alice

[laughs] But I would prefer I would prefer not to use artificial smells in the flat. I don’t like to, I think I feel like I should.

27:59

JF

Mmm ok. So that would generally be for guests, then?

28:02

Alice

Yep, yeah. And to like, and I think part of airing that flat when I go out as I say would turn that on so that I come back it’s you know any smells have dissipated, bad smells have dissipated, and have been replaced with something slightly better.

28:20

JF

Mmm ok cool, and so is that, is there anything else that you do to kind of affect the air in any sort of way?

28:29

Alice

I don’t think so.

28:30

Aaron

No.

28:32

JF

Or anthing to sort of try and clean the air or…?

28:39

Alice

No, we don’t have like purifiers or anything like that.

28:43

JF

Oh, and then I wondered what you think about the outdoor air quality?

28:50

Aaron

Oh, in London in general or?

28:53

JF

Uhh here I guess, so air that you think is coming into the flat from that side?

29:02

Aaron

Oh um, I don’t know, it’s never bad I guess, I don’t, yeah I don’t think it’s ever unpleasant. Um.

29:15

Alice

Yeah, it’s quite nice, as I say, I think you can normally smell like water and foliage and trees and that’s quite a pleasant smell. I think it’s quite good here. I spose being this side of the building, I’m conscious that there’s a big road out there, but generally the air quality seems quite nice.

29:37

JF

Do you notice it the other side then when you leave then, do you notice the air quality being different on the other side.

29:45

Aaron

No, not much, like the only time I notice it when it’s really bad is on my commute when I’m cycling in the morning and like it’s really bad, but it’s because of all the cars and buses and stuff, that’s really unpleasant.

29:55

Alice

And the underground obviously. But yeah, generally round here it’s alright.

30:04

JF

Mmm yeah. Ok, alright and then what about indoor air quality, is that something that you’re conscious of?

30:12

Aaron

No.

30:15

JF

Ok, umm and ok and then I wondered as well if you could tell me if there’s a ventilation system here and how it works?

30:27

Aaron

There is a, oh I don’t know how it works, there is an air flow system or something and I think it comes out in the underground car park? It’s like, because there’s massive fans in the ceiling in the underground car park.

30:42

Alice

So why are they [laughs] I feel like that is something [point at the trickle vent]

30:43

Aaron

Oh, what the vent above the window?

30:46

Alice

Yeah!

30:47

Aaron

They’re just to let a small amount of air in if you don’t want to have the windows open.

30:50

Alice

Well that counts.

30:54

Aaron

Yeah, oh, I thought you meant the building as a whole.

30:55

JF

Well, I, in, well no in general, yeah, I mean do you, are those [trickle vents] something that you, like are conscious of and use ever, or?

31:08

Alice

I have no idea what they’re doing! Well, apparently letting air in, I, I’ve not been conscious of it.

31:16

Aaron

Umm [laughing], I’ve opened them a couple of times!

31:22

Alice

Ohh! You can do stuff to them!?

31:23

Aaron

Yeah, you just flick them open!

31:25

Alice

Oh! Well I didn’t know that, what does that do?

31:30

Aaron

Lets a small amount of air in.

31:32

Alice

So at the moment, that’s not letting any air in?

31:35

Aaron

No.

31:36

Alice

So why don’t we just have them open all the time and not have to open the windows?

31:39

Aaron

Don’t know really.

31:41

Alice

If I’d known.

31:44

JF

Ok, umm, yeah so I was going to ask a few questions about those actually anyway… so have you noticed them in other places that you’ve lived or, like, little slots above the windows?

32:07

Aaron

Yeah… they had them in, so before we moved to London we lived in a couple of rented houses in our home town, and both places we lived were really old, so they just had single glazing windows, so they didn’t have those, but both places we’ve lived in London have had those.

32:33

JF

Mmm ok, so would you have done anything with them in, so when you have opened these ones, what’s that, what’s kind of driven that?

32:37

Aaron

So the only time I’ve, yeah, it’s just been in the, usually in the winter when Alice’s not here I’ve uhh I’ll just open them.

32:45

JF

Mmm ok.

32:47

Alice

Secretly opening these mysterious things…

32:48

Aaron

I know… just another secret in our marriage. It’s right up there with when I swap the dog for other dogs!

33:00

JF

Not that dog, no he’s too in love for that! Ummm, ok cool, and then when you’ve opened them would you close them again for a specific reason as well or…?

33:16

Aaron

So, the last time I remember opening them is when… we both went away together for a weekend but I had to work, so I went a day after you, I can’t remember what it was, you left a window open, I remember getting really passive aggressive that you’d left the window open because it fucking drives me up the wall when you leave the window open when we go away because I’m always convinced someone’s going to break in and steal everything. So I closed the windows and I opened the air vents. So I will leave those open when we go away, and then I come back and, this is really bad, I remember coming back ahead of you and opening the windows so you didn’t know I’d closed the window.

33:51

Alice

So then did you close, when you opened the window did you close those vents?

33:55

Aaron

Yep. Um, this entire marriage is built on lies.

33:59

Alice

I can’t believe it.

34:00

Aaron

Probably gonna, you’ve probably killed a marriage here.

34:03

JF

[laughs] Sorry…

34:04

Alice

[laughs] oops.

34:07

Aaron

[laughs] totally fine.

34:09

JF

Ummm, ok so, umm I think that was all the questions I wanted to ask here, but maybe if we could go round and look at a few things… Yeah so we talked about the windows being open, actually we can see them in here, yeah so we talked about them being open like, because you like to have the feel of the fresh air, and to keep a breeze in the winter and summer and stuff, would there be sort of other things that would make you think you needed to open them, is there any kind of other circumstances?

34:48

Alice

If I’ve burned something!

34:49

Aaron

Yeah, cooking smells. Umm and generally I think if we’ve got guests, because the flat gets quite hot. So if there’s a few people in here we’d probably have to have them open, because otherwise it’s a bit.. stuffy. Yeah, sorry actually going back to your earlier question, if it does get stuffy in here, it gets stuffy in here when there’s a few people in here, so, that’s a bit shit.

35:07

JF

Mmm so you notice that.

35:09

Aaron

Yeah.

35:10

JF

Mmm ok, so and that would be also in the winter as well, like if you had people over so of any time of the year?

35:17

Aaron

Mmm, yeah.

35:19

Alice

Yeah, I’d say both things apply regardless.

35:22

JF

Ok cool. And would you tend to have them, because the tip and tilt, they open that way don’t they as well as tilting? Would you tend to have them just tilted [as tilted at the time of the interview] or would you open them fully ever?

35:33

Aaron

In the summer we open them, we open them fully in the summer and like usually, usually the bedroom. In fact not so much the bedroom one because like, you get those shitty little fly things don’t you, so we just tilt that one most of the year, but this one, or one of these two we’ll always open fully.

33:55

JF

Mmm ok, so when you open them fully, because I just notice that the desk is there as well, would you have to move stuff around to be able to open them?

36:00

Alice

Yep. They are massively inconvenient windows. And also, when you open it fully that is an enormous space. I am quite conscious of the dog like climbing up and potentially jumping out of the window.

36:15

Aaron

It’s not irrational, he’s jumped out of windows before.

36:19

JF

Has he!?

36:20

Aaron

Yeah, we were in Wales, and were at this abandoned castle and he just jumped up out the window jumped down.

36:27

Alice

I mean, he’s like a little goat, he was fine! But yeah, he’s not very danger aware so I’m just conscious of that. So yeah, we do have to shuffle stuff around if we want to open them fully. Which is annoying.

36:36

JF

And then do they, do they kind of move in the wind as well if they’re open fully, or is that not too much of a problem.

36:42

Aaron

No they’re, yeah they’re super heavy so I don’t think the wind really

36:45

Alice

They’re quite heavy, maybe a little creak but not really, and they open, obviously they open in to the room and so yeah, they’re quite big, they don’t fold in any way so, they’re quite obstructive.

37:02

JF

Mmm ok cool. Oh and I also wondered if you’ve ever had any sort of advice about how to use the windows if anyone’s ever kind of talked to you about windows?

37:15

Alice

I don’t think so.

37:16

Aaron

When I was at university, the guy who, [laughing] this guy gave like a really serious talk about not opening the windows when you’re drunk because people have fallen out before!

37:25

JF

[laughing] really?

37:30

Aaron

I’m guessing that wasn’t what you meant!

37:31

JF

No, I mean any advice, I mean, ok

37:35

Alice

And I.. when I, when there’s been damp I’ve been advised to open the window, that’s it.

37:41

Aaron

Oh yeah, that’s true.

37:42

JF

Mmm ok, where would that advice have been from, do you remember?

37:45

Aaron

We had the world’s worst landlord in our second house in [a different city]

37:47

Alice

Would have been our landlord

37:48

Aaron

Yeah he was like ‘oh you’ve got damp, just open the windows’.

37:50

Alice

I feel like most landlords, like if you report damp they’ll say, open the window, as if that’s some kind of

37:55

Aaron

You could tell that guy your house was on fire and that guy would have told you to open the fucking windows.

38:05

JF

[laughs] Mmm ok, yeah so did you find that helped the situation then, opening the windows there?

38:09

Alice

Not really, because it’s the damp that’s in walls actually, more than the damp that’s in the, like the damp that’s around the windows is quite easily visible, and I think easier to clean, but it’s the stuff that’s coming through the walls, um, yeah in one of those houses in [a different city] I had a, I had my wedding dress packed away in the top of a wardrobe and it just so happened that one side of the wall was an outer wall, and it got my wedding dress actually got mould on it, was just vile, so yeah that was inconvenient.

38:42

JF

Ah no, yeah that’s annoying.

38:45

Aaron

But you’re not going to need it again

38:47

Alice

[laughing] Well! You never know!

38:49

Aaron

Probably.

38:52

JF

Ummm ok, and in previous places that you’ve lived have you used windows in a similar way, like open a lot of the time?

39:02

Aaron

Yeah, well I guess the only place that was similar to this was [previous area of London] and we always had those windows open because it was, yeah

39:11

Alice

Yeah, similar situation, warm flat.

39:14

Aaron

It was worse in [previous area of London] though because of the mezzanine, and like the main bedroom had no outer facing windows, it was like a little box.

39:24

Alice

Yeah, so the window in the bedroom was a window onto the main flat. Do you know what I mean? So yeah, there was no

39:34

Aaron

Yeah, super weird vibe. Although, awesome though, because part of the flat had like vaulted ceilings so I got like a 13-foot Christmas tree one yeah and put the star on from the upstairs. [all talk about Christmas trees]

40:14

JF

Ok cool. Yeah, so the cooker hood you mentioned you use it when for cooking, is there anything that ever kind of stops you using it, is there anything ever, kind of annoying about it or…?

40:29

Alice

Oh, it’s noisy, so I wouldn’t yeah I wouldn’t like leave it on if we were trying to have a conversation or do something else.

40:38

JF

Mmm ok, so it’s broken at the moment, do you know what’s wrong with it?

40:44

Aaron

I think the filter’s needs changing and it needs cleaning out. But I mean, I don’t know. Yeah, but that would be my guess.

40:52

Alice

Well, the guy looked at it today and he said the mechanism’s fine but it’s the actual unit behind that thing, and that’s something to do with the building manager rather than

41:01

Aaron

Oh right, I had no idea.

41:07

JF

Mmm ok. Are there, would you generally change the filters? Like do you generally do maintenance on it at all?

41:13

Aaron

No.

41:14

Alice

No, I think we need an engineer to do it, it’s not like a thing you can change it yourself. Or, if so, I’m not aware of how to do it.

41:23

JF

Cool. Oh, and then so, I think this is also a fan..? [Kitchen extract terminal]

41:35

Alice

Oh yeah, it is yeah.

41:37

JF

Is that something that you, can you use that in any meaningful sense, or is it just kind of there?

41:42

Aaron

So it’s always on.

41:43

JF

It’s just always on?

41:45

Aaron

Yeah I think so, there’s one in the bathroom and one in the utility closet, and both of those, the one in the bathroom comes on with the light, and the one in the utility closet, has a switch, but that one there’s no control, no controls, so it’s just always on.

42:04

JF

And the utility one, do you have that always on or..?

42:08

Aaron

Yeah, because we’ve got the washing machine in there.

42:14

JF

Mmm ok cool. Yeah ok cool. So. Sorry, just checking where I am. Oh yeah, so I wanted to ask about the internal doors as well, so this door… do you have that open most of the time or do you close it?

42:37

Alice

It’s open, most of the time.

42:40

Aaron

Yeah. Same with the bedroom. I think the only door that gets closed is the bathroom door.

42:48

Alice

Yeah.

42:50

JF

Mmm. Are there ever circumstances in which you close the living room door, this one?

42:57

Aaron

Blazing row! But I don’t think so, I don’t think I’ve ever closed it.

42:58

Alice

[laughs] Not really! I can think of one or two occasions but it’s not like a legitimate, it’s just [laughs] like if I need the dog to be out of the room,

43:13

Aaron

Oh yeah, yeah so just to keep the dog out.

43:16

Alice

That would be the only reason why I’d close it. But that’s very rare, it’s only like

43:21

Aaron

If he’s pissed the cleaner off or something!

43:23

Alice

Yeah I supposed, like if you’ve got maintenance here and they don’t want him messing around, I spose I would close the door to keep him out of the room, or yeah, if I’m playing a game with him where I’ve hidden things in the room, then I make him wait outside of the room, and then I ask him to come in and find them, but that’s something that I do, but generally no otherwise the door would stay open all the time.

43:44

JF

Mmmm mhm, and what about the bedroom door..?

43:47

Alice

It’s the same situation really, I’d keep that open all the time, unless I needed to keep the dog inside it, inside the bedroom, if there was someone else here who didn’t like dogs. I don’t think there’s any other reason I’d close the bedroom door, like, it stays open all night.

44:04

Aaron

Yeah, because he, yeah we don’t really, yeah.

44:08

Alice

We just don’t really close the internal doors.

44:10

JF

Is that the same in other places you’ve lived as well?

44:13

Aaron

So, in [previous area of London] we had um, well everything, all the, two bedrooms in [previous area of London] had auto, not auto, but weighted fire doors. So we had to prop them open but most of the time, like even when we propped them open they were so heavy they’d like move the doorstop so they were always closed, but that was, the living room door in [previous area of London] was always open.

44:41

JF

Mmmm ok, but so you would have preferred to have them to be open, propping them open?

44:46

Aaron

Yeah I think so.

44:48

Alice

Yeah, I think I’d be more used to that. Like the houses in [a different city] we, particularly I’m thinking of [road name], there literally wasn’t a door between the bedroom and the living room, it was just a door frame.

45:00

Aaron

And the same between the kitchen and the living room, that had that little weird antechamber thing.

45:05

Alice

I kind of prefer that air can just move between the, I don’t really like the feeling of being in a room with the doors closed.

45:18

Aaron

Yeah, I spose we just don’t really close doors.

45:20

JF

Mmm yeah, ok. Ok, and would that be the same also in, like when you might have lived with sort of other people in like student houses or at home with your parents, like would you have used doors in those houses do you think, or still not really?

45:50

Aaron

So I was, my parents house, every, all the doors were always open. Apart from like my bedroom one, like bedroom doors upstairs were always closed, but all the other doors were always open. It was quite like, and then student housing, bedroom doors were closed, but all other doors were open.

46:05

Alice

Yeah I think most doors open.

46:07

Aaron

Your family had like a lot more closed doors, didn’t they? Like living room door was always closed and the back room door was always closed, also the kitchen, like the run from the kitchen in the hallway was always open in your parents place, but the actual, your dad worked in the house a lot, so I wonder if that was that?

46:26

Alice

Yeah I suppose in my life, I’ve only really closed doors for privacy as opposed to any kind of temperature or air reason, it’s always only been yeah, that would be the only reason I would close a door. Or as a barrier for you know an animal, but um. Yeah never for air reasons.

46:51

JF

Yeah… ok, ok yep cool. Oh yeah, and so yeah I also noticed, maybe this doesn’t apply though if you never close the doors but I think there’s a bit of a gap at the bottom of the door, I just wondered if that’s something that you’d ever kind of noticed or thought anything about, or been annoyed by, or…?

47:18

Both

No.

47:20

JF

Ok. Ok cool.

47:26

Alice

I recall using a draft excluder in a house where that was the case, but not here.

47:34

JF

And that was, there was a draft coming through?

47:36

Alice

Mmm.

47:39

JF

Ok cool. Let me just check where I’m up to. Yeah, ok so I think that’s pretty much most of the questions I had so, yeah. Thank you for answering all of those. Is there anything you wanted to, anything else you wanted to mention about what it’s like being here?

48:12

Alice

Don’t think so… Yeah… no I don’t have anything else particularly.

48:22

JF

Ok, ok cool. Oh yeah I also wanted to ask how you found the experience of being involved in the research, like how’s it been having the sensors around?

48:32

Alice

I didn’t notice them.

48:35

Aaron

Oh yeah, no it’s fine.

48:39

JF

Ok cool. And yeah, is there anything you’d like to ask me before we finish the interview?

48:47

Alice

No.

48:48

JF

Ok cool, I will switch the recording off then..