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Responding to the Weather Indoors

Practices and Experiences of Tenants in Damp Housing on Waiheke Island



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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
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Abstract

Damp and mouldy dwellings have long been an unfortunate feature of the private rental market in Aotearoa New Zealand. Existing research demonstrates that legislative inaction and a societal sanctioning of this issue has led to the existence of a poor quality rental housing stock, resulting in adverse health outcomes for tenants who inhabit these dwellings. Yet, research engaging closely with the practices and experiences of tenants who live in damp and mouldy housing is absent from housing studies literature. In this thesis, I address this gap. Drawing on understandings from housing studies, the socio-cultures of weather, and critical architectural geographies, I argue that tenants must respond to the intricacies of the weather and of buildings in order to inhabit a dry and healthy home. Waiheke Island, the case study for this research, is typified by a laid-back holiday atmosphere, yet has ongoing rental housing supply, affordability, and quality issues. The island's rental stock largely comprises baches and holiday homes, with many not suitable for permanent inhabitation. I employ a phenomenologically-inspired approach and a mixed-method data collection strategy (named 'home tours') in order to gather details of tenants' socially-shaped and culturally-given practices and experiences. My findings demonstrate that tenants undertake a range of practices in order to keep their dwellings healthy and habitable. The intricacies of tenants' practices shift according to changing weather, annual seasonal deviations, the intimacies of their dwelling, and the social relations that need to be navigated in their efforts to achieve a dry and healthy home. As a result, tenants' attachments to their home and their island community are affected by their housing situation. I conclude that tenants' security of tenure is challenged by their experiences in damp rental housing yet is improved by their reflexive and perceptive actions.

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Chapter 1: “Livin’ in a never ending woe”: New Zealand’s damp housing crisis.

*We're dying in our bungalows, villas in the mist
in the valley of the saggy where the sun'll never kiss.
And it's a nice little place and it's cosy, I suppose,
if you don't mind livin' in a never ending woe
with Black Mould...*

(The Phoenix Foundation, 2013)

1.1 Introduction

Inhabiting damp and mouldy housing has become an unfortunate socio-cultural trope in Aotearoa New Zealand. The above verse from Wellington band Phoenix Foundation’s song ‘Black Mould’ certainly speaks to how dealing with dampness in our dwellings is a culturally embedded norm and how New Zealanders reluctantly accept such conditions. This societal sanctioning of relatively poor housing conditions in New Zealand is linked to the stoic qualities of our colonial past (Cupples et al., 2007). Further, living in an old, cold, and damp rental house in one’s early stages of adulthood is something of a rite of passage for many New Zealanders before at least aspirationally moving on to owner-occupied tenure (Bierre and Howden-Chapman, 2017).

Yet, the fundamentals of New Zealand’s housing market in recent decades have changed. Homeownership rates have fallen from 74% in 1991 to 63% in 2018 (Statistics New Zealand, 2019), resulting in the private rental market becoming a common long-term tenure rather than a stepping stone onto owner-occupation. At the same time, socially rented housing was increasingly privatised, becoming a residualised form of housing provision (Malpass, 2004, Murphy, 2004). This situation has resulted in many former and potential low income social

housing tenants being forced to find rentals on the private market. This resort to the private rental sector, alongside the increasing financialisation of housing in general (Soaita et al. 2017), has meant that affordability issues have also become a key problem. Rents nationwide have risen 25% between 2012 and 2017, with average wage growth at only 14% across the same period. In terms of housing quality, the private market rental stock is in a worse overall condition than socially rented housing and owner-occupied housing (Johnson, Howden-Chapman, and Eaqub, 2018). In particular, rental housing in New Zealand is known to have overall poor thermal efficiency, costing more to heat overall and resulting in significantly negative health outcomes for inhabitants (Howden-Chapman et al., 2012; Johnson et al., 2018). Overall, the picture for tenants in private market rentals in New Zealand is one that has been insecure, expensive, and unhealthy.

Dampness and mould in New Zealand's private rental stock is another significant and enduring issue, and is the focus of this research. From a technical standpoint, the cause of dampness in dwellings is a combination of inadequate insulation, heating, and mechanical ventilation (BRANZ, 2017). If any of these three factors is less than optimal, the likelihood of dampness and mould is higher. Yet, installing adequate heating, ventilation, and insulation still does not eliminate the need for accompanying occupant practices that support these systems (Plagmann, 2016). Technical literature recommends that inhabitants should also contain moisture from bathrooms and kitchens, use extractor fans, heat the house sufficiently, and open and close windows for 10-15 minutes daily (Plagmann, 2016). In New Zealand's rental sector, however, these 'best-practices' are complicated by three key realities that serve to exacerbate dampness. One is the wide range of building characteristics and qualities. As mentioned above, New Zealand's private rental stock generally is old and of relatively poor quality, lacking building materials, design, and technologies which reduce occurrences of dampness. Second, local climate greatly affects dampness and mould within a dwelling. New Zealand's temperate (high rainfall and humidity) and relatively damp climate heightens the risks of severe mould

occurring within the housing stock. Recent data from the 2018 Census shows that while mould occurs in housing in all climatic regions of New Zealand, the more humid climates of Auckland and Northland have the highest reporting of dampness in housing (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). Third, best practices are also complicated by who lives in the house, their socio-economic status, occupancy patterns, and heating needs. For example, those on low income have a reduced ability to afford heating costs associated with running dehumidifiers. Similarly, working hours and household characteristics (e.g. single parent households) affect how much time is available to undertake household tasks such as opening windows (Fursman, 2009). As such, the multiple causes and complicating factors that lead to dampness and mould means the issue has endured in New Zealand's private rental stock.

On Waiheke Island, the case study for this research, dampness and mould have been found to be key issues in the private rental housing stock (Watson and Inglis, 2016). Waiheke is typically known as a holiday destination with a strong local identity, yet also has significant quality, supply, and affordability issues in the housing market (Bates et al., 2019a; Bates et al., 2019b, Coleman et al., 2016; Watson and Inglis, 2016). The island's available rental stock largely comprises 'baches' and older holiday homes, some of which were built with makeshift materials that render them not suitable for year-round habitation. However, in such a heated rental market, damp, mouldy, and unhealthy dwellings may be the only option available to renters on the island. Such a contained and constrained case study that is nonetheless part of the greater Auckland housing market provides an apt location for this research.

1.2 A policy crisis

Poor housing quality that encourages dampness and mould in the New Zealand private market rental stock is the result of historically weak and outdated building regulations. The lack of legislative clarity in the 'dampness standard', the adopted name of a section of legislation first written into the Housing Improvement Regulations (New Zealand Government,

1947), is central in understanding how dampness has remained an ongoing and widespread issue in the private rental sector in New Zealand.

There are multiple and overlapping pieces of legislation that apply to the quality of housing. One legislative driver of housing policy is the Health Act 1956. This policy – based largely on a previous public health policy passed in 1920 – allows for both local and central government to serve repair notices and enforce closures for health hazards in buildings (Isaacs, 1993). Housing quality requirements that deal directly with the physical attributes of housing were also implemented through the Housing Improvement Regulations (1947), such as heating in main living areas, and overcrowding rules. This Act further stated that ‘every house shall be free from dampness’ (Housing Improvement Regulations No. 15, 1947), however it does not elaborate further with a definition or standard of what ‘free from dampness’ actually means. All houses have some level of moisture in them from occupation and atmospheric conditions (BRANZ, 2017), meaning this requirement is vague, and therefore variably interpreted by the tenancy tribunal or not enforceable (Bierre et al. 2014). Further requirements for newly built houses to be properly insulated were introduced in 1978. However, this standard does not apply to most houses in the private rental sector as their construction predates this legislative change. The legislative issues above were identified in drafting of the Residential Tenancies Act of 1986 (RTA). The Government of the day stated that the RTA would strengthen and simplify the regulation of private residential tenancies, which had previously been ‘the law of the jungle’ (Goff, 1985, p. 6896) and the new Act would ‘bring all law relating to landlords and tenants into one statute’ (p. 6897). Subsequent to the passing of the RTA (1986), it was rewritten by the Government in various forms that were more easily understood by landlords and tenants, and then distributed by housing agencies. The RTA (1986), while successfully collating landlords’ and tenants’ rights and responsibilities into a clearer piece of legislation, still referred to the ‘dampness standard’ as to what regulated dampness within a home.

Legislative inaction and vague definitions of the dampness standard resulted in both a lack of enforcement on the part of institutions, and a lack of knowledge and understanding by landlords and tenants (Bierre et al., 2014). The Tenancy Tribunal has ruled that dampness and mould not caused by disrepair do not constitute breach of the dampness standard, and state that these types of housing issues are simply an ‘unfortunate feature’ of the private rental housing sector in New Zealand (Bierre et al., 2014, p. 17). Government publications that outlined responsibilities for both landlords and tenants have until recently ignored the dampness standard altogether. Dampness was not mentioned in *Renting and You* - the Government’s main lay-speak publication for landlords and tenants - until the publication of the 8th edition in 2017 (New Zealand Tenancy Services, 2017). This and subsequent editions have since added a specific section about responsibilities around dampness. It states rental houses should be free from mould and dampness at the commencement of a tenancy (New Zealand Tenancy Services, 2017, p, 13). However, the responsibility to identify any mould or dampness issues and negotiate a solution with the landlord falls upon the tenant at the time of pre-lease inspection. Due to competition between prospective tenants in the private rental market, this is an interaction that can be fraught with unequal power dynamics between the landlord/agent and the tenant, resulting in such issues not being raised (Chisholm et al., 2018). Tenants comprise of only one in ten complaints taken to the Tenancy Tribunal (Johnson et al., 2018), showing that either reticence to ‘rock-the-boat’ or a lack of knowledge of tenant rights exists among private market renters (Chisholm et al., 2018). There continues to be no regular inspection of building quality for rental housing in New Zealand akin to a ‘warrant of fitness’, despite many comparable countries having this type of legislation (Bennet et al., 2016; Telfar-Barnard et al. 2017). The result of these regulatory insufficiencies and lack of enforcement is a rental stock that is increasingly unfit for inhabitation.

However, recent policy implementations have begun to address the dampness issues that continue to prevail in private rental housing stock. The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2016 requires that tenanted houses have the minimum required standard of insulation installed in ceiling and underfloor where practicable by 1 July 2019. Landlords are also required to provide details of a house’s insulation type and location for prospective tenants to consider. Further strengthening of this legislation was passed in the Residential Tenancies (Healthy Home Standards) Regulations (2019) (see Table 1.1). Instead of defining a ‘dampness standard’, the Healthy Home Standards outlines a comprehensive set of building improvements to reduce dampness for all rental homes. This includes heating, ventilation, moisture ingress, and draught stopping, and these issues must be addressed for all private market rental dwellings before 1 July 2021.

Table 1.1: Healthy Homes Standards

Heating	There must be fixed heating devices, capable of achieving a minimum temperature of at least 18°C in the living room only. Some heating devices are inefficient, unaffordable or unhealthy and will not meet the requirements under the heating standard.
Insulation	The minimum level of ceiling and underfloor insulation must either meet the 2008 Building Code, or (for existing ceiling insulation) have a minimum thickness of 120mm.
Ventilation	Ventilation must include openable windows in the living room, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms. Also an appropriately sized extractor fan(s) in rooms with a bath or shower or indoor cooktop.
Moisture ingress and drainage	Landlords must ensure efficient drainage and guttering, downpipes and drains. If a rental property has an enclosed subfloor, it must have a ground moisture barrier if it’s possible to install one.
Draught stopping	Landlords must stop any unnecessary gaps or holes in walls, ceilings, windows, floors, and doors that cause noticeable draughts. All unused chimneys and fireplaces must be blocked.

Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (2019)

1.3 Housing quality and health

The most recent Building Research Association of New Zealand housing condition survey in 2017 shows a significant quality gap between private rental housing and owner-occupied housing. The survey included instances of dampness reducing measures such as fixed heating systems, optimal insulation thickness and condition, and ventilation technology such as extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms which remove moisture (see Table 1.2). Visual observations of mould were also significantly more common in private market rentals when compared to own-occupied housing. Inhabitants of rental housing were nearly three times more likely to feel damp, and twice as likely to smell dampness in their dwellings compared to owner-occupiers. A key issue noted in the BRANZ 2017 housing quality survey was the number of rentals that could not be retrofitted with the required level of insulation set out in the Healthy Homes Standards. This is due to dwellings not having physical access (eg wall and ceiling cavities) in which to install the insulation due to structural impediments, a common issue with baches and older homes on Waiheke Island. Out of approximately 550,000 rental dwellings in New Zealand, 14% had no access to install adequate ceiling insulation, and 11% had no access to install subfloor insulation.

The health effects of living in damp and mouldy housing are severe, and this is well established in existing research. New Zealand has had ongoing high levels of excess winter mortality in general and a higher prevalence in private rental housing (Howden-Chapman et al., 2012; Isaacs and Donn, 1993). Winter mortality is largely due to respiratory illnesses such as asthma which are exacerbated by low indoor temperature and mould growth from dampness. These illnesses are particularly acute for infants, children, and older people. A less explored aspect in existing literature is the negative psychological, emotional, or experiential effects living in poor quality housing. Chisholm and O'Sullivan (2017) successfully used Twitter responses to explore tenant's negative experiences of damp and unhealthy private rental housing, yet the

convenience of their data collection method also served to limit the depth of responses by tenants.

Table 1.2: Comparison of dampness issues and causes in private market rentals and owner-occupied housing (source: BRANZ, 2017).

	Private market rentals	Owner Occupied
No fixed heating [^]	23%	7%
Optimal Insulation*	37%	47%
No extractor or heating in bathroom	43%	24%
No extractor in kitchen	50%	18%
Visible mould in house	56%	44%
Visible mould in bedrooms	30%	18%
‘Felt’ damp to inhabitants	31%	11%
‘Smelt’ damp to inhabitants	12%	6%

[^] heat pumps, wood burners, flued gas fires and electric resistance heaters
* According to July 2019 Healthy Homes Standards of 120mm thickness

1.4 The research question and objectives

The previous sections have provided an overview of the damp housing situation in the New Zealand private rental market. Drawing on an established body of enumerative, technical, and policy-driven literature, I have outlined the complex causes of dampness, as well as the past and present regulatory landscape that has led to this situation. This body of literature is extensive, and it has served to frame the ongoing debate, resulting in significant gains in improving housing quality regulations. Yet, little of this work has served to explore the ways

that tenants routinely deal with dampness. Nor has it investigated their experiences of living in a damp home. This thesis addresses this gap through applying theories of practice and a phenomenological methodology.

To approach this issue in the above way is important and valuable for a number of reasons. First, according to existing research in New Zealand, the private rental housing stock is of relatively low quality. Therefore renters need to exert greater effort to keep their houses healthy and habitable. Further to this point, as renters typically are of lower socio-economic status, they may not have the means to run a heater or dehumidifier for the necessary amount of time to reduce the dampness issues that are caused, or exacerbated, by poor building quality. Knowing what dampness management practices that renters employ to maintain habitable and healthy home is therefore of research importance. Second, by using a phenomenological research strategy, this research can consider the *experience* of living in a damp and mouldy dwelling. Phenomenological approaches in geographical research serve to interrogate the often taken-for-granted aspects of daily existence, and illuminate subjective experiences of place (Lea, 2009). Given these motivations for the research, my thesis question is:

What are the management practices and experiences of tenants in damp and mouldy housing?

This thesis situates itself amongst wider geographical research on the experience of living in poor housing in New Zealand. Existing research has explored the connections between housing and health, focussing on structural changes to social housing policy and its effects on mental health (Kearns et al., 1991) and other health-related household expenditure decisions (Cheer et al., 2002). There has been no earlier focus on damp rental housing, however.

1.5 Thesis structure

Following this chapter, I situate this research within the housing studies literature

through the concept of perceptual security of tenure (Hulse and Mulligan, 2014). By approaching the research through this entry point, I seek to respond to calls within housing studies to incorporate qualitative and experiential research into a policy driven field of research (Clapham, 2009; 2018; Jacobs and Smith, 2008). In Chapter 3, I outline my theoretical approach. This begins with an introduction to theories of practice and to how phenomenological theory has informed this way of understanding the meanings of embodied knowledge. This introduction then informs two modes of practice that I deploy in this thesis: practicing the weather and practicing buildings. Chapter 4 introduces the case study location of Waiheke Island, and reviews the historical and current housing situation on the island, and introduces a case study. In Chapter 5, I first outline my phenomenologically-inspired research approach. Second, I introduce my qualitative method of ‘home tours’, and address issues and ethical concerns related to this mixed-method approach. In Chapter 6, I present the empirical findings and explore emerging themes from those renters in the participant group. In Chapter 7, I reflect on the methodological process undertaken and present findings and reflections on my method. In Chapter 8, I conclude the thesis by offering an overview of the key findings and offering pointers towards further research directions.

Chapter 2: **Housing, home, and rental security**

2.1 **Introduction**

The previous chapter introduced the research question and outlined the policy context as well as housing quality issues pertinent to the private rental market in Aotearoa New Zealand. While recent policy has begun to address rental housing quality issues, many tenants continue to live in sub-standard housing, and must deal with challenging conditions on a daily basis. Having acknowledged this body of literature, the next two chapters move towards developing a framework for analysing the dampness management practices of tenants undertaken to maintain a habitable home. In this first chapter, I briefly situate this research within existing literature that explores the relationship between housing and home as it relates to tenants. I then utilise the conceptual framework of secure occupancy (Hulse and Milligan, 2014) to explore ways in which perceptual security can be challenged for tenants. I note that damp and mouldy housing is an under-explored area of research from the standpoint of security of tenure.

2.2 **Housing and Home**

There is an extensive literature on the relationship between housing and the concept of home (e.g., Blunt, 2005; Cook, Davidson, and Crabtree, 2016; Easthope, 2004; Saunders and Williams, 1988). Housing scholarship has, until recently, regarded the strength of the connection between housing and home as being tenure- specific, considering homeownership as more suited to delivering both emotional and financial benefits, and therefore greater ontological security to the inhabitant (Kearns et al., 2000). Yet, recent work has sought to disrupt this narrow understanding in both academic and public discourses (Easthope, 2014; Fox O'Mahony, 2012). This assembled understanding of 'home' (Soaita and McKee, 2019) considers any dwelling, regardless of tenure, as a processual aggregate of practices, materials, money, and emotions that functions simultaneously as a shelter, a home, a vehicle for

investment, and a store of wealth and stature (Cook et al., 2016). A broad range of interdisciplinary research includes exploring how home is produced and reproduced through the utility, functionality, possession, and maintenance of home materialities such as via do-it-yourself (DIY) renovations (Carr et al., 2007; Clapham, 2011; Jacobs and Smith, 2008). Additionally, recent interest in the emotional connections between housing and home have been informed by theories of affect (Johnston and Longhurst, 2012; Morrison, 2013) which help identify how affective ‘atmospheres’ are generated within particular spaces of the dwelling (Pink and Leder Mackley, 2016). In the context of the 2008 global recession, the instability of financial systems, and volatile housing markets (Aalbers, 2015), the paradoxical relationship between the concept of home and the financialisation of housing has been increasingly interrogated (Forrest and Hirayama, 2015; Smith, 2015). Practices of homemaking have also been explored in various dwelling settings such as high-rises (Baker, 2013), coastal communities (Gillon and Gibbs, 2019), share houses (McNamara and Connell, 2007), and in cases where home is made despite the inhabitant being considered homeless (Tomas and Dittmar, 1995). The varied findings of the preceding literature speaks to the diverse nature of relations between dwellers and their dwellings.

2.3 (In)Security of Occupancy for Renters

As mentioned above, households in private market rentals are considered both in academic and public discourses to be in a less secure form of tenure than that of homeownership. Security of tenure, a concept in housing studies literature (for example Kemeny, 1995), is largely derived from a property rights perspective. Yet, security of tenure has been critiqued for becoming a proxy for ontological security, which narrows the scope of all of the factors that can, as Easthope puts it, help in ‘making a rental property home’ (2014). Secure occupancy (Hulse and Milligan, 2014) has, consequently, been devised as a more useful framework to understanding the multiple factors that influence a sense of home for private

market renters (see also: Fitzpatrick and Pawson, 2014). For Hulse and Milligan, secure occupancy is:

“the extent to which households who occupy rented dwellings can make a home and stay there, to the extent that they wish to do so, subject to meeting their obligations as a tenant” (2014, p. 643).

This understanding of security seeks to widen the scope of enquiry beyond legal security and property rights (or *de jure* security), in which the duration of tenancy has been conflated with ontological security, resulting in singular understandings of how rental security can be achieved (Martin, 2017). Hulse and Milligan develop a more nuanced understanding by including *de facto* security and perceptual security into the framework. *De facto* security entails four domains related to both occupation and property use. These domains are: (1) legal factors that not only cover length of lease contracts, but also tenancy conditions that affect everyday living and consumer protection that cover building standards; (2) market factors which ensure renters can participate fully in the market through ensuring the affordability of entry costs and ongoing costs; (3) public policy factors that recognise how policy affects housing supply and rental assistance; (4) cultural factors such as public and institutional narratives regarding private rental housing. Perceptual security comprises the psycho-social dimensions of security, and to what extent the tenant has the capacity to feel ‘at home’. This includes feeling that their dwelling is safe, private, and that they are autonomous and in control of their environment (Hiscock et al., 2001; Kearns et al., 2000). Overall, considering how legal, market, policy, and cultural discourses interrelate with the psycho-social dimensions of ‘home’ for tenants ensures a holistic approach to understanding how security of occupancy is either stabilised or destabilised (Bates et al., 2019).

With the foregoing framework in mind, the rest of this section focuses on the perceptual security of tenants in private rental housing. This is not to reduce the importance of the other

aspects of the framework, because as stated above, the multiple factors that influence secure occupancy are inherently interrelated. Yet, as this thesis seeks to explore the lived experiences of tenants, perceptual security and feeling autonomous in one's dwelling is of greater conceptual importance.

2.4 Feeling secure and autonomous in a rental

As mentioned above, a tenant's perceptual security is potentially stabilised if they feel secure, autonomous, and in control of their environment. Existing literature both in New Zealand and internationally has established that living in poor quality housing negatively affects an inhabitant's feeling of security. Cold, damp, and difficult-to-heat dwellings are known to not only have negative health effects, but also negative psychological effects for inhabitants (O'Neill et al., 2006; Day and Hitchings; 2011). Similarly, the potential stressors of living in a poorly maintained dwelling lead to feelings of insecurity for renters (Bates et al., 2019a; Chisholm et al., 2018). While there is little research exploring tenants performing their own maintenance and repairs to poor quality rental dwellings, existing research demonstrates that homeowners with lower incomes and/or mobility issues can struggle with the necessary work required to keep their dwelling properly maintained in order for them to feel secure and healthy (Coleman et al., 2016). Tenants who feel it necessary and take it upon themselves to perform this type of work on their rentals due to an unresponsive landlord or property manager constitute an underexplored area of research.

Feeling autonomous in a dwelling is another way that tenants can foster perceptual security. Kearns et al. (2000) define autonomy in a housing context as possessing freedom to express oneself, the freedom from having to seek constant approval, and free from paternalistic oversight in one's living situation. Actions such as making minor modifications to a dwelling is one way that tenants can demonstrate their autonomy (Baker, 2013; Easthope, 2014; Fowler and Lipscomb, 2010; McNamara and Connell, 2007). These studies find that private market

tenants seek to personalise their dwelling through hanging pictures and/or installing furnishings and fittings, yet they are frequently constrained by their rental agreements in making these adjustments. Keeping pets is another way that tenants can demonstrate autonomy, yet are perceived by landlords and property managers as a risk to the condition of the dwelling (Power, 2017). Both of these situations also speak to the ‘risky tenant’ discourse associated with tenants in private rentals (Bierre et al., 2010), a cultural factor which further serves to reduce a tenant’s autonomy and therefore feelings of secure occupancy.

2.5 Landlords and Property managers

As alluded to above, two key actors associated with destabilising a tenant’s autonomy are landlords and property managers, both of whom wield considerable power over tenants in a private rental market (Chisholm et al., 2018; Bate, 2019; Grineski and Hernández, 2010; Power, 2017; Saugeres, 2000). Chisholm et al., (2018) note that while these manifestations of power are observable, there are also unobservable results of power at the interpersonal level between landlords and tenants. Unobservable in this sense has a twofold meaning. First, it can mean ‘hidden’ manifestations of power (e.g., tenants who lack confidence in asserting themselves and being afraid of repercussions such as eviction). Second, it can mean ‘invisible’ manifestations of power (e.g., tenants reaching a point where, to them, issues such as poor housing conditions are no longer objectionable, and therefore they are no longer aware of the possibility of better living conditions) (Grineski and Hernández, 2010). Similar power relations between tenants and property managers have also been identified (Bate, 2019; Saugeres, 2000). In the private rental market, property managers play the role of gatekeepers for landlords, and therefore have significant influence over a tenant’s search for a new property, rental security, and general housing conditions. Tenants can be ‘marked’ by a problematic rental record at local and national scales, which can negatively affect their future housing pathways.

Unequal dimensions of power frequently result in significant difficulties for tenants

attempting to create and maintain autonomy in their lives. Holdsworth (2011) demonstrates the presence of power relations by documenting how property managers communicate with solo-mother renters. For forgetting relatively minor maintenance issues such as mowing the lawn, solo mothers are made to feel irresponsible and unable to live up to landlord's expectations. In a more extreme example, older renters have been victims of sustained harassment from landlords in the form of verbal and financial abuse (Izuhara and Heywood, 2003). Voicing concerns about housing quality can also be fraught with less visible dimensions of power. Tenants in New Zealand as well as other Anglophone countries are required to self-report property issues to their landlord or property manager. Tenants in this case may avoid raising such concerns, as this can lead to landlords raising rents or even evicting the tenant (Bierre et al., 2010; Chisholm et al., 2016; 2018). In situations where tenants do voice concerns or even consider giving notice to landlords, other factors such as rental affordability and scarcity of supply may deter tenants from making the decision to move away from an unresponsive landlord (Chisholm et al., 2016). Other intersectional factors including race and undocumented immigrant status can further increase the fear of reporting housing quality issues to landlords and property managers, resulting in negative health outcomes for tenants living in substandard housing (Grineski and Hernández, 2010). These examples demonstrate how tenants can often feel powerless when voicing concerns about poor housing quality. In these situations, tenants must either endure housing challenges or go through the stresses of ending a tenancy and finding a new place to live (Chisholm et al., 2016).

2.6 Summary

It is apparent that perceptual security and therefore security of occupancy for tenants has less to do with the policy frameworks that govern the private rental market than it does with the struggles occurring in the everyday lives of tenants. This is not to diminish the efficacy of policy settings in affecting people's lives when dealing with issues such as dampness in their

rental dwelling. Rather, it suggests that the details of policy settings do not influence their everyday actions and decision making about how they improve their experiences of home. This idea speaks to current debates in housing studies literature about the extent to which policy should be the subject of research on housing (King 2009; Hartig, 2018). Aalbers (2018), Fitzpatrick and Watts (2018), among others take a balanced view that housing policy should inform research, yet other theoretical and conceptual influences from beyond housing studies also enrich this debate. Jacobs and Smith (2008) similarly suggest that housing studies could benefit from attending to the everyday practices and experiences of housing occupants and their home life. The presents research seeks to extend this line of exploration.

The objective of this thesis is to explore the undertakings of tenants to improve and maintain their experience of home in damp dwellings. As has been mentioned in Chapter 1, dampness in dwellings is the result of low indoor temperature, poor ventilation and moist air. Thus, for a renter seeking to alleviate dampness in their dwelling, an attentiveness to the particularities of both their physical and atmospheric environments is required. Notwithstanding Jacobs and Smith's (2008) call for housing research that is more attentive to the everyday practices and experiences, there have been few studies that have considered how housing and weather are related. Heating practices, energy consumption, and thermal comfort have been addressed in other related fields (for example Hitchings 2009; Rinkinen and Jalas, 2017; Shove et al., 2014; Vannini and Taggart, 2015) and, to a limited extent, within housing studies literature (Roberts and Henwood; 2019). Weather, seasons, and housing come into contact in existing social science literature in oblique ways (Bennett, 2015; de Vet, 2017; Hitchings and Day, 2011; Vannini et al., 2012), yet do not specially address housing tenure and the weather in conjunction. The ways that a tenant attunes, adapts, and makes compromises within a damp rental home is therefore of research significance.

Theories of practice provide the conceptual antecedent to this research. A practice-led

approach can be broadly understood as paying attention to routinised embodied behaviours, mental activities, and object relations that, in turn, shapes people's understanding of the world (Simonsen, 2007). Routinised practices of attunements and adaptation to both the weather and dwellings are both research fields that can be drawn upon to understand the actions of tenants in damp housing. The next chapter begins by introducing theories of practice and their use in human geography and related disciplines. Second, utilising Ingold's (2005, 2007) conceptualisation of the weather as a fluctuating and immersive medium, weather is examined as being not only 'out there', but also comprising a set of atmospheric conditions that circulate indoors, requiring various thermal and spatial management practices. Third, the concept of 'building practices', drawn from critical architectural geographies, will be used to demonstrate how inhabitants be-in and work-on buildings.

Chapter 3: Practicing weather, practicing buildings

3.1 Introducing theories of practice

Theories of practice have a diverse intellectual history. Their revival in the social sciences of late have led to efforts to solidify and codify the strands of thought into a coherent approach (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2001; Simonsen, 2007). Simonsen (2003; 2007) has drawn upon Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological approaches in creating a more spatial, embodied, and emotional conception of practices. What the above works have in common is that they all agree that in order to understand the social world, "nothing is prior to human practice; not consciousness, ideas or meaning; not structures or mechanisms; and not discourses, assemblages or networks" (Simonsen, 2007, p.168). There is common agreement that practice-led approaches seek to bring into view and give meaning to activities of everyday life. From this, Reckwitz (2002, p. 249) defines a practice as:

"a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge".

3.1.2 Body and Mind

The body and the mind are commonly placed as the central components of practice theory. For Reckwitz, practice theory is a "two-sided block" of routinised patterns of bodily behaviour, and knowledge and understanding (2002, p. 254). These learnings can be acquired not only through the physical handling of objects but also through activities of the mind, such as talking, reading, and writing; and through emotional and mental activities. The body is, then, not purely an instrument useful for completing tasks, but rather what Reckwitz (2002, p. 254)

refers to as ‘the site of the social’. Similarly, Simonsen (2007) suggests that lived experience, and therefore practices, are mid-point between the body and the mind. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty, she suggests that the body perceives and learns about itself, other bodies, and the world through what it touches, sees, hears, smells, and tastes. As such, practitioners can be seen as ‘carriers’ of practices ensuring their stability and durability (Reckwitz, 2002).

Yet, the social nature of practices complicates their stability and durability. The idea that the agent is a ‘carrier’ is reliant on faithful re-enactment and reproductions, suggesting that practices are performances (Shove and Pantzar, 2007). As a performance, practices are shaped by both explicit rules, principles, instructions; and implicit orders of beliefs, emotions, and moods. They are morphed – or even ended – according to new innovations, new carriers being ‘recruited’ or defecting, and the resulting new discourses that these changes can bring. Further to this point, Simonsen (2007) posits that practices are transitive in that people are affected through other practices as well. Individual practices may relate not only to the self, but are possibly of consequence for others. So in one way, a practice endures through a carrier’s recurrent performances of doings and sayings according to the relative fixity of social rules. But from another perspective, because practices are also plastic, the breaking and shifting of routinised practices means that new structures and norms are created.

3.1.3 Phenomenological practices

Phenomenological ‘takes’ on practice theory draw heavily upon the concepts of dwelling, being-in-the-world, and the lived experience, which originate from Heidegger (1962; 1975) and Merleau-Ponty (1962) (for example: Ingold, 2000; Simonsen, 2007). Heidegger poses the ‘dwelling question’ (i.e. what does it mean to dwell?) must be dealt with before the building question (how to build housing) should be considered. In other words, for Heidegger, the practices of place are the essence of being human and being-in-the-world, and compose our lifeworlds. Merleau-Ponty is more concerned with how, through the body, flesh, and senses,

humans are involved with their world. Recent scholarship in geography and related fields has considered these questions in both theoretical and empirical applications (for example: Harrison, 2007; Ingold, 2000; 2007; McFarlane, 2011) and is similarly concerned with how subjectivity and meaning are produced through interactions with the environment through everyday skills and experiences.

3.1.4 The issue of ‘everydayness’

The oft-stated uniqueness of focussing on the ‘everyday’ is to highlight the “unnoticed”, “banal”, and “insignificant” happenings of human life (Simonsen, 2007, p. 168), and has the potential to capture the strangeness and the mystery that occurs in unique situations. Yet, one critique that appears out of the use of the above-quoted words is the lack of attention to the struggles of, and even the withdrawals from, performing everyday practices. The everyday realities of poor housing quality for those experiencing it are surely not going “unnoticed”, and the embodied and emotional stress of home making in unhealthy housing is not “insignificant”. Along these lines, Harrison provides a useful critique of practice theories by highlighting the “finitude of corporeal existence” (2009, p. 987) by supplementing Merleau-Ponty’s oft quoted phrase ‘I think, I can’ with ‘I cannot’ (p. 996). For Harrison, practices are inherently limited and have bounded possibilities. He states that attentiveness to everyday existence should also include inaction, and a dynamic withdrawal from practices, so as to not privilege some actions over others. For example, and in the context of this research, not acting on a housing quality issue in some way is in itself a meaningful finding. This broader conception of practices will be taken forward in this thesis research.

3.2 Practising the Weather

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are limited links in existing literature between housing tenure and the weather. This section begins to establish this link by first reviewing the existing

understandings of weather. Second, I conceptualise weather as fluctuations of air, experienced both outdoors and indoors at progressing levels of volatility. Finally, I connect these conceptions of the weather to theories of practice as conceptualised in the previous section of Chapter 3, as air to be governed both thermally and spatially.

3.2.2 Existing understandings of the weather

Experiences of the weather are fundamentally entangled with human existence. These processional changes have given rise to various cultural celebrations, the marking of historical and spiritual events, and dictating periods of economic and societal prosperity and decline. The way that humans speak regularly about, develop strong connections to, and give meaning to the weather-world gives credence to Ingold's statement that the human experience of weather 'is the very temperament of our being' (2010, p. 122).

Research regarding the social-cultural aspects of the weather has seen a recent growth in the social sciences. This work has been in large part a response to the acceptance of anthropomorphic climate change as an impending reality and recognises the need to understand how societies will respond to different or more extreme weather (de Vet, 2017; Strauss and Orlove, 2003; Szerszynski, 2010). Weather-relations (de Vet, 2017) have been interrogated through discursive approaches in which it is conceptualised as not only a physical force but as a cultural force that shapes popular and national discourses in Aotearoa New Zealand (Cupples et al., 2007; Matthewman, 2000) and elsewhere (Endfield, 2011). In addition to discursive approaches, behavioural understandings of how weather is experienced, and is responded to, by groups has taken over as the focus of research. Work has focussed on weather adaptation strategies of the past (Behringer, 2010), how weather impacts outdoor experiences for differently-abled persons (Allen-Collinson, 2018) and children (Ergler et al., 2016), and also how weather-related behaviours take an everyday part in communities whose members demonstrate a strong weather connection through traditional knowledge (Ingold and Kurtilla,

2000). Research at the intersection of weather, urban form, and mobility has found that an increasingly ‘elemental’ world will pose significant issues, for instance, for cycling planning in the future (Böcker et al., 2013; Simpson, 2018). Specific weather phenomena and how they are experienced has also been explored in depth, including heat and cold (Hitchings et al., 2015; Strengers and Maller; 2017), wind (Hsu and Low, 2008), rain (Vannini et al., 2012), and snow (Gorman-Murray, 2010). As discussed in Chapter 1, moisture in the air that causes dampness within a dwelling cannot be narrowed down to a singular weather phenomenon, but rather to a combination of moisture, temperature, and ventilation, which are better described as weather effects related to the properties of air. The next section will outline how weather can be conceived of differently

3.2.3 The weather as ‘fluctuations’ of a medium

An entry point for understanding the weather differently can be found through considering weather as a verb rather than a noun. To ‘weather’ is to “endure, sense, struggle, manipulate, mature, change, and grow” (Vannini et al., 2012, p. 362), which are skilful, reflexive, and perceptive human activities. The next section addresses this issue by developing an understanding of the weather firstly as fluctuations and secondly as rhythmic fluctuations.

First, we can conceive weather as the fluctuations of a medium in an open world (Ingold, 2005; 2007; 2008). On Earth, at least, air is the medium which affords all weather. Air is also the medium in which humans exist. It affords us breath, movement, and also the perception of our environment through the senses. For instance, fluctuations of the air coming into contact with skin is how humans are able to haptically perceive the weather. According to Ingold, this perception of the weather occurs out in ‘the open’, having “no insides or outsides, only comings and goings” (2007, p. 28). By this, Ingold means that if air is the medium in which weather occurs, then weather can occur anywhere to some degree, including inside a dwelling. This logic suggests that all dwellings have degrees of porosity. So moving from the ‘outside’ to the

‘inside’ a house is just a movement to a progressively less volatile fluctuation of the air medium. As such, regardless of their immediate environment, humans are always mingling with the open weather-world.

Second, the idea of fluctuations also alludes to the temporal and rhythmic dimensions of the weather. Szerszynski (2010) notes that many European words for the weather (and tides) have their etymological roots in the words for time. While the temporal dimensions of the weather or climate such as frontal systems or seasonal changes are often described as patterns, this suggests a chronological uniformity, which Szerszynski notes is far from the case. Rather, weather occurs and is perceived both *rhythmically* and *kairologically*. Weather is rhythmic in that its fluxes are “woven in the multiple rhythmic alternations of the environment” – of day and night, sun and moon, winds and tides, shifting seasons, vegetative growth and decay, and the comings and goings of migratory animals (Ingold, 2012, pp. 76-77). As these processes are dynamic, interwoven, and at times erratic, weather requires attention and response to fleeting moments of weather fluctuations which are learned through accreted experiences of one’s past. In this sense, reading the weather *kairologically* is to draw upon experience and memory to be alert and responsive to a divergent weather phenomena. For example, humans have a strong sense of what seasonal weather characteristics ‘should’ be like in a certain period (Mason, 2016). But as Szerszynski rightly points out, weather can be uncoiled from seasonal cycles from one year to the next, and therefore being reflexive the year-round and across multiple years is required to deal with the anomalies of the weather-world.

3.2.4 Responding to the weather indoors

The above section has provided a conception of the weather as fluctuations that are immersive and rhythmic, and that being indoors perhaps only lessens the need to weather these fluctuations to some degree. When inside, the air with which people mingle is to some degree more controllable than the ‘uncontrollable outside’. This aligns with Steele and Kays’ (2016)

understandings of the dwelling as a gradation of ‘interstitial spaces’ where, rather than possessing rigid boundaries, a building’s cracks and crevices allow the ‘inside’ out and the ‘outside’ in. How this mingling of air is both encouraged and prevented requires an understanding of air practices (Hauge, 2013). This section reviews understandings of air practices as they relate to both the thermal practices of warming and cooling air, and the spatial management practices of moving, containing, and cycling air in a porous dwelling.

Maintaining thermal temperature is one aspect of air practices. The aim for inhabitants is to achieve a feeling of being at a comfortable temperature, but this goal is tempered by other considerations such as reducing heating costs, the technology in use, environmental concerns, or perhaps consideration for another person, plant, or pet (Madsen, 2018; Shove et al., 2014; Strengers and Maller, 2011). The controlling of indoor temperatures also requires that people have an ongoing embodied engagement with practices and routines of ‘observing, controlling, recalling, regulating, and leaving traces (like carbon footprints), of their warming and cooling activities (Vannini and Taggart, 2014b, p.68). In other words, a certain level of effort and skill is required in maintaining of what can be considered a comfortable indoor ‘atmosphere’.

The air practices of indoor heating and cooling are well traversed in the social science literature. This has been along two thematic avenues. The first avenue of inquiry is the need for formulating new understandings of energy use when it relates to climate change and pollution (Zimmerer, 2011). How practices of heating are adapted have been explored in regard to moving to a new country with a different weather profile (Strengers and Maller, 2017), or a new or reconfigured home in the same city (Rinkinen and Jalas, 2017), have shown that tolerable adaptation may be required in a changing climate. Maller et al. (2012) have examined temporal dimensions of heating practices such as scheduling heating in response to fluctuating energy costs and new technologies. Research has also included the practices of alternative-energy dwellers who make the decision to go off-grid (Vannini and Taggart, 2014a; 2014b;

2015), and the use wood as the main heating source (Cupples et al. 2007; Jalas and Rinkinen, 2016).

Secondly, the spatial management of air is also important to keeping a dwelling warm, dry, and inhabitable. Royston (2014) explores how indoor temperature is spatially ‘governed’, ensuring that ‘heat-out-of-place’ and ‘heat-out-of-time’ is moved and contained effectively and efficiently. This ‘governance’ comprises human efforts and routines which alter the physical construction of a dwelling, what parts of the dwelling that people inhabit, the make-up and the arrangement of the objects within it, as well as heating methods that they use. The reason for this wider focus is that people do not necessarily have the means to heat their home but still desire to maintain thermal comfort (Royston, 2014, p. 149). For example, the inhabitants of a cold household may choose to gather into an isolated single room rather than switch on an electric heater in each room they are inhabiting; or hang blankets over windows to retain heat that can escape (Howden-Chapman et al., 2000). As Royston notes, people develop these adaptive skills and competences – or ‘know-how’ – of governing air within the home through trial and error and the need to ‘make do’ with what resources they may have at hand.

It is not only the heating, cooling, and internal control of air that is important to home air practices; dwellings also create a unique need for fresh air. Hauge (2013) states that the cycling of air into and out of the home is important for both maintaining the various materialities of the physical dwelling, as well as the physical and emotional wellbeing of its inhabitants. Fresh air can be seen as a carrier of nature in suspension (Mason, 2016), and is therefore perceived culturally as both therapeutic and grounding. However, air can also be dense, stagnant, or smelly, and therefore can be perceived as unhealthy or embarrassing (Low, 2005). Resultantly, people seek to actively shift what they perceive as stagnant and unpleasant air out of their homes and let in fresh air from the ‘outside’. Hauge finds that cycling fresh air into the home is also shaped by emotions of care for family members’ health, an inhabitant

being in control of their home and its cleanliness, and also enjoying the movement of the breeze throughout their home.

A useful point made from this literature relates to the social aspect of air practices within the home. Royston (2014) states that air management practices are tempered by social interactions and negotiations with conventions. Responding to the weather indoors is personal and experience-based and each person perceives their own actions as appropriate for the circumstance. For example, people may come to understand their hard-to-heat dwelling as just 'how it works' and therefore something just to be endured, resulting in renegotiations of what is a 'normal' temperature (Roberts and Henwood, 2019). Hitchings and Day (2011) found that people's response to winter cold was "right for [them]" (p. 2459), and that how participants applied what they considered 'common sense' heating practices had little in common with other participants. This is why communicating beyond the home through what Hitchings (2013) names as 'communities of thermal practitioners' is important. This communication can serve to disrupt ineffective and entrenched practices (Cupples et al., 2007) that can help improve people's lives.

There is a clear tension between having the means and ability to produce and retain heat within the dwelling, and the perceived benefits of circulating air to both personal wellbeing and building health. Exploring adaptive and alternative energy practices is no doubt important for improving understandings for future climate change-related policy. However, much of this literature is focussed on privileged groups such as homeowners, a tenure group whose members have the means as well as the rights to freely make any necessary adjustments to increase or conserve their energy use and hence optimise their air practices according to what suits them. Another thematic avenue has sought to discover how less advantaged inhabitants sought to heat their dwellings. Heating practices under the conditions of fuel poverty have shown the struggles of household decision making when a warm house is at stake (Day and Hitchings,

2013; Hitchings and Day, 2011; O'Neill et al., 2006). There is a need to include private renters in this avenue of research.

3.3 Practicing buildings

The previous section has provided a conceptualisation of how the weather is practiced and experienced. This section moves focus to ask the same question of buildings. Recent scholarship in architectural geography and related fields has explored how buildings are practiced in some depth. This area of research sought to decentre the building designer as the apex building practitioner and show how others can also do 'building work' (Jacobs, et al., 2012). This section conceptualises the dwelling as both "a practice and a product, it is performative, in the sense that it involves ongoing social practices through which space is continually shaped and inhabited" (Lees, 2001, p. 53). First, I review relevant approaches to buildings as practiced. I then outline practices of maintenance and repair, DIY, and domestic work as building practices that are worthy of further investigation.

3.3.1 Critical Architectural Geographies

Geographical research of the built environment until the late 1990s had largely relied upon representational interpretations of meaning. A key impetus for this shift in thinking was Lees' (2001) seminal critique of the semiotic approach to buildings and architecture. At least initially, this change in approach was made alongside the non-representational or 'more-than-representational' movement underway in other socio-cultural geographical scholarship (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000). By relying solely on representational approaches to architecture, Lees argued that the practical and affective importance of built form was profoundly underexplored. Using a case study of politics surrounding the design and construction of the Vancouver Public Library, Lees states that while contested semiotic readings exist between building designers and multiple stakeholders, a deeper interest in the ongoing use and inhabitation by differently

positioned individuals is a “more serious” interrogation of space (p. 71). Through a series of vignettes, Lees shows how the spaces within her library case study are appropriated in a range of ways: by children as a playground; by street-dwellers as a public toilet; and by elderly migrants as an intermediary space between Canada and their country of birth through reading the available foreign newspapers. For these library inhabitants, what the proposed design elements of the building façade might mean are perhaps less immediately important than the ways they actually use, practice and perform the library space.

Lees’ way of thinking about building use rather than form has inspired further studies using this approach. Research has explored the “precarious conditions of alliance that allow [a building] to cohere (or not) into a built form”, with a greater focus on less spectacular form of architecture (Jacobs, 2006, p. 22). Of note is Llewellyn’s (2003) problematisation of the singular narrative that commonly dominated previous geographies of architecture, and showcased ‘polyvolcalism’ in everyday building use. Multiple tenant voices combine in a ‘messy’ story to document the multiple and shifting uses of spaces within the residential buildings. This approach serves to disrupt the singular ‘designer as producer’ narrative in previous building studies, and places the consumers (i.e. inhabitants) of buildings as ‘re-producers’ of space. Jenkins (2002) explores how building spaces are ‘permeable’ through exploring the relations between the social and the technical, problematising what and where the ‘boundary’ of a building is by treating the building as a node in a network of people, materials, and technology. These heterogeneous elements each come together in a ‘patchworked’ co-production of the social and the material aspects of buildings.

Jacobs and Merriman (2011) propose two starting points to embed architecture in practice. First, architectural ‘practitioners’ must be thought of in a wider sense than merely the architect and the building ‘user’. Other practitioners who do various types of building ‘work’ include ‘builders, demolishers, conservators, maintenance workers, DIY-ers, home-makers,

cleaners, artists, vandals' (p. 211). In addition to these human practitioners, there are non-human practitioners such as birds, pets, rodents, insects, plants, moulds, as well as the forces and results of weather or seismic activity. This broader conception of who or what a building 'practitioner' might include allows for a greater understanding of the processes holding a building together or breaking it down. Second, and reinforcing Lees (2001), 'practising architectures' invigorates architectural geographies such that it is processional and happening, rather than static and 'finished'. These ongoing changes can be material in nature, with alterations, additions, and maintenance, or breakdown, rot, and crumbling. There can also be changes, such as shifting uses, significances, or emotions that are associated with the architectural object. What happens through this approach is that the static object envisioned by the building designer diverges in lived experience in multiple ways.

3.3.2 Maintenance and Repair

Actions of maintenance and repair are one such building practice. Maintenance and repair have been explored in a range of such as: concierge workers in residential high-rises (Jacobs et al. 2012); craftspeople (Edensor, 2011); and a focus on amateur practitioners who undertake residential or business maintenance and remodelling (Cox, 2016; Grubbauer, 2015; Vannini and Taggart, 2014a). The overarching aim of these accounts centre on how the oft-overlooked practice of building maintenance serves to sustain different kinds of building life after production.

Graham and Thrift's (2007) conceptualisation of maintenance and repair has had a sizeable influence on this scholarship. Drawing on Heidegger, they state that when one has reliable dealings with an object, little notice is taken of it. Yet, it is when the object breaks down that it becomes 'visible'. It is the space between these two states of visibility that Graham and Thrift argue should be of interest. They point out that decay is a constant in the world: "Moisture gets in. Damp hangs around. Ice expands joints. Surfaces wear thin. Particles fall

out of suspension. Materials rot. Insects breed. Animals chew. All kinds of wildlife war with all kinds of fabric. Humans make errors” (p. 5). Their simple proposition is that every piece of infrastructure has the potential for failure, and therefore failure should not be seen as an aberration from the normal but rather as a central part of the way society works. The only counter-force to these processes are actions of maintenance and repair. Improvisation and innovation are important here. The process of tinkering, ranging from temporary fixes, to upgrades, to complete rebuilds, necessarily spurs new and unique understandings of how things perform better, and how to prevent further failures. Thus the processual and assembled nature of buildings, which are in a constant state of decay, are actively upkeep, repaired, and modified with historical sensitivities (Edensor, 2011).

The practices of professional maintainers and repairers largely concern large institutional buildings such as high-rise public residential blocks (Jacobs et al. 2012; Strebel). Strebel (2011) deploys the concept of ‘living building’ in order to understand high-rises as products of ‘unfolding courses of action’ undertaken by building concierges in a Glasgow case study during their regular block checks (p.259). These ‘block checks’ are routinised and systematic walks up and down multi-storey blocks where a concierge monitors, assesses and possibly carries out minor maintenance work. Through walking, observing, touching, documenting, and communicating with each other, concierges detect and solve maintenance and repair issues. Resultantly, Strebel conceives the high-rise building as a “function of the problems that concierges encounter in their work routine, as well as of the practical ad hoc solutions they adopt to respond, solve and repair such problems” (p. 248). These small stories are important on their own, as they help address the under-researched ‘space between breakdown and restoration’ that Graham and Thrift advocate for (2007, p. 3). They demonstrate how building practitioners react to issues intuitively and ‘on-the-fly’ to maintain the integrity of the building. But, in addition to this, these narratives also tell larger stories about institutional failings of under-investment in public housing infrastructure or other examples, and therefore

parts of bigger histories and politics.

3.3.3 **DIY practices**

Self-organised and self-undertaken repair and maintenance, or DIY ('do it yourself'), can be understood as a type of amateur building practice. DIY has become an increasingly common way of dealing with 'handyman' and small renovation tasks that would have traditionally been undertaken by professional tradespeople (Shove, 2007). Existing literature demonstrates that rather than saving money or producing particular material or structural outcomes, DIY is favoured because it produces and entrenches particular identities of masculinity and home-ownership (Cox, 2016; Shove, 2007). Cox (2016) states that DIY is typically performed on owner-occupied housing, and contributes to feeling that home is a malleable structure to make one's own. Even the most minor DIY practices undertaken in private rental housing typically require permission from the landlord, if allowed at all (see Chapter 2.4), and they therefore understudied in the rental housing literature. Vannini and Taggart (2014a) posit DIY in difficult weather conditions as practices that require attunements to the atmosphere, improvisation with building materials, and in negotiation with other actors. Despite a focus on homeowners, their practice-led approach can assist the present research in connecting to DIY to practices within a damp rental home.

3.3.4 **Domestic work**

While maintenance, repair, and DIY serve to keep a dwelling together, domestic work is also a key action which has little inclusion in research keeping the materiality and the sociality of the home together. Research on the materialities of home state that domestic practices are bound up with social, technological, gendered, and symbolic meanings. With dirt viewed as 'disorder' (Shove, 2003) or 'matter out of place' (Douglas, 1966), ensuring cleanliness within the home is moralised as adhering to societal norms. In a similar vein, Kaika

(2004) states that processes of material decay are scripted as the ‘other’ with home environments, and therefore need to be cleansed. Yet, these societal constructs of cleanliness within the home cause tensions between what domestic work ‘should’ be done and what is possible to be done. Factors such as working hours and family characteristics (e.g. single parent households) can constrain the time available to do domestic tasks (Fursman, 2009). In addition, in certain circumstances such as a tenant-landlord relationship, the division of who is responsible for what ‘household task’ can be blurred, such as who is responsible for cleaning of mould if a private market rental is particularly susceptible to dampness because of its structure, aspect, or installed technology (Chisholm et al., 2018; Grineski and Hernandez, 2010). Rather than the domestic integrity of a house being purely reliant on ‘doing chores’, it is therefore also reliant on multiple factors out of an inhabitants entire control.

This section has sought to understanding buildings as processional and porous, rather than static and ‘black boxed’ objects, or as Jacobs (2006) puts it, constantly being “made or unmade”. The way in which this occurs is through the actions of various ‘building practitioners’, who actively work on the building against processes of building breakdown and decay (Edensor, 2011).

3.4 Summary: Linking weather practices and building practices to renters perceptual security.

This chapter has outlined theories of practice that will be used in this research and applied these ideas to conceptualise how people practice both the weather and buildings. The literature on theories of practice has established that practices consist of interrelated embodied and mental activities, objects and their use, and existing and newly produced knowledge. Practices are theorised as inherently social, as they are communicated, replicated, and transformed through social relations and lived experiences, meaning performances of these practices are of consequence not only to the self but to others (Simonsen, 2007). Additionally,

while the ‘activeness’ of practices undertaken by tenants in damp housing is a key interest in this research, inaction and withdrawal is also meaningful. This wider conception of practice is useful in informing how perceptual security is maintained or tested for tenants.

This chapter has also conceptualised weather as phenomena happening inside as well as out there (Ingold, 2005; 2007). To some degree humans are always mingling in the weather-world to a certain degree. These minglings of air on a small scale such as weather ‘patterns’ or a large scale such as annual or decadal shifts, are perceived by us both rhythmically and kairologically, requiring reflexivity and attentiveness to deal with (Szerszynski, 2010). Practicing the weather indoors requires maintaining thermal comfort and the cycling of air, which afford positive health outcomes and socially-acceptable aromas of the home environment and its inhabitants. How we deal with the weather indoors not only requires air practices (Hauge, 2011), but also maintenance and repair, DIY, household work, and various socio-technical relations between buildings, objects, and people. Combinations of these practices assist inhabitants become intimate with their dwelling, learning its ‘ins and outs’, its rhythms, and how to maintain their own comfort and the material aspects of their home as well.

Chapter 4: Waiheke Island

4.1 An Island Case Study

Waiheke Island is located in the Hauraki Gulf approximately 20 kilometres, or 35 minutes by passenger ferry from downtown Auckland. Its usual resident population is over 9,000 people, rising to over 45,000 during the summer holiday season (Flemming, 2018). The island is approximately 92km², yet a majority of the population is situated in the western, urbanised end of the island which is closest to Auckland (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). The island is characteristically hilly, with a high point of 231m, and steep gullies running down to sandy beaches (Picard, 2017). Waiheke weather is typical of the Auckland region as a whole (NIWA, 2013). Usual annual rainfall amount and frequency mimics the Auckland region. Annual rainfall is 1266mm for Waiheke compared to a regional average of 1261mm. Rainfall frequency is 130 ‘wet days’ per year for Waiheke compared to the Auckland regional average of 134 days. The median annual temperature for Waiheke is between 15° and 16°C, the same as the rest of the Auckland region. Median sunshine hours on Waiheke are also typical of Auckland, yet the south-western parts of the island receive about 150 hours less than the regional median of 2000 hours (NIWA, 2013, p. 27).

Waiheke has been historically famed for its distinctive community and beach identity. Throughout most of the 20th century, the island was a quiet rural beachside setting with a small local population typified by ‘alternative living’ and New Zealand ‘bach’ culture (Kearns and Collins, 2006; Logie, 2016). These identities were in part created, and also sustained, by its ‘islandness’, a conceptual term describing assembled notions of relative isolation, bounded space, and idealised romanticism that give rise to particular realities of island life (Hoffman and Kearns, 2012; Stratford, 2006).



Figure 4.1: Map of Waiheke Island showing main urbanised centres (source Waihekewine.co.nz)



Figure 4.2: Waiheke Island and its location relative to Auckland City (source: Google maps)

Since the late 1980s, however, faster ferry services and amalgamation into Auckland City has seen the distinctive islandness of Waiheke being reworked (Logie, 2016), and the island increasingly woven into the urban fabric of Auckland as an ‘island suburb’.

Bringing Waiheke Island ‘closer’ to Auckland, both in travel times and in governance structure, has resulted in increased development on the island. Local businesses such as vineyards, cafes, accommodation providers, tourism operators, and artists encourage more domestic and international visitors; wealthy professionals seek to take advantage of a dual city-island lifestyle commuting to downtown Auckland; and property developers seek to redevelop existing real estate, as well as expand the edges of Waiheke’s urbanised areas (Logie, 2016). Tourism has grown significantly on the island, and an inclusion in Lonely Planet’s top-ten regions to visit in 2016 demonstrates its appeal to the international tourist market (Stuff, 2015). Logie notes that this development pressure has led to significant issues with fresh water provision, wastewater disposal, transportation, and other planning and infrastructural issues. As a result, longer-term residents of Waiheke have raised concerns about the management of this growth and the island’s future.

4.2 Waiheke Housing Issues

Another significant issue with the increasing development and popularity of Waiheke Island is housing affordability and insecurity (Corlett, 2017; Davis, 2017; Gibson, 2011). With the large number of holiday houses on the island, much of the housing stock goes unused for much of the year. Unoccupied dwellings on the island make up approximately 36% of the housing stock, compared to 3% of Auckland’s and 5% of New Zealand’s housing stock as a whole (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). Property prices have increased significantly on the island, with median prices increasing from \$519,000 in 2013 to \$890,000 in 2016 (71%)

(Waiheke Gulf News, 2016). Median rental prices for a two bedroom house have increased from \$440 per week in 2016 to \$560 per week in 2019 (Scoop, 2019). Despite rising rental revenues for landlords, tenants are often evicted at the beginning of the summer months to make way for those seeking to make seasonal use of their holiday homes (Flemming, 2018), or for the increased rental profits from online tourist accommodation marketplaces such as Air BnB (Tuatagaloa and Osbourne, 2018). Air Bnb listings make up for 16% of the island's total rental stock, and earn almost twice the weekly rental revenue when compared to residential rentals (Tuatagaloa and Osbourne, 2018). To exacerbate housing issues further, Waiheke has a growing demand for rental accommodation for seasonal tourism industry workers. Further, it only has 14 social housing units, and extremely limited emergency housing or third party housing providers (Watson and Inglis, 2016).

The established rental stock on Waiheke Island also has significant housing quality issues. Watson and Inglis (2016) state that the island's rental stock is highly variable in quality due to many rental properties being older 'baches' used as permanent rental accommodation. Baches are a vernacular style of New Zealand coastal holiday accommodation typified by amateur building practices and cheap materials (Kearns and Collins, 2006), and are therefore generally not suitable for permanent habitation. These dwellings lack the necessary insulation to keep them warm and dry, and exhibit significant issues with mould and dampness (Watson and Inglis, 2016). While focussed on different cohorts to this research, existing literature exploring housing on the island also highlight these issues for older people. Bates et al. (2019a) note that older Waiheke renters experience ongoing health issues related to dampness, cold, and mould resulting from their old and substandard dwellings. Older Waiheke homeowners can struggle in maintaining their homes independently, which challenges their ability to age in place (Coleman et al. 2016). A number of renters also inhabit small cabins, house trucks, or campervans (Bates et al., 2019b; Watson and Inglis, 2016). These studies are useful starting points to consider the context of this research.

Some social service organisations on the island have expressed concerns about the low quality rental stock in a report commissioned by the Waiheke Local Board (Watson and Inglis, 2016). The Waiheke Health Trust reported in 2016 that 14 of their clients were renting in dwellings with significant health and safety issues, noting that there are likely many more undocumented cases (Watson and Inglis, 2016, pp. 6-7). Amelia Lawley of the Waiheke Budgeting Service stated that many of her clients were living in uninsulated and difficult-to-heat dwellings (Watson and Inglis, 2016, p. 7). Watson and Inglis (2016) further note that as many of the higher quality dwellings in the Waiheke rental stock are used as higher-earning holiday accommodation, this leaves a residual stock of lower quality dwellings available to be rented for residential uses.

This section has provided an overview of the private market rental situation on Waiheke Island. Waiheke provides a fitting context for research exploring the practices of private market renters living in damp housing. First, the island provides a study location where there are known issues of poor housing quality, in particular damp and mouldy older baches and holiday homes now used for private market rentals. These housing quality issues are exacerbated by housing unaffordability in the private rental market. Second, as an island it provides a physically bounded geographical area for study. This simplifies the parameters for recruiting participants, and well as giving participants a definitive area within which to discuss renting biography and their experiences of damp housing. Third, the weather on Waiheke is broadly similar to Auckland region, and this research can therefore speak to dampness issues in lower quality housing in Auckland as a whole. That said, poor housing quality in the private rental market is a national issue and therefore this research can speak to dampness issues in older housing across New Zealand. The next chapters will outline the research strategy and present the findings of the research.

Chapter 5: Research Strategy

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have reviewed the existing literature surrounding both rental security and theories of practice as they relate to the weather and to buildings. This chapter begins by providing a rationale for this research employing a qualitative methodology. I then introduce my phenomenologically-inspired approach to research philosophy and design, followed by considerations of my own positionality and place in the research. The second section presents my 'Home Tours' approach to fieldwork by providing a rationale for a mixed-method style of data collection. I then outline the methods of *in-situ* interviews, participatory photo elicitation (Coleman, 2016a), embodied and sensory observations, and logbook reflections. This is followed by an account of my phenomenologically-led approach to qualitative data analysis. Finally, I outline and consider the ethical implications of this research and reflect on ways in which ethical challenges were mitigated.

5.2 Qualitative Geography: individual stories and multiple realities

As argued in Chapter 2, practices consist of both routinised patterns of bodily and mental behaviour (Reckwitz, 2002). Addressing the research question therefore requires not only documenting what actions renters undertake to manage dampness in their dwellings but also their experiences and the meanings attached to those experiences. Adopting a qualitative approach differs from the vast majority of studies on dampness in dwellings that employ enumerative methodologies. I deemed it appropriate to adopt a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis which recognised the intangible, fluid, and conflicting nature of human experiences, and how meaning is concurrently produced from them (Winchester and Rofe, 2016). As Winchester and Rofe note, 'reality is like an orchestra' (p. 24), and thus individual stories can go unheard and disappear into the noise of life. Qualitative research provides a stage

for these individual voices to coalesce and be heard.

5.2.1 Phenomenology and Geography

Phenomenological philosophy and research approaches encompass a school of thought that centres on humans' conscious interaction with the world in which they inhabit. While there are a number of phenomenological styles (Lopez and Willis, 2004), this thesis utilises interpretive phenomenology primarily informed by Heidegger (1962). As noted in Chapter 3.1.2, Heidegger's concept of 'being-in-the-world' suggests a relational connection between the self and place. The focus of an interpretive inquiry is on what people experience rather than what they consciously know. This type of phenomenology goes beyond description, and seeks to discover the meanings attached to life practices, a methodology which aligns with the tenets of theories of practice (embodiment and knowledge) which I outlined in Chapter 3.

Geographers have had a long-standing interest in phenomenology. This was initiated by humanist geographies of the late 1970s and 1980s (Buttimer, 1976) who explained the need for geographers to develop "ideas and languages to describe and explain the human experience of nature, space, and time" (Buttimer, 1976, p. 278). More recently, renewed interest by geographers in practice and performativity through non-representational theory, (Simonsen, 2003; Thrift, 1996) has seen further attention to phenomenology, and subsequently what is referred to as post-phenomenology (Lea, 2009; Rose and Wylie, 2006). Post-phenomenological approaches do not abandon any of phenomenology's central insights, but encompass a shift in focus from the subject to the particularities of relations between the subject and the world (Adams, 2007; Ash and Simpson, 2016; Lea, 2009). A focus on these relations means a concern with co-constitutionality and intersubjectivity – the relations between participant and their world, participant and researcher, researcher and their world. Ash and Simpson (2019) state that in order to interrogate these relations, new methodological styles should be developed around the research matter in a way that is uniquely responsive. A 'custom-built set of tools'

can account for an array of occurrences in the field that escape the attention of typical humanistic techniques such as interviews and surveys (p.154). This diverse set of experiences can then coalesce into stories for each research encounter, and then into a story for the data as a whole, a strength of a phenomenologically-inspired approach.

5.2.2 Positionality and Place

The interpretive phenomenological approach that I have taken in this research also requires recognition of presuppositions and knowledge on the part of the researcher. Such acknowledgment is important, since it is impossible for a researcher to forget previous knowledge or experiences of a research topic (Lopez and Willis, 2004). Lopez and Willis argue that previous knowledge can actually serve to make the research more meaningful, in that new knowledge can be created and shared between researcher and participant. I therefore acknowledge my own position in, and inseparability from, the research process through both academic knowledge and personal experience. To recognise and consider the presuppositions that I bring to the research process, I first undertook an extensive review of the literature. This review allowed me to identify key themes as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. I built this knowledge upon a foundation of personal experience in damp rental housing outlined below. I then reflected on the presuppositions that I have developed through this combination of academic and life experiences. To record these thoughts and reflections, I kept a logbook of my own dampness management practices and experiences. These changing assumptions and feelings towards my research topic were further noted and reflected on in my research notebook throughout the study period. The benefit of this exercise was that any ‘knew-it-all-along effect’ was challenged, and it reduced any propensity to foresee an outcome before it occurred (Simandan, 2019) and, through understanding my own presuppositions, I was able to reflect on the influence of my positionality upon the research.

Researcher positionality is an acknowledgment of seeing the world from specific

location(s) (Rose, 1997). Data collected during fieldwork is potentially interpreted according to nationality, race, age, gender, sexuality, social and/or economic status, and eventually coded as knowledge. As five of seven participants were women, four of those with children living with them at least part-time, there was some considerable distance between our lifeworlds (Heidegger, 1962). I acknowledge that during a single research encounter lasting one hour, it is difficult to bridge these ‘gaps’ in a significant way. It was important for me to reflect upon these distances in my notebook. Further, in order to step outside of my own potentially siloed considerations of my positionality, I engaged in ‘everyday talk’ about my place in the fieldwork with my supervisors, fellow postgraduate students, and my partner (Cupples and Kindon, 2003; Kohl and McCutcheon, 2015). These discussions led me to greater understandings of participant lifeworlds outside of my own.

Despite my differing position compared to my participants, I nonetheless shared with them the relevant status of being a long-time renter who had experienced damp housing on numerous occasions. While my history as a renter entails many stories of low quality housing, the particular situation which motivated this research was my experiences in a damp rental dwelling during the period of May-September 2018. I was housesitting a rental for friends in Ōwairaka, Auckland while they were on their honeymoon. The house was a 1920s Californian Bungalow-style, with a south-westerly aspect, built only a foot off the ground, with large trees surrounding the property. The street was situated on the shady southern side of Ōwairaka (Mt. Albert), in a low-lying area that had originally been a swamp but drained for the housing development (Auckland Star, 1944, p. 4). The house was a perfect dwelling for summer with a cool and airy feel, which was familiar to me as I had visited for barbeques numerous times. But, as I came to know, in winter it received little sunlight (see Figure 5.1), was very damp, and suffered from mould problems in most of the rooms. I had been asked by my friends to run the dehumidifier once a week in the main bedroom to keep the moisture level to a minimum, but I found myself running it twice a week at least. Despite the cold temperature outside, each

morning I would open all the windows in attempt to cycle the air inside the house with fresh air. At the same time, I would wipe the condensation that had built up overnight on the windows, which I mopped up with a sponge or a towel, which I then hung outside to dry. During the time I spent at the house, I developed asthma which I have never experienced as an adult, for which I was prescribed an inhaler. I often felt frustrated at my housing situation and my resultant poor health. Eventually I felt as if all I was doing to manage the dampness was rather pointless. I did, however, feel lucky that my situation was a temporary one, and I was moving to a house in October that was much warmer and drier.

The foregoing narrative conveys a brief history of my own experiences living in damp rental housing. By reflecting on these experiences throughout the research process, I was able to become a co-participant in my own research. Having an understanding of the difficulties of living in a damp rental, such as performing repetitive tasks throughout a winter to avoid mould growth, served to lessen some of the experiential and emotional distances between participants and myself. These reflections also, in line with an interpretive phenomenological approach, brought my own beliefs and assumptions about experiences of in rental housing into view. This process of consistent reflection about my own experiences continued throughout the research process.



Figure 5.1: The low angle of the afternoon sun in Ōwairaka, 5th July 2018 (photo my own).

5.2.3 The home as site of research

Geographers are keenly aware that a research encounter is, at least in part, structured by the setting in which it is conducted. Where fieldwork takes place yields important information about how participants construct their own identities and make sense of their everyday lives (Anderson and Jones, 2009; Katz, 1994; Sin, 2003; 2005). By undertaking research in a participant's home, geographers and other social scientists seek to gain a deeper understanding of a participant's lived experiences of the place that they potentially feel most intimate with (Coleman, 2016). As my research sought to explore the routine dampness management practices that people perform, participants' homes were the obvious location for undertaking the data collection phase of my research.

Home as a "field" has been regarded by feminist scholars as a place for knowledge-

producing research encounters. While its meaning is complex and contested (see Chapter 2), one conception of home is an intimate and personalised space where participants feel at ease with their surroundings and their actions (Sin, 2003). Interviewing participants in their home spaces may provide a beneficial location in which to address differing power relations of the researcher and participant (Katz, 1994; Oberhauser, 1997). This is because conducting research in such a personal social space serves to “position the participant as someone who informs the researcher about the processes and relations under study”, in contrast to the “situation where the researcher is viewed as the expert on a separate critical plane from the subjects on study” (Oberhauser, 1997, p. 167). Approaching each encounter with the mindset that each participant is an expert in their own home meant privileging the participant’s practices and knowledges.

5.3 Fieldwork strategy

With a foundation laid through a phenomenologically-inspired approach detailed in the foregoing section, this section introduces my fieldwork strategy. I first outline my recruitment method, and a rationale for my fieldwork approach. Following this, I overview my mixed-method fieldwork strategy of home tours.

5.3.1 Recruitment

Fieldwork commenced with a number of visits to Waiheke Island to meet with social service providers. Conversations with representatives from Waiheke Budgeting Service and Waiheke Health Trust offered further context to the current housing quality situation on the island. These representatives agreed to assist in distributing flyers to potential study participants through their service networks (see Appendix. A). Interested participants then provided their contact details to the service-provider representatives, who then passed on this information to me. This indirect recruitment method conformed to requirements of the University of Auckland Human Participant Ethics Committee (Approval 022434) (see

Appendix B and C).

Upon receiving the contact details of potential participants, I then made contact via phone to briefly explain the research objectives and process, and to screen participants to ensure they were suitable for the study. This short screening involved me asking potential participants to briefly describe their current living situation, what dampness issues they were experiencing in their home, and confirming that they were a tenant. If participants were suitable and interested in taking part, I sent them a follow up email with the information in writing and with a request for a convenient time to visit them at their home for the research to take place.

A total of 12 Waiheke residents expressed an interest to take part in the study during the recruitment period. Of these, five were either deemed unsuitable for taking part (e.g., were, in fact, owner-occupiers) or had changes in personal circumstances that led them to become unavailable.

5.3.2 Devising a method for exploring practice and experiences

The research objective of exploring tenants' dampness management practices requires that close attention be paid to the embodied and mental activities that a tenant performs within their home. Therefore a 'tool box' that is attuned to the theoretical foundation of this study needed to be devised. This section outlines a rationale for the methods utilised in the fieldwork.

Research on social practices in Geography and related fields have debated the merits of interviews as a sufficient method of encapsulating the embodied and mental practices of people's lives. Non-representational theorists have argued that interviews happening after the fact can only offer partial accounts of activities and experiences that have taken place in the past (Latham, 2003; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000). Other researchers of social practices have maintained that the interview still remains a valuable method. Hitchings (2012) argues that talking to people about their practices is logically consistent with social theories of practice.

Drawing upon Reckwitz (2002, p. 250), Hitchings states that in the same way that embodied practices can be passed on verbally through social networks, participants can similarly explain these practices to a researcher. From a more practical angle, Hitchings also asserts that an efficient means of gleaning the most information in a short research timeframe is needed – a constraint that applied to my own research.

The practical and ethical realities for a researcher of ‘being-there’ while practices of interest are taking place can require adopting supplemented strategies of data collection. Enriching interviews by expanding the emphasis on the socio-materiality and the socio-spatiality of everyday practices have resulted in mixed-method approaches becoming more common in practice-focussed geographical fieldwork (Dowling et al., 2016; Roulston, 2010). Interviews have been augmented with alternative methods such as auto-ethnography in exploring everyday mass transit mobilities (Bissell, 2010), video of street performance (Simpson, 2011), solicited diaries documenting heterosexual relationships within the home (Morrison, 2013), and ride-alongs with urban cyclists (Spinney, 2009). As these studies note, mix-methods of data collection are valuable as they have the ability to unearth alternative aspects of people’s practices which may be missed through an interview-only method, and also provide the potential for methodological experimentation.

My own research follows the lead of augmented approaches mentioned above. In noting the data richness and diversity that emerges from a mixed-method approach, I sought to develop a phenomenological framework to data collection in the field that adhered to social theories of practice, yet also recognised the need for efficient data collection during a limited fieldwork period.

5.4 Home Tours

‘Home tours’ was a method I devised to gather varied kinds of information from

participants within their rental homes on Waiheke in a single research encounter. The method included *in-situ* interviews, participatory photo elicitation (PPE) (Coleman, 2016), and multisensory observations during the encounter. The method of ‘home tours’ was initially inspired by PPE (method explained further below), where Coleman’s method of photo elicitation during a research encounter became tour-like, with the participant showing the researcher around their home to highlight what was meaningful to them. Yet the approach was realised more fully from reflections and analysis of the first field encounter that I undertook with a participant I will name Myles. This encounter was a particularly rich and detailed one, lasting approximately two hours. What began as a combined interview/PPE approach became observatory, embodied, and multisensory as I was invited to move objects with Myles to inspect mould growth, and to smell spaces within different rooms in order to share Myles’ own experiences of living in a damp dwelling.

In existing geographic research, tour-like styles of qualitative research have become increasingly common. ‘Go-alongs’ have been utilised as a method in street and neighbourhood settings, especially where the emphasis is on exploring a participant’s mobility (Anderson, 2004, Pinder, 2005; Pink, 2008; Spinney, 2009). Closer to my own research area, Jacobs et al. (2012) devised ‘Show Us Your Home’ in order to challenge the static nature of the seated interview. Their research focussed on socio-technical networks inside of high-rise apartments, which lends itself to my own thematic enquiries of maintenance, repair, and heating technologies. Yet ‘Show Us Your Home’ had little focus on the participants’ personal experiences of living inside the high-rise and what these experiences meant to them and to broader contexts about housing quality. My own style of tour, inspired by a phenomenological approach, oriented itself towards exploring these experiences.

Billo and Heimstra (2013, p. 324) propose fieldwork to be ‘a malleable, fluid extension of one’s initial vision [which is] accompanied by edits, revisions, and feedback’. By reflecting

on my first research encounter and the literature mentioned above, the ‘temporary commonplaces’ (Thrift, 2003, p. 106) created between Myles and me were identified in my logbook notes as something that would be beneficial to investigate in future field encounters. I subsequently devised additional interview questions in order to further interrogate potential embodied and/or multisensory elements that could possibly occur. I also sought to enhance the tour-like aspect of the research through emphasising to participants at the beginning of the encounter that they could feel free to stand and move around. I also invited participants to show me objects, spaces, or places of meaning to them. As with all fieldwork, no method can encapsulate reality in full and representations that emerge during the research process are always partial (Hinthorne, 2014). Yet by utilising a mixed-method approach, I sought to convey a richer and ‘more-whole’ account of renter’s experiences.

The following sections explain and discuss the ‘home tour’ framework as made up of four interrelated methods: in-situ interviews, participatory photo elicitation, embodied and multisensory observations, and my own personal reflections post-encounter.

5.4.1 In-situ interviews

I undertook in-situ interviews at the participant’s home. The interview questions were largely open ended, covering: the participant’s history of living on the island, their methods of alleviating dampness in their home; what changes they make according to weather or seasonal changes; what type of heating they use; what air management they undertake inside their home, their favourite and least favourite parts of their home; and what the nature of relations they have with their landlord and/or property manager in regards to the dampness issues. Interviews were audio recorded on a smart phone application (see further discussion below), and then transcribed in full after the interview.

There was the potential for participants to be bewildered at the seemingly obvious

questions that I asked about their routine practices. Questions such as “where do you spend the most time when you are at home?” or “how do you know how to do that [dampness management practice]?” occasionally led to awkward moments in the discussion. Hitchings (2012) notes that these types of moments can be minimised by being clear at the outset of the encounter about the research aims, and that an interviewer being committed to the question will provide the participant with confidence to answer about seemingly banal aspects of their routines. Allowing space for answers also helps participants to explain their practices. Sometimes it was not immediately clear to a participant exactly how or why they go about these tasks, and giving time to work through the logics allows for a better response. Hitchings also notes that responses to questions such as a shrug can provide a useful demonstration of how embedded and unquestioned some mundane practices really are.

5.4.2 Participatory Photo Elicitation

Participatory photo elicitation (PPE) (Coleman, 2016) is a photographic method in which the researcher and participant work together to produce photographs in line with research aims. This is different to a pure photo elicitation method, which means leaving a camera with participants to take their own photographs of their lived experience, and discussing the images at a later date (Bignante, 2010; Harper, 2002). Coleman (2016) modified this method to be a photographic collaboration between the participant and the researcher during a follow-up visit to an initial in-situ interview. After an analysis of the initial interview data in light of research objectives, a PPE interview is undertaken. During this interview, the participant and the researcher decide together which meaningful object or space to photograph, as well as technical details such as framing and aspect. Coleman found that the key benefit of the PPE method was ‘being-there’ and working in collaboration while taking photographs allowed for participants’ experiences to be discussed, interpreted, and reflected on ‘in-place’. Further to this, it also enhances the individual’s participation and agency in research practice.

Table 5.1: Participatory photo elicitation prompts (Coleman, 2016)

Prompts for initiating a photo(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there anything you would like to photograph to illustrate your comments? - How would you like me to photograph this (O/S/P)*? - Is this photograph ok with you?
Possible prompts for discussion while taking photographs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why do you think you are experiencing dampness issue with this (O/S/P)? - How do you use this (O/S/P)? Talk me through it. - How does this (O/S/P) make you feel? - Have you spoken with your landlord about the problem/issue with this (O/S/P) - What do you think you might do with this (O/S/P) in the future?

During the ‘home tour’ I took photographs on my smartphone at the direction of participants. If a response to an interview question was of particular importance to the participant or peaked my own interest in relation to the research objectives, I would ask the participant if they would like me to photograph the object/space/place to illustrate (see Table 5.1). Differing from Coleman (2016), the compressed nature of my research timeline meant that I would undertake the *in-situ* interview and the PPE interview concurrently. Aside from time efficiencies gained in the research timeline, the benefit of this modification was that it served to enhance the immediacy and the sense of ‘being-there’ whilst participants showed me through their home and what practices they undertook to manage dampness. Some participants were eager to jump up and show me around immediately. Others were more inclined to show me things after the interview phase of the encounter had ended. Despite some ‘tours’ being the interview itself, and some occurring after a period of seated discussion, both scenarios resulted in further insight into practices of managing dampness within the home.

5.4.3 Embodied and multisensory observations

The ‘home tours’ method also meant experiencing the participant’s dampness issues for myself. Participants would suggest that I:

“stick [my] head down there have a sniff, you can smell how damp it is. It smells like Granny’s cupboard” (Chantelle), or:

“The major problem was this discovery right here. Do you mind helping me lift this [piece of linoleum on the floor of the kitchen] up?” [Myles].

These situations during the research encounter meant that I could gain a deeper understanding of the participant’s dampness management practices and experiences of a poor quality rental dwelling for myself.

The advantage of incorporating sensory and embodied observations into my research is that I could occupy a place adjacent to people whose practices and experiences I was seeking to understand. This idea follows Pink (2009), who states that the phenomenological experience is not a disjointed set of sensations but rather an amalgamation of smells, sounds, touch, tastes, and sights. A researcher can, through active and multi-sensory participation, provide a more coherent phenomenological understanding of a participant’s lifeworld. Examples of getting ‘closer’ to participant’s experiences in existing literature has been in the form of researchers sharing tastes from different ethnic backgrounds (Longhurst et al., 2007) and experiencing listening and hearing as a home-making practices (Duffy and Waitt, 2013). My own data collection method followed in the vein of these studies, and extended beyond the discursive and the visual, into the embodied, the olfactory, and the haptic. As part of my framework involves weather and air-related practices, these observations would add to my findings in these areas. Yet, as Pink (2008) notes, it is important to critically reflect on the researcher’s co-involvement in the constitution of places in the field (see Chapter 6). These multi-sensory observations that I experienced in the field were recorded both during the interview as fieldnotes and also written up in a logbook subsequent to the encounter.

5.4.4 Researcher's logbook

Keeping a logbook during the research process was an important part of making sense of disparate findings that were uncovered through various methods. As mentioned in Section 3 above, alterations to the research strategy were made as a result of the notes made post-field encounter. In addition to this alteration, and in line with my interpretivist approach, it also ensured that my presuppositions and assumptions went recorded (Ortlipp, 2008). I spent time reflecting on each encounter while I cycled from participant's homes back to the ferry, and would make field notes whilst on the 40 minute sailing back to Auckland. These notes covered my own experience of the participant's home, noting the visible condition of the dwelling, any of my own sensory experiences that stood out to me, and other factors such as the weather on the day. I would sketch out a floor plan of the house, noting the aspect of the house, its siting in the surrounding landscape, and other features such as tree cover. These recorded observations allowed me to retain an ongoing connection to the field (Katz, 1994). On reviewing the audio recording for the transcript for the first time, I would also add to my field notes any further details that could potentially be gleaned from the recording.

5.4.5 Compiling a mixed-method approach

Combining a number of methods into a distinct style of data collection allowed me to approach my subject in a responsive way. Home tours aligns with a phenomenologically-inspired approach to field work in that this approach seeks to 'get close' and gain a deeper understanding of the participants' practices and experiences in damp housing.

5.5 Qualitative Data Analysis

The data collected during the fieldwork process was analysed using interpretive phenomenological analysis (see Table 5.2). As mentioned in Section 1.2., interpretive

phenomenology is a dynamic methodology, and encompasses both an insider's perspective of the participant and an active role for the researcher who considers their own positionality. Interpretation should then be dual-layered: participants are attempting to make sense of their own world; and the researcher making sense of the participant making sense of their own world (Smith and Osbourne, 2003).

Smith and Osbourne (2003) outline a stepped process of interpretive phenomenological analysis that has guided my interpretation of my data. For each participant I would first work through the five steps in Table 5.2. As I worked through each analysis, I became more familiar with the experiences and meaning-making of individual participants and increasingly able to recognise emergent themes linking participants and encounters. Yet, it was also important to have respect for divergences in the data in order to recognise difference between participant's experiences when it emerged.

Table 5.2: Steps of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis used in this research (inspired by Smith and Osborn, 2007)

For each participant:

- 1) Read printed transcript once/twice over to get a sense for the participant.
- 2) Close read the transcript, using margin to note down:
 - a) associations or connections that come to mind.
 - b) preliminary interpretations.
 - c) the use of language by the participants and/or the sense of the persons themselves which is coming across.
 - d) comment on similarities and differences, echoes, amplifications, and contradictions in what a person is saying.
- 3) Review researcher's logbook:
 - a) connect any observations and experiences of my own.
 - b) Consider my own positionality in the research.
- 4) Document emerging themes (invoke terminology from literature review themes):
 - a) Find expressions which are 'high level', making theoretical connections within interviews (and subsequently across interviews).
- 5) Produce participant's thematic table:
 - a) Produce a table of themes and narratives – cluster themes together where they link (some will cluster, some will emerge superordinate).
 - b) Link relevant examples from transcript/field notes of that theme.
 - c) Link across participants if relevant.

Master Table of Themes

- 1) Compile superordinate themes:
 - a) according to prevalence in the data
 - b) for richness of passages
 - 2) Compile subordinate themes:
 - a) If convergences are not immediately present between individual case tables, this may be an opportunity rather than a hinderance.
-

5.6 Ethical considerations

This research was approved by The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (reference number 022434). In accordance with the terms of the ethical agreement, I provided each participant with a Participant Information Sheet and they signed a consent form before the research encounter commenced.

5.6.1 Privacy and confidentiality in a small island community

Waiheke Island comprises a small and well-connected community, and it was important

to me to uphold the privacy and security of the research participants. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the topics covered during the research, I emphasised to participants that confidentiality and anonymity were of utmost importance. To ensure confidentiality, I gave each participant a randomly assigned pseudonym. Any identifiable words (such as names of island suburb, family members, employers, friends, businesses) were omitted or obscured from the final transcripts. Participants were made aware that they could refuse to answer any question, and end the encounter at any time. Copies of transcripts were sent to each participant to review and retract any information for one month after they received it. None did. All data in hard-copy form was stored in a locked file storage cabinet, and data was secured in on the School of Environment's secure servers.

As a male researcher, I was acutely aware of the power dynamics that potentially exist when conducting research with female participants in their homes (Oberhauser, 1997). An initial step to providing assurance to female participants when conducting a home tour was to bring along a female colleague. While this person did not take part in the home tour, they provided a useful springboard for post-encounter discussions on the return trip to Auckland. The offer of a second person accompanying me was extended to all participants. A second step to ensuring comfort and perceived safety to female participants was to maximise commonalities (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001) between us, such as emphasising being a renter and having experiences in damp housing myself. As mentioned in Section 2, taking account of social and physical contexts and how these may affect the research process is important in maintaining an ethical relationship with a research participant.

5.6.2 Smartphones as a field device

My smartphone was the device with which I audio-recorded the home tours, conducted participatory photo elicitation, and recorded reflections immediately after the research encounter (notes during the interview were made in a notebook). As recent studies have noted,

qualitative fieldwork is being increasingly shaped by smartphone technology (Gorman, 2017; van Doorn, 2013). This technology provides affordances to the researcher by combining the collection of multiple media forms (audio, image, video) into a single device, greatly reducing the need for multiple devices which could make mobility difficult whilst in the field (Coleman, 2016). It can also assist in other ways, such as participant-researcher communications, scheduling with participants, and location-based uses such as travelling on public transport and bicycle to and from research encounters (van Doorn, 2013).

Smartphones, as with any technology, have the potential to both intensify and relieve power and difference during fieldwork. Gorman (2017) notes that smart phone use can be perceived as ‘amateur’ or ‘unprofessional’ when compared to a ‘scientist’s notebook’, potentially problematising the issue of maintaining participant engagement. Yet, Gorman also notes that the relative ubiquity of smartphones gives them an ‘everydayness’ that can reduce the social distance in the researcher-participant divide and allow participants to be more at ease. For my own research, this ubiquity meant that participants could engage in the PPE element of data collection easily. Working with a smartphone to take an image is something that all of the participants understood and most likely had undertaken themselves, which perhaps made them feel more at ease than a complex digital camera. I could show a participant the image(s) that I had taken immediately, gaining approval that could then be further cemented through the transcript review process as described above.

There are privacy issues that arise with smartphone use in regard to data storage and locational tracking (van Doorn, 2013). To alleviate these issues, I took two steps. One was to turn my smartphone to flight mode during interviews, which stops locational data being attached to an audio recording or an image. The second was to off-load all of the interview data onto the School of Environment servers on return to Auckland, and delete the files from my phone.

5.7 Summary

This chapter has detailed the research strategy that I employed in this research. I outlined my phenomenologically-inspired approach to research design, and recognised the interdependence between participant's experiences, the home as a place of research, and my own positionality in the research. I justified a mixed method approach to data collection and explained the 'home tour' qualitative framework, which encompasses in-situ interviews, participatory photo elicitation, embodied and sensory observations, and field logbook entries. In keeping with my phenomenologically-inspired approach, I outlined the steps to interpretive phenomenological analysis. Finally, I explored ethical considerations and implications pertinent to the research process. The next chapters will detail the findings of employing this research approach in exploring the dampness management practices and experiences of renters on Waiheke Island.

Chapter 6: Weathering inside of damp rental housing

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have outlined the conceptual and methodological approach to this research, and outlined the mixed method ‘home tour’ fieldwork strategy. This chapter explores the findings derived from this strategy. The chapter is organised by a range of thematic commonalities that emerged from the research encounters and subsequent data analysis. I begin with an explanation of the participants’ socio-demographic characteristics, dwelling characteristics, and a brief overview of the participant-reported housing quality issues as they relate to the research objectives. Following this, I explore the specific ways in which tenants manage the weather indoors. This includes practices of maintaining thermal comfort; cycling, freshening, and retaining air; and other individual ‘air practices’. Then, drawing on practice theory as outlined in Chapter 3, I explore the role of knowledge and social relations in shaping these practices (Reckwitz, 2002). I interrogate how tenants come to know what they know by questioning the embeddedness of their practices, how they learn, and by what means they share knowledge and experiences within the Waiheke community. Fourth, I include another specific aspect of the social nature of dampness management practices though examining relations between tenants, landlords, and property managers, and how the characteristics of the Waiheke rental market can affect these relations. Fifth, I explore how the tenants’ attachment to their rental property, and Waiheke at large as a place of residence, is affected by the housing quality issues that they experience. Finally, I offer a summary of the key findings from this chapter, before exploring key methodological findings from the research in the subsequent chapter.

6.2 Study overview

Participants were between 35 and 74 years of age, with five identifying as female and two male (see Table 6.1). Of the seven households, two were single, four were single mothers with one to three children, and one comprised a two parent household with one young adult. The length of time each had resided at their current dwelling ranged from one to six years (median 2.5 years).

All had rented on the island for five years or more, with one having lived there for 20 years. Two had owned homes previously on Waiheke. During their time spent renting, the

Table 6.1: Participant Characteristics

Name	Age Bracket	Household Characteristics	Years at current rental	Years renting on W.I.	# of rentals on W.I.	Ave. years in each rental	Forced move?
Myles (M)	55-64	Single	1	20	10	2	✓
Lolie (F)	55-64	Single	5	5	2	2.5	X
Veronica (F)	45-54	Mother, daughter, flatmate	2	10*	6	1.7	✓
Terrence (M)	65-74	Father, Mother, Daughter	6	8	2	4	✓
Marilyn (F)	45-54	Mother, Daughter, two sons	1	10	5	2	X
Chantelle (F)	45-54	Mother, two sons	5	5*	2	2.5	✓
Karen (F)	35-44	Mother, one son, one daughter.	2 ½	12	5	2.4	✓

* denotes that the participant had previously been an owner-occupier on Waiheke Island.

number of dwellings that each participant had lived in ranged from two to ten, with participants moving to a new rental approximately every two and a half years. Of the seven participants, five considered themselves forced to move out of their last house for varying reasons including landlords selling their property, major house renovations, and relationship break-ups.

6.2.2 Dwelling characteristics

The participants lived in a range of dwelling types typical of the Waiheke Island rental stock (Table 6.2). Two lived in original pre-1950s baches, which appeared to have had few significant alterations made to them since their original construction. These baches both had small floorspaces, with just one-bedroom, combined living/kitchen/dining rooms, and a bathroom. One participant lived in a one-bedroom unit built underneath an original bach, which had been raised on pole foundations to accommodate it. According to this participant, the building was constructed by the owners (see Figure 6.1). The other four houses were constructed in the 1970s and 1980s (Auckland Council, 2019), and ranged from three to four bedrooms. Six of the seven houses were sited on south facing slopes, with their main windows and living areas being oriented in this direction (a dwelling's south face will receive the least sun in the southern hemisphere). Five of the seven houses had significant tree coverage on at least one sun-facing side of the house (east, north, or west), which further reduces sun entering the windows.

Table 6.2: Dwelling characteristics overview

Name	Dwelling type decade built	Dwelling description	Siting and aspect notes	South aspect ?	Tree shade ?	Insulation Type [^]
Myles	Unit built under original bach (addition approx. 1980s construction)	1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, combined living/ kitchen	Entire dwelling situated on the SE side of a steep hill. Unit low to the ground with main aspect facing SE	✓	✓	X
Lolie	Original bach (unknown construction date)	1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, 1 storage, combined living/ kitchen	Bach situated on a SW facing slope with a main aspect of WSW. Low to the ground.	✓	✓	Ceiling only
Veronica	1980s House*	3 bedroom, 2 bathroom	House situated on the SW side of a steep ridge, the main building aspect is SW	✓	X	Ceiling bats and foil underfloor
Terrence	Original bach (unknown construction date)	1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, separate kitchen and living room. Daughter's bed in lounge	Bach situated on the South side of the road, on a south slope. The house's aspect is SSW and is surrounded by thick bush each side.	✓	✓	X
Marilyn	1980s house*	4 bedroom, 2 bathroom, combined living kitchen dining	House is situated on an SE facing slope, with the lower story dug into the ground.	✓	X	Ceiling only
Chantelle	1970s House*	3 bedroom, 1 bathroom, Combined living and dining.	House is situated on a steep NW facing slope. The NE side is covered by bush.	X	✓	Ceiling bats and foil underfloor
Karen	1970s House*	3 bedroom, 1 bathroom, Kitchen, Combined living and dining.	House is situated on a SW facing slope with surrounding trees. The rear and under-story of the building is dug into the ground.	✓	✓	Ceiling only

* Date retrieved from Auckland Council GIS database.

[^] As informed by participants' knowledge

6.2.3 Housing quality issues

As established during the initial screening process (see Chapter 4), all of the participants reported experiencing some level of dampness within their rental home. During the research encounter, I asked what quality issues they had noticed in their rental property. Table 6.3 shows a count of the issues that participants reported at their homes. The most common issue was visual and olfactory signs of dampness and mould, as well as mould on other personal items. Five participants noted that they had significant tree coverage which they felt restricted sunlight entering their homes. Other common issues were dampness felt on the floors, faults with mechanical ventilation and insulation not installed where participants believed it could be.

Table 6.3: Reported housing quality issues

Quality Issue	Count
Walls/ceilings mouldy	7
Smell of dampness/mould	7
Personal effects mouldy (furniture, clothing etc.)	6
Curtains mouldy	5
Trees blocking light	5
Floor/carpet dampness	4
Mechanical ventilation faults (not functioning/not properly installed)	4
Insulation missing	4
Drafts (windows, doors, and walls)	3
Roof leaks/water entering	2
Old/damaged insulation	2

6.3 “A little gap like that, all the weather comes in”: Managing the weather indoors

In Chapter 3, I argued that to ‘weather’ is to be skilful, reflexive, and perceptive to ones experiences, and I conceptualised a way of understanding how the weather can be practiced and experienced indoors. Rather than weather occurring ‘out there’, I argued that being indoors perhaps only lessens the need to weather these fluctuations to some degree (Ingold, 2005), and that to deal how with the weather indoors requires various ‘air practices’ (Hauge, 2013). Further,

tenants must be reflexive in their practices, responding to both cyclical feature of the weather and anomalies of the weather-world (Szerszynski; 2010). This section explores what air practices tenants on Waiheke Island undertake in their homes, and how they experience the weather in their poor quality dwellings. As noted in Chapter 2, dampness arises from a number of interrelated factors (low thermal temperature, poor ventilation, high moisture), tenants sought to actively reduce these issues by warming through heating practices and employing spatial management practices of moving, containing, and cycling air in a porous dwelling.

6.3.2 Maintaining indoor temperature and thermal comfort

Tenants undertook a range of heating practices in order to reduce dampness and maintain thermal comfort. All had some form of heating in their dwelling, including fan heaters, oil heaters, enclosed fireplaces, and heat-pumps, or some combination of these (Table 6.4). Two tenants provided their own heaters, with landlords providing the rest of the heating sources including heat-pumps, fireplaces, or portable oil heaters. Six of the seven tenants paid their own power bills, with only Lolie's power expenses being included in her rent. When asked if they thought their heating source(s) were sufficient to heat their rental, three participants told me it was sufficient and four told me that it was not. Yet the three participants who stated that their heating source(s) were sufficient to heat their houses also complained that it was a significant cost to do so.

Affording heating costs was an issue raised by all six tenants who paid their power bills themselves, regardless of their heating type. The tenant's power bills were significantly higher in the winter months. For example, Chantelle told me that she paid on average \$100 in the summer and that rose to \$300-\$350 per month during the winter time. Despite this expense, some tenants used their heating almost constantly in order to keep their house both warm and dry:

Table 6.4: Heating types and thermal comfort

Pseudonym	Heating type(s) and location in house	Heating source provided by:	Power bill paid by:	Heating maintains tenants' thermal comfort?
Myles	Fan heater (bedroom)	Tenant	Tenant	No
Lolie	Oil heater (bedroom)	Tenant	Landlord	No
Veronica	Heatpump (main living area), oil heater (daughter's bedroom)	LL (Heatpump), tenant (oil heater)	Tenant	No
Terrence	Enclosed fireplace (living room)	LL	Tenant	Yes
Marilyn	Heatpump (downstairs bedroom)	LL	Tenant	Yes
Chantelle	Oil heater	LL	Tenant	No
Karen	Enclosed fireplace (living room), oil heater (children's bedroom)	LL (Fireplace), tenant (oil heater)	Tenant	Yes

In winter the fire is on pretty much 24/7. It's the only way we can keep the place dry. We keep it running the whole time so it can get pretty expensive with the wood (Terrence).

Veronica, a single-parent, was conscious of high heating costs from constant heater use and actively controlled her heater use by putting on extra clothes:

I'm by myself paying the power bill. We first snuggle up with blankets, but then when it gets really cold, I'll turn the heat pump on and off and on and off (Veronica).

Similarly, Terrence discussed how he had learnt to make his firewood consumption more efficient through ongoing experimentation in different parts of the day and parts of the year:

Feeding the fire too fast is one thing we have to watch, especially in winter. We can go through the wood really fast, so we have learnt the art of getting it right according to when we need it (Terrence).

Yet, tenants would also seek to maintain their thermal comfort through other methods rather than using their heaters and fireplaces. All tenants stated that they and their families usually put on extra layers of clothing rather than turning on the heater in order to save money on their power bill. Veronica also told me how she and her daughter shared a bed on especially cold nights due to her daughter's bedroom being too cold and damp:

I don't want my daughter to freeze or get sick. But she sleeps up with me in the winter, the room is just too cold and damp and the bed gets damp (Veronica).

Chantelle explained how her family sometimes do not heat the house in winter:

It is what it is [in the winter]. Warm socks and slippers, dressing gowns, that sort of thing.

Other participants described the partitioning of their house in order to retain heat in the spaces that they were inhabiting. By spatially managing air (Royston, 2014), participants could save in heating costs through containing the limited amount of heat they could produce in-place. Myles described how he felt there was little point in heating certain parts of his house, due to them not being able to retain heat:

In [the kitchen/living room], I will have a jacket on and not heat it – just while I’m making my dinner. But then, I take my dinner through to my bedroom, shut my door and turn the heater on. It’s pointless to put the heater on in here. These drapes are O.K. at keeping some heat in, but it’s a thin layer of glass on the windows and just so may gaps everywhere (Myles).

Chantelle, with only one oil heater for her whole three-bedroom house, actively contained all of the heat in her living area:

I try to contain everything in (the living room), because this is where we eat our meals and this is where we watch TV. The boys do their homework at the table. I try to contain it in here because one oil heater doesn’t actually do much. So, at night before the kids go to bed, I go and put the electric blankets on and that’s it (Chantelle).

Chantelle showed me her indoor thermometer that she kept the wall in her lounge and explained how she commonly measured temperatures of 10 degrees during the winter, well below the standard of 18 degrees required to maintain inhabitants’ wellbeing (Howden-Chapman et al., 2012). Most tenants reported that they understood that dampness is alleviated partially through heating their home, but were restricted by expensive heating costs and some participants lacked the number of heating sources to make a significant impact in each part of their house. This meant prioritising their own thermal comfort and certain spaces within their home, leaving other spaces to become potentially colder and damper.

6.3.3 “I’m a real fresh air person”: Cycling, freshening, and retaining air.

As well as maintaining thermal comfort within a dwelling, another action that tenants undertook to manage dampness was cycling, freshening, and retaining the air in their rentals.

As conceptualised in Chapter 3.2.4, managing the air within a dwelling has importance in maintaining the materialities of the physical dwelling, but also the physical and emotional wellbeing of its inhabitants. Renters were asked about the housing quality issues that they had noticed in their rental house, and how they had detected these issues. As is stated in existing reports (BRANZ, 2017), inhabitants of damp housing identify mould visibly, yet also experience dampness through smell and feel. Participants were asked to explain how they initially experienced dampness issues in their home when they first noticed them. All seven noted that the particular smell of dampness and mould was the first thing that alerted them to any issues:

Well, first you always can smell it. It's that distinctive smell. There's a little bit of mould on the walls, but it's the smell that really does it (Karen).

...when it's bad it can just get really musty [downstairs]. Like that smell, you know? Like, I can open up the doors down there and it's ok on a sunny day, but if it's shut up for a bit it just develops that smell and I know I have to do something about it (Marilyn).

It's usually just the heavy air in here. Like after a couple of days of rain and me being at work for long hours the place is usually shut up. I'll come home and it'll just have that heavy air and that particular smell. (Veronica).

While not all participants actively identified a bad smelling part of their dwelling they wished to show me during a tour, Chantelle told me that I should try smelling a particularly damp part of her son's bedroom that she was having issues with at the time:

"stick your head down there have a sniff, you can smell how damp it is. It smells like Granny's cupboard" (Chantelle).

As can be seen in the above quotes, without the regular circulation of air, their dwellings begin to smell of mould quickly, especially in a period of bad weather. As Marilyn states, it is the first signal that alerts her to begin to deal with the issue. Low (2005) notes that smells that are considered as ‘bad’ in a socio-cultural sense. However, rather than being embarrassed about the smell of dampness, some participants actively encouraged me to smell the air in certain rooms or behind furniture to prove to me how bad the dampness situation was. Participants often articulated the smell of dampness as something inherently known to them, and included me in the known experience. Comments of “that smell”, that was “particular” and “distinctive” (underlined) suggests how common the occurrence of dampness was amongst these renters and New Zealanders in general. That is not to suggest that renters are the only tenure group familiar with the smell of mould, yet the ubiquity of this experience amongst the participants signals that it is a common occurrence when living in rental housing.

Given an initial signal that they were experiencing dampness issues in their rental, all participants explained various strategies that they undertook to freshen, cycle, or reduce moisture in the air in their rentals. Most commonly, this activity was through dehumidification, with six of the seven participants owning and using a dehumidifier regularly throughout the year. In the winter, three of the six users stated they kept their dehumidifier on “24/7”, and three stated they used it daily. In the summer, this usage dropped, with three participants stating they used their dehumidifier in most weeks, two stating they used it occasionally, and one stating they did not use it at all. Participants told me of their methods of how they used their dehumidifiers to target the worst areas of their dwellings. During tours, tenants showed me the places where they cycled their dehumidifiers around the different rooms or parts of their house:

I alternate the dehumidifier between [my room] and my daughter’s room which is that room. Mainly just here at back of the house where the dampness is and where the smell is the worst (Karen).

This cupboard with my coats in it, I put the dehumidifier in there, and also the cupboard in the bedroom. We've had a lot of clothes ruined by the mildew and mould (Terrence).

While some participants were generally happy with utilising a dehumidifier in this way and stated that it did help, others explained how using the dehumidifier between parts of the house that were the dampest was only a temporary fix, and found the dampness returned after a short period. Veronica stated that use of a dehumidifier her landlord had provided for her daughter's bedroom only relieved dampness for two days:

[My landlord] gave me a dehumidifier for [my daughter's] room. It works for the two days it's on. But as soon as you turn it off the room still gets damp again. It never really gets better [Veronica].

As they had in relation to heating practices, several participants did express some reticence in using their dehumidifier for long periods as it added a significant amount to their electricity bill. This led them to run it sparingly.

As well as dehumidification, participants also cycled fresh air into their homes by routinely opening and closing windows and doors for periods during the day. Participants told me that these actions were important to them for saving money on their power bills that came with dehumidification. In addition to this practice, they explained how it was important to cycle fresh air in from the outside because it made them and their dwellings feel healthier:

I always keep the bathroom window open, because I do like fresh air. It makes me feel healthier to have some coming in somewhere (Lolie).

I have the house opened up if the sun is shining. Just to get all that fresh morning air in and air this place out, especially over at the leaky corner (Karen).

I can open the doors down here and let the outside air in (Veronica).

These comments from participants demonstrate how air practices within the home are for both the maintenance of their bodies and the maintenance of material aspects of their lives such as their dwelling (Hauge, 2016). Lolie found fresh air important to keeping healthy. She had been ill when she first moved to her current home and explained that keeping well was important to her and part of this was keeping connected to the outdoors. For Karen, when the weather allowed, it was important to get fresh morning air in to dry out ‘*the leaky corner*’ where the wood and the curtains under a roof leak were rotting. All three participants felt it was important to ‘*let the outside air in*’.

Chantelle asserted that she was well aware of the need to circulate fresh air throughout her house to reduce dampness. She described how she made adjustments to her actions and routines between each season in order to deal with increased moisture in her house and the lower temperatures that occur. She explained that she had shifting seasonal routines for opening and closing the windows during different times of the day. She acknowledged the need for allowing fresh air into her home in the morning. She fits this around other routines such as taking her sons to school:

Elliott: Can you give me an example [of how you change the use of the house as the year goes by]?

Chantelle: Well, in summer, because it's much warmer, everything is much more open and all the doors are open. I'm a real fresh air person. With teenage boys, their rooms stink, so when I take them to school or something, I'll just open everything up to try and circulate things a bit.

After describing her summer routine, she explained what she did differently during the colder months of the year:

Chantelle: *Coming into winter though, it's very much about keeping everything closed and trying to keep the warmth in. I know that's not always the best thing to do, but keeping the heat in is important. In the morning, I'll still open [the windows] for a little bit. But then during the day, because I get the sun on this [NW] side of the house in the afternoon, I'll close everything to try and keep the heat in. If it was winter now, all the windows in here [the living room] would be closed up, the heaters would be on. So come 5-6 o'clock it might be a little bit warm-ish. Then I might have a bit of a head start.*

Elliott: *So if you do those things, do you find things get a bit better in terms of dampness?*

Chantelle: *Maybe, sometimes I notice it getting better, maybe it doesn't smell as much as it can. But it's so hard to know if there are so many ways it can get damp you know?*

This discussion I had with Chantelle illustrates the differing and conflicting seasonal routines that she devised for herself in order to both circulate air and retain the heat in her home. While during summer it was a relatively uncomplicated decision to air out her sons' rooms, during the colder months Chantelle sought to balance the need to circulate fresh air into the house with a subsequent need to retain enough sun-generated warmth before the end of the day. While she understood that not circulating fresh air into her home could potentially create further dampness, by shutting up her home as much as she possible she gained “*a head start*” on heating her house for the evening, perhaps saving some money on her electricity bill.

Individual tenants also had specific practices that they would perform to retain heat within their homes. Lolie, for example, would hang duvet covers over the larger windows and

sliding doors that did not have curtains in her back, a practice that a friend on the island in similar housing circumstances told her to do. Similarly, Chantelle had issues with her windows missing latches and not closing properly (see Figure 6.2), leaving gaps where cold air would enter the house. She would rip up strips of old sheets and towels to stuff into the gaps in order to block these drafts, yet she explained to me that this was a lot of effort for her:

I used to get fabric and stuff it around all the window frames to keep the draft out and the cold. But it's a pain, a pain in the ass doing that. Because then as soon as you open the window you've gotta take everything away, the when you close the window you gotta put it all back again.

I asked Chantelle if she continued to stuff her windows in this way, and she explained that the fabric had to be washed because it got damp and mouldy, and this caused her too much extra work. As a result she was not performing this work anymore.



Figure 6.1: Chantelle's windows which could not completely close, and my fingers testing the gap width and the draft coming through.



Figure 6.2 Terrence's vacuum bags for sealing away clothes in the winter inside his cupboards



Figure 6.3 Remains of baking soda at the area where dampness enters through Myles' flooring.

6.3.4 Other individual practices

Participants also had their own individual techniques for dealing with the dampness issue they experienced in their rental. These were often specific 'fixes' to a unique issue with how their dwelling worked, or ways to solve issues cheaply. For example, Terrence and his family had significant issues with dampness in their two cupboards. Terrence showed me the vacuum-packs that he and his family used to isolate their clothes during seasonal disuse: (see Figure 6.3):

We've had a lot of clothes ruined by the mildew and mould. So what we do is have these big bags, which we suck the air out of and store in the cupboards. We got it from my parents place down the road when they moved

out. The bags keep the mould off the clothes. Then it's visa-versa for summer, so it's year round really (Terrence).

Similarly, Myles explained how he used baking soda as a moisture absorbent. He sprinkled it around the areas in his house that were are damp, such as the bottom of the pole in Figure 6.4:

So to get rid of mould I just got baking soda, sprinkled it around the room, the smell was gone the next day, it absorbs and kills mould. Baking soda is cheap as. You just sprinkle it around and vacuum it up afterwards. The stuff from the shop is just baking soda with fragrance (Myles).

Myles attempted to find the cheapest way that he could absorb any moisture in his house. As he only had approximately \$70 per week to spend on groceries and other supplies after paying his rent and bills, finding cheap methods was the only way he could successfully fix issues in his damp rental.

6.4 “I’ve done all the work myself”: Tenant repairs and maintenance of their rentals.

Another way tenants dealt with dampness in their rentals on Waiheke Island was through undertaking repairs and maintenance to the physical structure of their homes themselves. As discussed in Chapter 3.3, buildings can be conceived of as ongoing emergences, being unmade by various destructive agencies, and being remade through practices of maintenance and repair (Edensor, 2011). The above section explored the various practices tenants undertook to deal with the weather in their rental homes. This next section explores how some tenants encountered in this study repaired their rentals in order to work against damage caused dampness, mould and moisture.

Myles’ rental unit was built beneath an original Waiheke bach in a steep and bushy gully on the southern side of the island. He told me his landlord’s father had built the unit

himself in the 1980s. Myles told me all of the DIY repairs that he had undertaken in the 11 months he had been living in his unit. These included using silicone to seal gaps in windows to keep draughts out and warm air from escaping (see Figure 6.5). In addition to this, Myles sealed holes in the



Figure 6.4: Myles' repairs and maintenance around his rental. Clockwise from top left: Sealing of a drafty window; showing me where the water fell from above and splashed under the exterior cladding; showing me his DIY repair of the floor inside his kitchen; demonstrating the mould growth as a result of the damp floor.

flooring and walls that he felt cold air coming through. However, a major piece of DIY repairs to his rental unit was replacing a section of damp and rotting particle board flooring in his kitchen. Due to a missing piece of flashing, rainwater was running down the outside walls of the house, and was splashing up under the cladding onto the particle board floor. Myles stated that he had to wear his gumboots inside because his floor was so wet. He explained how he did the repair himself after asking his landlord:

Myles: *I did the floor repair. ... I went down to the second hand supplies shop and looked for a bit of particle board the same thickness. I got an offcut*

about the size I needed and got it home. I pencil marked around the bit I needed to cut out, cut it out and broke up what I needed to take out. Then just sealed this part in there. ... [My landlord didn't pay me] for labour. I told him it cost me \$3.70 to go on the bus and \$3.70 to come home. It cost me a few dollars for the particle board off-cut. So they gave me the cost of my transport to and from and the particle board cost. Nothing for my labour.

Elliott: *Why did you do that for free?*

Myles: *I thought ultimately, it's going to benefit me, I know that much... I thought it's saving me the hassle of having a damp floor. If [the landlord] had paid a builder to come and do it, it would have cost a couple of hundred dollars.*

As someone who has previously worked on building sites as a labourer, Myles was skilled in DIY repairs and thrifty in sourcing materials. When Myles was showing me all the different parts of the house he had repaired, he demonstrated to me a general enjoyment of the tasks he undertook and seemed proud of his work. He told me that when he was a labourer he would “*treat those houses as they were [his] own*”, a sentiment which was obviously carried forward into his current rental. His willingness to do the work free of charge also indicates his desire to be on-side with his landlord in order to remain in his rental long term. As Myles had been forced to move around different places on the island a lot over recent years, he felt it was important for him to do as much as he could to remain in place. By stating that the work he

undertook was ultimately going to benefit him, Myles signalled that to maintain the material condition of his rental under his own effort was also to maintain his perceived security (Hulse and Milligan, 2014).

Other tenants also undertook or organised DIY maintenance to their rentals, although they were paid by their landlords for the materials and their labour. Terrence had done some extensive work to the roof, and had painted the mouldy bathroom and kitchen in his small bach. He told me that his landlord was happy for him to do this work and he would be happy to do more such as insulating the floor. Lolie also had worked with a friend to repair flooring, decking and tree cutting in order to let light into her home, for which her landlord gave her reduced rent in return. These participants were happy doing this work as it made them feel more in control of their rental and therefore their own lives.

6.5 “Just experience really, just life’: Knowledge and practices

As stated in Chapter 2, the transitive nature of practices is due to both experiencing the doings and saying of other people’s practices for one’s self (Reckwitz, 2002; Simonsen, 2007). In other words, practices can be communicated and transferred through experiential learning and through talking within a community. Often, tenants would tell me that they ‘carried’ certain practices from an unknown point sometime in their past (Reckwitz, 2002). Yet, by questioning participants further they revealed other ways that they came to *know* what management practices to perform in their homes and how this knowledge was translated socially. I found that there were three general types of explanations: (1) embedded knowledge, (2) learning through experience, and (3) sharing knowledge. This section will explore each of these explanations.

6.5.2 Embedded knowledge

Tenants were asked about *how* they knew to perform the dampness management tasks

in their rental. This question sought to encourage participants to reflect on the embeddedness of their practices, seeking to interrogate their ‘carrier’ status (Shove and Pantzar, 2007). This line of questioning allowed me to explore with participants how they may have modified their practices according to the weather or their house. Yet, questions related to the modification of dampness management practices were commonly met with some bewilderment and tenants typically did not know how to answer at first. Indeed, tenants often put their knowledge down to ‘common sense’, ‘life experience’, or from sometime the past:

Well, I guess it's just common sense to do it. (Karen)

Hmmm, I'm not sure really... I think that I might have known about baking soda since I was younger. (Myles)

Just experience really, just life. I wouldn't be able to tell you exactly when I learnt it. I guess my parents have told me... (Marilyn)

The above comments demonstrate how practices of dampness management often go unquestioned (Shove and Pantzar, 2007). Some participants halted discussion of how they knew what they knew at this point, and further questions did not serve to elucidate any more rationale behind their actions. Yet, other participants went on when interrogated further. Marilyn, after her initial answer, considered the embeddedness of her practices at her home:

I'm certainly a fan of Google. I try to find alternative methods. Like I try to avoid using the harsh things like bleach, but to be honest it is actually the best mould killer. When it comes down to it, I'd rather just leave the house for the day while the bleach dissipates than having my kids breathing black mould. Vinegar and lemon are only going to do so much. When it's black mould you got to go for the most effective treatment (Marilyn).

Despite actively seeking new and more eco-friendly ways of cleaning up mould around the home, Marilyn deferred back to what she knew would work best. She was reassured and felt a sense of continuity in knowing that what she was doing worked and could be enacted in the future if she was to face the problem again.

6.5.3 Learning through experience

Participants typically learnt through experience how to deal with dampness issues in their rental houses. This learning was by way of experimentation with what worked and what did not in their rental, and coming to understand their dwelling. I asked Chantelle how she knew what to do when it came to dampness management:

I guess it's trial and error. Some things are just common sense, like when you open your curtains and it's streaming water down the window, it's common sense to get a towel and mop that all up... But that creates other problems, because then, you've gotta wash the towel or dry the towel. You've got the dryer on which doesn't have a vent [to the outside], so then you have moist air coming through into the rest of the house... Or you've got your washing hanging in here with the dehumidifier on, which gets rid of the moist air, but it costs... But as I say, it's been a process of elimination (Chantelle).

Chantelle's comments describe how she has become knowledgeable through trial and error about how her house 'works'. 'Common sense' actions to reduce dampness in her home, such as mopping up condensation which has formed on the windows overnight, have led to further work needing to be done. These 'knock-on' actions have required Chantelle to discover for herself how other parts of her house work, such as poorly installed appliances.

Some participants explained that their knowledge was not only about day-to-day

dampness management practices in their current rental, but also about how they selected a rental home in the first place. Marilyn spoke about her history of renting on the island, in which she had rented 5 different dwellings in 10 years. She described in detail each house she and her family had lived in, and all the different housing problems she had faced during this period. Through these experiences she had come to learn what issues to look for and what to ask the landlord or property manager when searching for a rental house on Waiheke:

Marilyn: There is insulation in the ceiling and the walls. I had that checked when I moved in.

Elliott: Was that because you were wary from the last times?

Marilyn: Yeah, I just didn't want it to be like my old places. You know, renting is tricky. Sometimes you don't know what it's like until you've already moved in. So it's better to check.

Elliott: So after a number of bad rentals, have you begun to learn about what to look out for with houses?

Marilyn: Yeah you do, you learn what's going to work, what to check for. I knew there were things that were wrong here. But I knew it was good overall. I knew this was an investment property, and so I knew it was going to be a stable place to live. I didn't want a really damp place, or to find out it was being sold and then pack the kids up and have to head off again.

This exchange shows that through Marilyn's previous experiences of living in damp and low quality housing she has developed an understanding of potential housing issues. Her previous houses were not insulated, and she wanted to be sure her current house was before she decided to move in. Her last comment demonstrates how she weighed up the benefits of

her current house against the potential problems with dampness and the landlords intentions with the property. There were serious dampness issues with the downstairs of her house, and her landlords have addressed some of these issues. Marilyn was not forced out of her last rental like most of the participants in this research (see Table 6.1). Instead, she was in a position where she could take time to decide on a rental that was ‘good overall’ according to what she had learnt from previous experiences. Later in our encounter, Marilyn told me she felt lucky that she had a stable home with landlords who were relatively responsive to dampness issues.

However, security of tenure on Waiheke is precarious (Bates et al., 2019a), and most tenants in this research were not in a position to take their time in choosing their rental home. Other participants explained how they had learnt what dampness issues to look for from experiencing their current dwelling. Veronica, who was forced to find a rental for her and her daughter due to a relationship break-up, told me of how she had learnt from her current house what to look for in the future:

I think it's the luck of the draw what you get out here [on Waiheke]. If it's on the back side of a hill it's probably pretty bad. I've learnt a lot from being in this house. I think now living here for as long as we have been, when I move out, I'll definitely look for the dampness issue and how the house sits before the aesthetics of the house. (Veronica)

The above responses indicate ways in which renters become acutely aware of how houses work. Checking for features of a dwelling that may make dampness worse – such as a south facing aspect, heavy tree cover, and building materials such as insulation – can potentially help tenants avoid issues in their future houses.

6.5.4 Sharing knowledge

Participants were asked whether they talked with anyone else, on Waiheke or otherwise,

about strategies to alleviate dampness with their home. All of the participants aside from one noted that they engaged others on the topic in some way. For example:

On the community Facebook [page] it's a topic of conversation.

Sometimes we share tips about what can be done, or who to get in touch with about issues (Karen).

Someone here on the island told me to [put blankets over windows to stop heat loss], and I thought that was a good idea (Lolie).

As is shown in Karen and Lolie's responses, the topic of dampness and certain methods of alleviation occasionally arise in conversations and on social media pages. Speaking with others can lead to the formation of 'communities of practice' (Hitchings, 2013), which are groups that share and reproduce skills and practices as a form of social learning. Yet, tenants responses to this question were limited in terms of sharing actual techniques amongst the community of Waiheke, and mostly they just spoke generally about the subject. This is a similar finding to Hitchings (2013) who found that due to social reasons of etiquette, practices of keeping warm at home were hidden from others. This may have been true for the renters in this research, but none alluded to it. However, renters did give more detailed responses in regard to sharing their *experiences* with others rather than their practices *per se*. By seeking commonality amongst other renters, or emotional support from friends, participants sought to alleviate some of the bad experiences they had in their damp rentals:

I talk to heaps of people when I go to stay at their house because it's so cold here... I guess I complain sometimes.

Sometimes when I'm feeling down about it, I like to have a bitch to my mates, I say 'I would like to have the landlords come and live here in their own house for the winter' (Chantelle).

I don't really talk about what I do, but yeah it does come up, especially with people who are renting. Because there is a certain lack of control around dampness and I feel like renters know it more than anyone (Marilyn).

The above quotes show how tenants can find ways of coping with their housing situation by sharing the problems they face as renters in damp and cold housing. Marilyn's quote in particular speaks to Hitchings' (2013) idea that rather than sharing techniques, talk about practices was more commonly linked to identities of the participants rather than a shared location. She finds she can find common ground with other renters, as they are more likely to have shared her experiences.

6.6 **“He wouldn't spend a bean on it”: Tenant's relationship with their landlords.**

Participants told stories of complex and sometimes difficult relationships with their landlords or property agents. Due to the informal nature of some of the rental stock and the seasonal nature of the accommodation market (see Chapter 4), agreements between tenants and landlords can be problematic on the island. New Zealand tenancy law states that there must be a pre-tenancy written agreement between a landlord and a tenant, and that any bond taken must be lodged through Tenancy Services (Tenancy Services, 2019). In this research, participants' rental agreements had varying levels of formality (Table 8). Four participants told me they dealt directly with their landlords. Of these, two payed no bond, and one payed bond to their landlord without it being lodged with Tenancy Services making this an illegal tenancy. One further participant had a formal agreement directly with their landlord and had a bond lodged with the Tenancy Tribunal. The three others had property managers who were their primary point of contact for any issues relating to their tenancy.

Table 6.5 shows the participant's overall opinions of their landlord/property manager

Table 6.5: Overview of tenant-landlord relations

Pseudonym	Primary relationship for tenancy issues	Rental agreement details and bond	Tenant's overall opinion of LL/PM relationship
Myles	Landlord	Informal - direct with landlord, paid bond to owner (illegal)	Negative
Lolie	Landlord	Informal - direct with landlord, paid no bond	Positive
Veronica	Property Manager	Formal - through property manager, bond lodged with TT*	Strongly Negative
Terrence	Landlord	Informal - direct with landlord, paid no bond	Positive
Marilyn	Property Manger	Formal - through property manager, bond lodged with TT	Positive
Chantelle	Landlord	Formal - direct with landlord, bond lodged with TT	Strongly Negative
Karen	Property Manger	Formal - through property manager, bond lodged with TT	Strongly Negative

*TT denotes Tenancy Tribunal

relationship. This is a qualitative assessment based on close readings of each participant's statements when asked about this relationship. Three of seven participants had overall positive opinions of the relationship with their landlords and/or property managers, while one had a negative opinion and three had strongly negative opinions.

While tenants performed in their own maintenance and repairs to their rentals, working with their landlord or property manager was also another competency that tenants in this research had to negotiate in order to make their homes warm and dry. As outlined in Chapter 1, rental housing in the private market in New Zealand has no regular quality oversight or inspections, and tenants are responsible for alerting landlords to any repairs and maintenance that need to be done.

Tenants in this research told me stories of landlords and property managers ignoring,

downplaying, or not believing housing quality issues that tenants reported in their houses. Chisholm et al. (2018) states that these types of interactions can lead to tenants lacking the confidence to bring up housing quality issues with their landlords or property managers, resulting in ongoing poor housing conditions. For example, Karen told me about a repair for a leaking roof in her lounge that was causing significant dampness, mould, and rot inside her dwelling (see Figure 6.6):

[Trades-people my property manager hired] had a look at this corner and had several attempts to fix it. Now the property managers just ignore me. I think they have put it in the too hard basket with the landlords. They just don't want to do anymore (Karen).



Figure 6.5: The rotting window frame in Karen's lounge from a leaking ceiling

Veronica, told me that after a winter period with particularly high humidity and rainfall, her living room carpet was so damp underfoot that her and her daughters socks were getting

wet:

Veronica: I rang the property manager but they didn't come around for a week. By then the weather had moved on and it had dried up and they didn't believe me. It was just that wet and humid weather. It was too late by the time [the landlord] eventually came around...

Elliott: What happened after that?

Veronica: Nothing has happened at all. It's pretty demoralising...

Veronica and Karen's accounts of difficult interactions with their landlords and property managers demonstrate how ongoing maintenance issues that are not resolved can lead to them giving up on improving their living situation. Veronica in particular had grown increasingly demoralised and frustrated with her living situation and was considering moving out, yet she was deterred by affordability and availability in the Waiheke rental market.

Another renter, Chantelle, discussed the ripped underfloor foil insulation that was underneath her rental (see Figure 6.7). Foil insulation is a common insulation type in homes built after the 1978 insulation standards came into effect, yet is now banned from being installed due to fire safety concerns (BRANZ, 2017). Foil also performs poorly as a thermal barrier, and is completely ineffective when it has rips and tears. Chantelle was not aware of the specific rules regarding foil insulation, but had made her landlord aware of the damage to the foil that she suspected was causing the carpet in her living area to feel damp underfoot. She took me under the house, and told me that her landlord blamed her children for the rips in the foil:

I've talked to my landlord, and I've taken him under here [the house to show him the ripped foil insulation]. As far as he's concerned, it's insulated and it's fine. He wouldn't spend a bean on it. Interestingly, he

told me my kids had actually ripped that silver foil. That's not likely, because my kids can't even reach (Chantelle).



Figure 6.6: The ripped and outdated foil insulation under Chantelle's living room

Chantelle went on to say that with experiences like the above, she felt powerless as a renter when trying to make improvements to her home:

The problem is as a renter, you can talk to your landlord, and then your landlord can basically tell you bugger off and say 'well it's insulated and I'm within the laws and the rules and the regulations'. I can't do anything without his permission. I don't know who I could get, and I don't see why I should have to organise or pay for someone to come and assess his property to tell me the insulation is substandard. I know it is substandard. It's just hard to get landlords to do things.

The above two excerpts from my encounter with Chantelle demonstrate in a number of ways how tenants are put in difficult situations by unresponsive landlords. It was possible for Chantelle's landlord to tell her that the rental was up to the current insulation standard, but Chantelle had no way of knowing if this was true, leading to an untrusting relationship between her and her landlord. Second, Chantelle could not get a qualified inspector to assess the insulation without her landlords permission, unless she paid for and organised an inspector herself.

Myles also described how his landlord's family was using his unit when he was away for a holiday. After coming home and finding water and damp towels on his bathroom floor and a bad smell of mould, he complained to his landlord:

I sent an email to the owners and asked but there was no reply. I know tenant's rights and that's illegal, but I don't want to rock the boat. I really like it here and I don't want a notice that there is a "family member" moving in.

Myles was careful to act delicately with his landlord since he understood that his tenure was insecure. He previously had a number of tenancies ended by landlords for reasons that Myles considered illegitimate, such as being told a family member was going to move in when it was going to be rented out for tourism accommodation. While this was the most obvious breach of tenancy law that any of the participants told me, this sentiment of 'not wanting to rock the boat' was common amongst other participants. Four of the seven participants had been moved on from a Waiheke rental in the past to make way for tourism accommodation, and these histories affected their perceived insecurity of tenure (Hulse and Mulligan, 2014).

Yet, some tenants had overall positive relationships with their landlord or property manager. Marilyn, Lolie, and Terrence all spoke of being able to work with landlords to get

what they needed done around their rental to some extent. Terrence and Lolie were in situations where they organised what needed to be done in terms of maintenance and repair and their landlord would pay them for the work that they performed or organised, which they both stated that they did not mind doing and gave them purpose and a sense of ownership over their rentals. These two tenants had been in their current rentals for more five to six years. Marilyn had a more conventional relationship with her property manager, whereby she asked for repairs and heat-pumps to be installed and these were quickly performed. Yet Marilyn told me that she felt lucky with her current situation, and as someone who had been in bad quality rentals in the past with unresponsive landlords, she empathised with other renters who were not in her situation.

6.7 Attachments to home, place, and housing aspirations

Participants told me of their complicated ‘relationship’ with their dwellings. As demonstrated in previous section of this chapter, participants spoke of the dampness issues that they spent time, effort, money, and emotional labour attempting to address. In two cases, the amalgamation of these experiences had led them to become emotionally detached from their dwellings, and they wished to move on. Participants spoke directly of becoming increasingly unattached to their rental because of dampness issues that they could not alleviate, and their landlord would not address. The sense of frustration with their situation was evident in their responses and their general mood throughout the interview. For example, Veronica told me how she tends to avoid being in her house as it does not feel ‘homey’ anymore:

Elliott: *How much time do you spend at home during a week?*

Veronica: *I don't really spend much time at home. I'm working a lot, but I just don't enjoy the house enough to be around here.*

Elliott: *Can you explain to me why you don't enjoy being around here?*

Veronica: I guess I don't enjoy it because it just doesn't feel homely. It's not cosy or inviting. It's a really weird thing, a weird feeling... So I just don't want to be here. In the summer, I guess I can open the doors down here and let the fresh air in and go out on the deck and all that good stuff. But on days like this, I'd much rather be out somewhere else. I just try to keep busy.

Throughout the interview, Veronica gave an account of place attachment that was conflicted and shifting. In the above exchange, Veronica works through an explanation of how dampness and cold makes her feel unattached to her home. Yet, these feelings she has are lifted periodically by the arrival of summer, better weather, and the ability to enjoy her house. She spoke later in the interview of wanting to move on from her current rental (see 6.6.2), she also stated that '*felt safe*' there. She explained this was partially because the house was a permanent rental (i.e. not going to be rented out for summer season tourist accommodation), and the rent had not gone up during the time she had been living there. But she also felt that if the landlord took action on the dampness in her home, they would raise her rent, making it unaffordable for her to remain living there. Veronica's conflicted and shifting attachments to place are interlaced with, and affected by, experiences of the weather, the experiences of her dwelling, and the experience of being a renter.

Another participant, Chantelle, stated that she wanted to move out of her rental and potentially off the island altogether. While this was partially driven by other factors such as her children's schooling, her housing situation was a significant reason for her feeling this way. Chantelle told me she felt like anything she did to alleviate dampness in her home was fruitless, and she had grown tired of trying to make her living situation better:

I'm now at a point where I've got better things to do with my life. This isn't my house. Whilst I'm trying to make it a healthy home to live in for

my children, I'm just at the end of it now. I've just got to sit tight...My lease is up at the end of October, and I'm probably going to move off the Island. Rents are so expensive here, and for what you pay versus what you get, it's just not worth it (Chantelle).

Chantelle went on to tell me how she felt when visiting her friends on the island. She was acutely aware of the difference between her and other people's situations, through experiences like visiting her home-owner friends, but also as a past homeowner on the island herself:

When I go over to other people's houses who own their place, they have fire places or they have heat pumps. They have windows that close properly. Honestly the difference [between the houses] is like chalk and cheese. It's horrible when you've been to another house that's warm and dry, and then you come to a house that you think might be warm because you've left your little oil heater on. But then it's not. In that instance the best thing to do is to just go and sit in bed.

While Chantelle was one of the most active tenants in terms of the myriad of practices that she had undertaken to keep her house dry, when I interviewed her, she had given up on some of these activities (see for example her air window stuffing practices in Chapter 6.3.1). Statements such as "*it's just not worth it*" and "*the best thing to do is to just go and sit in bed*" demonstrate her negative feelings about her housing situation. They also reveal her increasing inaction to go to the effort of some tasks shows how she has given up on attempting to make her rental a home for her and her family. As she says, "*[she's] got better things to do with her life*".

Yet, participants still spoke of how they were attached to their rental house and living

on the island in general. As recent literature has shown, Waiheke residents demonstrate significant place-attachment to the island, despite living in circumstances that may be insecure or precarious (Bates et al., 2019a; Coleman et al., 2016). Tenants in this research echo those sentiments. Living the 'island life' with a bach and the easily accessible outdoors was key to alleviating any negative experiences of living in poor housing circumstances. For example, when asked where their favourite part of their rental was, all seven participants answered that it was their deck or outdoor area. Participants were also attached to their rental despite its poor quality. Lolie, who lived in a small one bedroom original bach, spoke of how she liked her home despite the dampness issues she experienced:

...It's so cold here in winter. I guess I complain sometimes. Not that it's impossible - I've got a little cottage for myself. I like that it's a little cottage. I like it, so I just make-do with the problems that it has (Lolie).

While living in a newer house at the time of the interview, Marilyn spoke fondly of the characteristic baches on the island that she and her family had rented in the past. This was despite them being cold, damp, and of generally poor quality housing:

[The house was] very cold and damp, lots of little rooms, so it was so difficult to heat all of them. It was right in the bush...it didn't get a lot of light. It had a lot of character. [It was] a fantastic-looking old house. About 100 years old... Windows and doors didn't shut properly, so there were lots of drafts coming through. [It was] terrible in winter. (Marilyn).

Terrence told of his attachment to the island and his rental despite the dampness issues he and his family suffered from:

We are very happy aside from the tragedy of winter! It's because it's an old bach and we have no insulation. This is the only reason my wife

sometimes wants to go and live in the city, for that one reason. Otherwise she's happy here, we like it here on the island. The rent is right. We'll keep going as long as we can... (Terrence).

As the above quote alludes to, inhabitants of older housing may make allowances for their poor quality if it suits their lifestyle and their socio-economic circumstances.

6.8 Summary

This chapter has explored the array of practices and experiences of tenants living in damp housing on Waiheke Island. Participants toured me around their home, and told me stories of their heating and air practices, how they undertook repairs and maintenance to their rentals, and how they attained this knowledge. They also explained to me their relations with their landlords and property managers, as well as discussing their attachments to their rentals and the island, which were sometimes challenged by their housing situation.

Tenants actively managed and maintained thermal temperature and undertook air practices within their rentals. Participants utilised a range of heating technologies, yet commonly stated that this heating was insufficient for heating their home to maintain comfort, and that heating was especially expensive in the winter months. The high cost of heating resulted in tenants restricting heater use, opting to put extra clothes on instead, or only heating enclosable spaces such as bedrooms, suggesting some were suffering from fuel poverty (Howden-Chapman et al., 2012).

Tenants also sought to cycle, freshen, and retain air in their dwelling in order to reduce dampness in order to maintain both their own physical and emotional wellbeing but also the materialities of their rental (Hauge, 2013). All told me their rental often smelt damp, and connected these occurrences to weather 'outside' their dwellings such rain or humidity and according to seasonal shifts. To alleviate these episodes of dampness in their rentals, tenants

commonly utilised technology such as dehumidifiers, and undertook actions such as opening doors and windows for specific periods. Dehumidifier usage varied seasonally, but was also limited by tenants due energy costs in a similar way to heater use as explained above. For some participants, the benefits of dehumidifier use were quickly undone due to the inherent dampness in their homes, which led to feelings of frustration and withdrawal with their living situation. Tenants also performed passive air practices, such as opening windows and doors in order to let air indoors in order to revitalise and freshen their dwellings (Hauge, 2013). Some actions in this respect were routinised, according to weather conditions considered by participants to be the “right” kind of weather (e.g. sunny or breezy), the right time of the day (e.g. when sunlight enters the home), or air that was perceived as health giving or therapeutic, in order to freshen their rentals successfully. These practices were however complicated by various socio-temporal factors such as employment, household, and family commitments (for example Chantelle). A further complication was achieving balance between freshening air within a dwelling and managing heating costs, as freshening air caused a reduction in room temperature, and therefore thermal comfort.

Some tenants also undertook their own building, maintenance, and repair on their rentals. Myles was particularly active in this respect, and had made significant repairs to rotting floors, roof leaks, and draughty window frames. He performed these repairs unpaid, and saw these actions as beneficial to keeping the house free from dampness and cold, another motivation was to build good relations with his landlord. By helping his landlord for free he perceived his security of tenure would be improved (Hulse and Milligan, 2014). Other tenants also performed or organised repairs on behalf of their landlord, yet they were paid for their own labour and found the work was a way to feel autonomous in their rental (Kearns et al., 2000).

As well as embodied actions, the participants and I discussed with participants how

they came to know about how to manage dampness in their home. They gave three types of explanations: (1) embedded knowledge, (2) learning through experience, and (3) sharing knowledge (Reckwitz, 2003; Simonsen, 2007). First, participants explained that their ordinary routines were just “common sense” of “life experience”, and this demonstrated how some routine practices of home management are embedded and go unnoticed (Shove and Pantzar, 2007). Yet, and secondly, tenants adapted or learnt new practices through trial and error. Some participants told me how they came to understand how their home ‘worked’ (or did not) in relation to poor building quality (Roberts and Henwood, 2019), or had learnt what issues to look for when selecting a rental in the first place. Third, tenants spoke about sharing practices and experiences of dampness in their rentals (Reckwitz, 2003; Simonsen, 2007). Some tenants did share specific techniques with their community (Hitchings, 2013), yet most preferred to share their bad experiences of rental housing, and find common ground with other renters in the island community.

A key relationship that participants had to negotiate was with their landlord or property manager. These relationships were sometimes fraught with power imbalances (Chisholm et al., 2018; Bate, 2019), with some tenants having informal and even illegal rental agreements. The four tenants with negative views of their landlords or property managers largely put their poor relations down to disputes over housing quality. Tenants often felt frustrated by their unresponsive landlords or property managers. As a result of constantly being ignored or not believed about the poor quality of their rental, some tenants felt demoralised, and lost attachment to their rental, yet also felt that moving on was too difficult or too expensive (Chisholm et al., 2016). Yet some tenants were happy overall with their landlords or property managers. This was largely due to landlords being somewhat responsive to their requests for improvements or allowing them to perform and organise maintenance themselves (and being paid for their time).

As a result of their experiences of living in damp rental housing, tenants in this study demonstrated varying attachments to their dwelling, and to Waiheke as the place in which they lived. As found in existing housing-related research on Waiheke (Bates et al., 2019; Coleman et al., 2016), some tenants in this research made-do or even enjoyed living in their older, characterful dwellings, while others struggled to marry attachments to place and attachments to the island with poor and expensive housing conditions.

Chapter 7: Reflections on Home Tours

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 explored how tenants in this research managed and experienced dampness in their dwellings. As discussed in Chapter 6, tenants' routines shifted according to daily, seasonal, and kairological factors of weather and climate, and the intricacies and intimacies of their dwelling. This research therefore required a reflective and perceptual approach. This chapter examines my use of home tours in the context of a phenomenologically-inspired research philosophy to support a reflective and perceptual research strategy. First, I examine my phenomenologically-inspired research philosophy, interrogating my own place in the research. Second, I reflect on my mixed-method approach to fieldwork which I called 'home tours'. I critically examine how the method functioned within tenant's homes, using participatory photo elicitation, as well as the benefits and challenges of mixing methods.

7.2 Phenomenology and positionality

As outlined in Chapter 5.2, my approach was phenomenologically-inspired, meaning that my focus was not merely upon what actions tenants undertook, but also on the nature of their being-in-the-world, experiences, and meaning-making which are attached to them (Heidegger, 1962). A further aspect of a phenomenological approach is the acknowledgement of my own influence upon the research before, during, and after the fieldwork process. As feminist scholars have established, the 'field' is not demarcated with an 'inside' and an 'outside' (Cupples and Kindon, 2003; Katz, 1994; Kohl and McCutcheon, 2015). Rather, 'the field' is relational, and exists in "spaces of betweenness": between sites of research, between participants' existences and biographies, and a researcher's historically-constituted social and political life (Katz, 1994, p. 72). Using this argument, the field as it relates to this research spans between participant's current rental housing situation, their past experiences and housing

biographies, my own involvement in their lives, my own housing biography, and the ideas and influences that have shaped my motivations to undertake this project. As such, I acknowledge that this research is situated within my own pre-existing and ongoing realities.

Bridging the gap between researcher and participant can be difficult within an hour-long research period, and that this distance is potentially difficult to overcome. Establishing rapport during the initial stages of recruitment was a key way of ‘getting closer’ to participants early on in the fieldwork stage. My logbook notes revealed two ways in which I established a trusting relationship with participants. First, my first verbal conversation was on the phone with participants, and this was a good way of explaining the study and initiating a trusting relationship with them before I scheduled a visit to their home. I found that this was a relatable ‘first contact’, rather than a email which could be interpreted as overly formal. Participants would often begin telling me their stories on the phone, leading to me having to politely tell them ‘I want to know more, but shall we make an arrangement for me to visit?’ These occurrences demonstrated to me that a phone conversation was a key first step to a trusting participant-researcher relationship. Second, placing myself and my own experiences into the field was a helpful way of building rapport with participant. When I first met participants at their houses, they would often ask me why I was interested in this research, and this led to explaining my own experiences of poor quality rental housing (see Chapter 5.2.2). These more casual conversations about renting usually carried on after the encounter ‘ended’ as well. I recorded the essence of these conversations in my logbook. These ways of establishing trust served to lessen the distance between the myself and the participant, yet they also speak to how the ‘field’ stretches outside the documented encounter, from initial recruitment phone conversations to casual chatting before the ‘encounter’ begins.

7.3 Reflections on Home tours

In light of my reflections on positionality in the field above, this section reflects upon

‘home tours’ as a mixed-method approach. In Chapter 5.4, I outlined how ‘home tours’ consisted of four interrelated methods: in-home interviews, participatory photo elicitation, embodied and sensory observations, and researcher’s notebook. I argued that a multi-modal method such as ‘home tours’ has the advantage of challenging the ‘static’ nature of the seated interview by incorporating other modes of data collection, which serve to provide a more detailed picture of practices in the home such as dampness management. This section explores methodological findings of the home tours method, as well as detailing the strengths of the method. I also make some suggestions for improvement of the method for future research.

7.3.1 Shifting gradations of welcome within the home

As explained in Chapter 5.2.3, the home as a field location provides a particular place for exploring the practices and experiences of everyday life. Participants’ homes in this research were sites with multiple and contested meanings attached to them, requiring a sensitive, reflexive and adaptable approach to data collection and relations in the field (Billo and Heimstra, 2013). Thus, no home tour followed the same path. This section analyses some key findings from undertaking this multi-modal method of fieldwork.

In conducting home tours, it was important to establish rapport with participants in order to gain their trust in the initial stages of the interview. Conducting research in the home environment needs to be undertaken reflexively, and this required me to be sensitive to the shifting ‘gradation of welcome’ into the participant’s home that occurred during each encounter. As mentioned above, I had already begun establishing this rapport through phone calls, texts, and emails in the initial recruitment phase of the research, but the first face to face meeting was often at the participant’s front door or at the ferry terminal if they picked me up. Interviews began in the living room or at the kitchen table where the participant and I completed written consent and opening questions, but was also a way to establish rapport in a home-space considered to be more ‘public’. During the initial questions and discussion, it was important

for me to gauge the socio-spatial dynamics that unfurled during these initial stages of the encounter in order to progress to moving to different parts of a participant's home (Sin, 2003). I took care to identify linguistic cues, but also gestures, posture, facial expression, and eye contact when in dialogue with participants (Montague et al., 2013) as to signal that I could ask if they would like to move to a different space and take a photo of something they mentioned in an answer. In instances in which I judged a positive rapport had been built, I could then ask about moving the interview to different parts of their home.

Once the 'tour' had begun and there was potential for other spaces to be explored, the 'gradation of welcome' shifted according to the socio-spatial intricacies of each encounter. Some participants only showed me more 'public' spaces within their house, such as kitchens, laundries, and outdoor living areas. Different home spaces can sites of pride, shame, or stigma (Warren, 2010), and it was important that I maintained respect for each of the participants by consistently gauging rapport that they were comfortable with me being within certain spaces. In total, five of seven participants showed me the more 'private' rooms of their rental, such as bedrooms and bathrooms. In these cases, I was sometimes asked to excuse realities of home life such as an unmade bed or a son's clothes on the floor, which signalled to me that the participants were house proud, yet comfortable with me being there in their more 'private' spaces.

When the tour had begun and the participant and I were walking around, I found that participants spoke more freely about their practices and experiences. Two potential reasons explain this. First, there is a possibility of a stifling effect that formality and power differentials can have on a face-to-face researcher-participant interviews (Katz, 1994; Oberhauser, 1997). This factor means that there is a need to establish and maintain rapport and trust before participants elucidate with more detailed answers. Second, most dampness management practices were not 'going on' when I was present, and participants were commonly recollecting

practices that they undertook throughout the year. As stated in Chapter 5.3.2, participants talking about their practices that they have performed in the past is not inconsistent with the tenants of practice theory (Hitchings, 2012). I found during research encounters that being *in-place* where the practices had been undertaken around the home served to jog participants' memories about different actions that they undertook. For example, early on in the encounter with Terrence, we were still seated at his dining room table, and he only explained to me his heating and dehumidifier use when asked about his various practices. Yet, when we rose and he began showing me around his home, further items of discussion arose as we moved between each of his home spaces. For instance, he then began telling me about the mould inside his cupboards, and his use of the vacuum bags to keep his clothing mould-free (see Chapter 6.3.4). As such, the method allowed me to overcome the fact that as a researcher, I cannot always be there when routine practices are taking place. This suggests that a mobile method such as home-tours – which considers the *place* of the research encounter– can serve to stimulate deeper considerations by participants when talking about their practices.

7.3.2 Collaborative Photography with Participatory Photo Elicitation

As described in Chapter 5.2.4, participatory photo elicitation (PPE) (Coleman, 2016) is a photographic method in which the researcher and participant work together to produce photographs and discuss their meaning. For my research, incorporating PPE and an in-situ interview means that images that represent the context of renter's practices are kept linked to the verbal data generated through an interview. Due to the time constraints associated with a short research period, I undertook a compressed version of PPE, meaning that I undertook the initial interview and PPE interview concurrently rather than conducting these on two separate encounters.

As Coleman (2016) notes, a key benefit of conducting PPE is that it provokes deeper and more intimate discussions of objects, spaces, and places that are meaningful to the

participant. By asking participants in this research if they would like us to photograph something that they mentioned during a discussion, it was possible for me to indicate to participants that the matter under discussion was meaningful to me and the research. It was important for me to demonstrate to participants that their practices and experiences were of consequence both for the research and for them, despite questions potentially seeming routine, embedded, or banal. I found that taking photographs of a draughty window or ripped insulation foil served to validate participant's experiences of poor housing quality and this, in turn, stimulated the participation of renters.

The exchange below with Chantelle demonstrates how, through PPE, working together to take a photograph of mouldy curtains can lead to further discussion about landlord relations, mould cleaning practices, and how Chantelle is losing attachment to her rental:

Chantelle: And in my room, [we walk through to her bedroom]... check this out [moves towards the window]. Like these curtains here, they are less than two years old, an look how much the mould has grown. I've tried to clean these up but they are screwed.

Elliott: Could we take a picture of that [curtain]?

Chantelle: Yeah, here I'll hold it up [holds up curtain].

Elliott: [Takes photo] How about this [shows photo]?

Chantelle: Yep!

Elliott: And what does your landlord say about the curtains when you talk to him?

Chantelle: I've asked him to replace them. His answer is 'here's some curtain cleaner for you!'. I've got mould and mildew remover and all of

that and I use it. But these just need replacing. It's just another thing that I would need to do that is really his job... I'm over it.



Figure 7.1: The mould growing on Chantelle's curtains in her bedroom

The dialogue between Chantelle and myself also demonstrates how using a smart phone for photography during a PPE encounter can be beneficial. Being able to show the participant the image on the smart phone screen allows immediate feedback on whether or not a participant feels that a photograph reflected an issue accurately. The ability for participants to approve a photo in real time during an encounter also served to enhance rapport between the participants and myself. There is little existing research about this benefit of using smart phones to instantly gauge feedback from participants, but Hinthorne (2014) who used instant film photos (such as polaroid photographs) to gauge near-immediate approval of photos found that this improved rapport and interest in the subject at hand. I found this to be the case in most circumstances. Where participants were not so interested in viewing a photograph it was perhaps due to smart phones' ubiquity as discussed in Chapter 5.6.2. The lack of existing research into the use of smart phones in this way warrants further investigation.

7.3.3 **Mixing methods and mixed outcomes**

Home tours in this research was a multi-modal approach that sought to encapsulate a broad range of evidence in a participant's home. Undertaking concurrent methods meant that I had a lot to do at once during a research encounter, which was at times a difficult operation. Using a smart phone reduced the potentially cumbersome task of carrying audio recording equipment, a digital camera, and interview notes. Yet despite the convenience of smart phone technology, simultaneously undertaking mobile interviews, taking photos with participants, reflecting with participants verbally, observing their body language, and internally reflecting on research aims could be a demanding task. Having to attend to these aspects of the method simultaneously meant that I sometimes missed an opportunity to reflect in the moment during an interview, and felt like I could have probed a participant's response to elicit a deeper reflection. These gaps were identified in reflections during my cycle to the ferry or the sailing back to Auckland, or during the transcription process, and were noted down in my logbook. Participants were happy to answer follow up questions via email, however, and this helped to expand upon some answers that I may have missed the opportunity to delve deeper into during an encounter. To better address these issues of practicality, home tours could be improved by working in tandem with a co-researcher whereby specific tasks could be assigned to each researcher, or splitting the method across two encounters as Coleman (2016) did.

In light of the above point, maintaining the quality of each encounter was an important part of the research process. There were points during my bicycle reflection journeys that I felt the encounter did not go according to my proposed 'vision' of the Home Tour method. While fieldwork is messy and no encounter can be expected to follow the same path (Billo and Heimstra, 2013), I would sometimes feel that some encounters worked 'better' than others. Two home tours returned only a few photographs, and the length of discussions differed between participants. There is limited literature regarding what defines the quality of evidence

collected in fieldwork, but Roulston (2010) outlines a number of factors that may demonstrate a ‘high-quality’ qualitative interview. These include (1) the extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers, (2) the length of answers, and (3) the extent of follow-up questions, clarifications, and in-place interpretations on the part of the researcher. In this research, it was often the case that it was through reflection in my logbook and a critical review of transcripts that I was able to glean meaning from what I initially thought was a ‘bad’ encounter. For example, the encounter with Veronica produced less of a ‘tour’ and more of a conventional interview. Throughout the course of our discussion, when I asked her about the actions she undertook to maintain a warm and dry living environment, she gave few answers apart from turning on her heater or dehumidifier. As is explored in Chapter 6.7, Veronica had all but given up on trying to be proactive and also given up on her home:

Elliott: Do you talk to anyone else about ways you might help to make your house less damp?

Veronica: What techniques are there? When you are living on the back of a hill, what help is there?

After my conversation with Veronica I wrote in my logbook to reflect on the theme of ‘giving up’ on practice:

Veronica was friendly, but clearly frustrated about her housing situation. The encounter mainly stuck to an ‘interview’ style, without much of the other aspects of data collection. She didn’t really have many ‘actions’ she undertook, so during that part of the interview conversation was a little stilted. We had a quick 10 minute walk around when she mentioned how her house was dug into the bank and that’s why it was so damp. I took some photos of the sides and underside of the house which didn’t

receive any sun, and we talked more about that while we did a quick walk-around... Towards the end of the interview when I just let her talk about her opinions on renting, her answers became more reflective on her experiences how she learnt from them, rather than what she actually did to combat dampness.

As the above logbook entry demonstrates, while the encounter was not so successful in terms of the envisioned tour and photography outputs, the conversation still gave meaningful insights into Veronica's experiences and indicated that *not* actively combatting dampness was a relevant finding. As such, maintaining a logbook was an integral part of home tours. When the research encounter did not go according to 'plan', post-encounter reflections assisted me in identifying initially unrecognised meaning-making, and generated findings which challenged my assumptions about the research process. This demonstrates the importance of maintaining fieldwork reflexivity both during an encounter and during analysis (Katz, 1994), and the importance of using a research logbook throughout the research process to reflect on method and developing findings.

7.4 **Summary**

This chapter has reflected upon my research strategy and the home tours method. In line with my phenomenologically-inspired approach, I have acknowledged my own position in the research. I have explained how I sought to reduce the distance between myself and participants in a relatively short research encounter by spanning the divide between insider and outsider, researcher and co-participant,. The above reflections on home tours demonstrate that mixed-method approaches can ensure that a full spectrum of socially-shaped and culturally-given practices and experiences can be explored during the research process, of which verbal responses are only one. While attempting to 'capture' this spectrum can be challenging, through the adoption of a reflective research practice, such as maintaining a log book, and critical

consideration of the influence of the researcher upon the research, home tours are able to reveal a broad range of participants' experiences, practices and meaning-making. In the following and final chapter, I summarise the findings of the research and expand on their implications. The final chapter also offers possible directions for further research.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

I have explored the question: *What are the management practices and experiences of renters in damp and mouldy housing?* To address this question, I employed theories of practice to develop a framework that conceived weather and buildings as practiced and performed. I enacted a phenomenologically-inspired research strategy that considered relations between each participant and their world, as well as my own positionality within the research. According to this inherent involvement, I devised a mixed-method data collection strategy, which I named 'home tours'. This mixed-method approach enabled me to 'get-close' to participants in their rental homes, their actions of dampness management, and their experiences of living in damp rental houses on Waiheke Island. In this final chapter, I synthesise the research findings and their implications for generating broader understandings of rental tenure and socio-cultures of weather.

8.2 Synthesis of the findings

Tenants demonstrated and described actions that they undertook to deal with the weather inside their damp rentals. As outlined in Chapter 3.2, dwellings can be understood as 'interstitial spaces' rather than rigid weatherproof shells (Steele and Keys, 2016), and thus require management of the air temperature and spatial flows throughout a porous house (Hauge, 2013; Shove et al., 2014). Tenants in this research undertook these types of practices. Tenants' actions to heat their home demonstrated their desire to maintain their thermal comfort and also to reduce dampness. Suggesting the phenomenon of 'fuel poverty' (Howden-Chapman et al., 2012), participants found heating their rentals expensive and often sought ways to keep their heating more effective and efficient. These practices align with previous research whereby inhabitants govern air to be 'in the right place at the right time' (Royston, 2014). Tenants in

this study scheduled certain times to power heaters on and off (Maller et al., 2012), developed the “art” of feeding fires to a point where tenants felt thermally comfortable (Jalas and Rinkinen, 2016; Vannini and Taggart, 2014a), and partitioned spaces of their rental to retain heat (Royston, 2014; Shove et al., 2014). As participants told me, they developed these practices according to the heating technology they were using, how often they could afford to use it, and the spaces they were heating (Maller et al., 2012). Participants also described how they would put on extra layers of clothing and wear blankets in order to save on heating costs, and only heat the spaces within their home in which they were using. Though they potentially reduce power bills, these types of heating practices are problematic. People may be able to warm themselves by putting on extra clothes, yet cold air within a dwelling increases dampness and has significant health issues for inhabitants (BRANZ, 2017; Howden-Chapman et al., 2012). Heating practices described in this research demonstrate how tenants understandably prioritised their own thermal comfort above attempts to alleviate dampness in their homes.

The cycling, freshening, and retaining air within a rental was a key practice of dampness management for tenants in this research. Fresh air was important for tenants’ physical and emotional wellbeing, as well as maintaining the various materialities of the physical dwelling (Hauge, 2013). Tenants told me how they first detected dampness through smelling mould within their home, and how they described this to me signalled that it was a unpleasant, yet common smell for them in their history as a renter. Tenants often connected the occurrence of these olfactory episodes inside their houses to ‘outside’ weather phenomena, such as a period of rain or a certain humid time of the year. These interrelated experiences of damp air inside the rental and weather outside was typically a signal to tenants that it was a time to ‘take action’ with some form of air management. It can therefore be said that tenants’ sensual evaluations of the air in the interstitial spaces (Steele and Keys, 2016) of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ their dwelling is shaped by their individual life experiences, and in turn shapes their specific dampness management practices.

In order to cycle, freshen, and retain air inside their homes tenants utilised technology such as dehumidifiers as well as actions such as opening doors and windows for periods. For the six participants who used dehumidifiers, their usage varied according to seasons, with significantly higher usage in the winter months. These practices were also shaped by energy costs and the spatialities of the home in a similar way to heater use as explained above. As discussed in Chapter 3.2.4, adapting technology use and spatialities are key practices of maintaining indoor air. Tenants told me how they adapted their technology use (Strengers and Maller, 2011) to move their dehumidifiers cyclically between spaces in their houses to target the dampest areas (Shove et al., 2014). Yet for some participants, as well as being expensive, dehumidifier use was a temporary fix, as damp air would soon pervade these spaces due to the inherent porosity of their dwellings.

As a result, tenants also performed passive practices, such as opening windows and doors in order to let the right kind of air indoors in order to revitalise and freshen their dwellings (Hauge, 2013). In this case, tenants expressed their desire to be in control of their rentals through their sensitivities to the weather-world (Ingold, 2012; Vannini et al., 2012). Tenants waited until they experienced the “right” kind of weather (e.g. sunny or breezy) or the right time of the day (e.g. when the sun angle is right) to freshen their rentals successfully. Further to this, as Waiheke residents, tenants had a significant affinity to the island environment, and desired to be connected to the air from the outdoors and its perceived health-giving properties. However, these positively perceived types of air entangled with and are complicated by various temporal and social factors. To perform these tasks, tenants needed to fit them in around employment and other household or family commitments. The freshening of air needed to be balanced with costs of heating and dehumidification as mentioned above, as tenants would need to ensure they had ‘stopped’ freshening air when the air from outside was no longer desirable – if they let any air in at all. Air therefore complicates the siloed conceptions of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’. In other words, through allowing some flows and disallowing others,

tenants sought to maintain an environment for themselves that they perceive to be contained yet refreshed, free from mouldy aromas yet free to experience the island air.

Entangled in the above doings are the interwoven knowledges of tenant's dampness management in their rentals. As established in Chapter 3, practices are carried and translated socially, yet are also shaped by explicit rules, principles and instructions; and implicit orders of beliefs, emotions, and moods. Tenants dampness management choices were typically explained as related to: (1) embedded knowledge, (2) learning through experience, and (3) sharing knowledge. First, how participants learnt ordinary routines of dampness management often went unquestioned and therefore routines were enduring. As Shove and Pantzar (2007) state, the origins and trajectories of practices are often elusive, being learnt sometime in the past and becoming embedded as 'obvious' routine. Yet, performing 'old habits', such as bleach instead of eco-friendly products, were sometimes what worked best, and made participants feel reassured by their habits. Second, tenants adapted or learnt new practices through experience. Through trial and error and dealing with the spaces, technologies, and materialities of home, tenants become intimately knowledgeable of their rental, developing a 'relationship' with their current home (Roberts and Henwood, 2019). As the tenants demonstrated, becoming intimately aware of how houses 'worked' was not only important for combatting dampness in their current rental, but also for inevitable decisions regarding future rentals in a churning rental market on Waiheke or elsewhere. Third, as practices are inherently social (Reckwitz, 2003; Simonsen, 2007), they are necessarily shared. As has been discussed in Chapter 6.5.3 and following Hitchings (2013), tenants tended not to share specific techniques with their community, preferring to share their bad experiences and find common ground through others with which they share the renter 'identity'. This observation suggests that tenants as a group may feel neglected and on their own with their housing quality woes, insulated from the possibilities of a better quality place to call home.

A key relationship that tenants have to manage is with their landlord or property manager. As is established in Chapter 2.5, this relationship is fraught with power imbalances, both observable and unobservable (Chisholm et al., 2018; Bate 2019). While some tenants in the study had informal and even illegal agreements with their landlord, this was not necessarily a precursor to bad relations between tenants and their landlords or property managers. The four tenants with negative views of their landlords or property managers largely put their poor relations down to disputes over housing quality. Feeling autonomous and in charge of one's living situation is key to perceptual security of tenure (Hulse and Mulligan, 2014), and tenants felt frustrated that they could not feel in charge of the housing quality of their home if they had to organise housing repairs through an unresponsive landlord or property manager. As a result of constantly being ignored or not believed about the poor quality of their rental, tenants commonly felt demoralised, and lost attachment to their rental, yet also felt that moving on was too difficult or too expensive (Chisholm et al., 2016). Yet some tenants were happy overall with their landlords or property managers. This was largely due to landlords being somewhat responsive to their requests for improvements or allowing them to perform and organise maintenance themselves (and being paid for their time). This responsiveness gave tenants a sense of ownership over the condition of their dwellings, and thus felt more secure in their tenure.

Finally, tenants in this study demonstrated varying attachments to their rental as their home and to Waiheke as the place in which they lived. Participants who demonstrated attachments to place alluded to factors such as seeking to remain stoic, and '*make-do*' with their cold dwelling (Cupples et al., 2007), attachment to the aesthetics and peculiarities of older housing (Roberts and Henwood, 2019), and island-related attachments to Waiheke itself (Bates et al., 2019; Coleman et al., 2016). Yet, older housing is difficult and costly to keep warm and dry (with associated health risks), and some tenants demonstrated that this undermined secure place attachment. When attachment to a rental was undermined some participants withdrew

from wanting to deal with the weather in their home. While practices are generally stated as being conceived of as ‘banal’ and ‘everyday’, the experience of everyday realities of poor housing quality is clearly not insignificant for those suffering from the embodied and emotional stress of home making in unhealthy housing.

At the outset, many of these practices may appear to be ordinary and banal routines of home domesticities. Yet, tenants in this research demonstrated how these practices are important to them and their family’s thermal comfort, health, and wellbeing in their rental. The intricacies of tenants’ practices shift according to changing weather, annual seasonal deviations, the intimacies of their dwelling, and the social relations that need to be navigated in their efforts to achieve a dry and healthy home. Tenants’ attachments to their home and their island community are affected by their experiences of the weather. Waiheke is well known for its summer and ‘bachy feel’, and tenants clearly chose the island, and perhaps their house in particular, as a place to live because of these island-related attributes. Yet the reality for tenants is that they must deal with “*the tragedy of winter*” (Terrence) that inevitably arises when living in damp, cold, and poor quality housing.

This research was undertaken on Waiheke Island due to its established issues of housing affordability and insecurity, its old and low quality rental housing stock, as well as its defined geographical boundedness as an island. Housing quality and affordability issues are by no means unique to Waiheke, and unfortunately exist on mainland Auckland and New Zealand in general, as well as elsewhere in comparable countries internationally. As contextualised in Chapter 1, the private rental market in New Zealand is beset by structural issues that affect the security of tenancies, and the 2018 census demonstrated that dampness issues are occurring in rental housing nationwide (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). This suggests that the findings of this research are potentially relevant to tenants’ experiences nationwide.

8.3 Future directions

This research has drawn upon a growing body of interdisciplinary literature that explores the socio-cultures of the weather. In a world with a rapidly changing climate, this area of research will become more significant as adaptations are required to weather atmospheric changes. Practice-led approaches will continue to be an important way in which the nuances and motivations of behaviours change. This type of research is already being undertaken in relation to wet and humid climates (for example this thesis; de Vet, 2018; Strengers and Maller, 2017), yet application of this approach to hot, dry, quasi-desert climates is especially important (for example in California). As cities attempt to transition to more active modes of transport, commuting practices will have to adapt to these new and unpredictable forms of weather.

Methodological findings in this research suggest that future studies should consider home tours as a fruitful strategy to explore weather management practices. Home tours, the mixed-method approach to research in the home that I employed in this research, could be adapted for a range of home-based research. As noted Chapter 7, the ‘set of tools’ that the method employs can account for an array of occurrences in the field that escape the attention of more conventional techniques such as interviews and surveys. This could include similar studies that explore how inhabitants experience different weather-related phenomena while in their home (for example extreme heat). While this kind of close-up research undertaken in the private space of home needs to be undertaken with care and perceptiveness, it serves to foster greater involvement of participants and serves to foster greater involvement of participants in the research by empowering their own perspectives and practices. This diverse set of experiences can then coalesce into stories for each research encounter, and then into a story for the data as a whole, a strength of this approach.

8.4 Contributions and conclusions

As stated in Chapter 2, this thesis is situated in the broad body of literature that is housing studies. The extent to which policy research should be the central focus of housing studies is currently under debate (Clapham, 2009; Hartig, 2018; King, 2009), and the approach and findings of this research have addressed the call for theory and approaches from outside of policy studies to enrich the field. The study's attention to everyday practices and experiences of housing inhabitants and their home lives serves to inform how security of tenure is challenged or improved by dynamics outside of legal, market, policy, or institutional factors. In this research, tenants' security of tenure was challenged by their experiences in damp rental housing, yet improved by their reflexive and perceptive actions. As Clapham states (2018), improving housing policy is about the reconciliation of different perspectives and discourses. Existing approaches such as regulatory reviews (e.g. Bierre et al., 2014), surveys (e.g. Kearns et al., 1991), and technical measurement (e.g. Isaacs and Donn, 1993) each serve to elucidate valuable standpoints. This research has added a new approach to the field of housing studies and in turn can inform wider debates on housing policy through close encounters with private market renters on Waiheke.

This thesis has expanded upon a growing body of literature that explores socio-cultures of the weather. These studies have commonly addressed singular objectives such as maintaining thermal comfort (Hitchings 2009; Rininen and Jalas, 2017; Shove et al., 2014), fuel and energy use (Jalas and Rininen, 2016; Vannini and Taggart, 2015), or freshening and cycling air (Hauge, 2013). Due to the complexities of dealing with dampness within a home in that it involves reflexive combinations of the above practices, this research provides a novel addition to this literature. In the context of a changing global climate and the growing occurrences of unpredictable weather, it is important to develop diverse understandings of how humans can be adaptive, resourceful, and perceptive to kairological fluctuations in the sky and

on the earth (Szerszynski, 2010).

This research has explored the dampness management practices of tenants living on Waiheke Island. As well as the above contributions to academic literature, I have also sought to raise further awareness of housing issues on Waiheke Island. By attending to island issues below the shiny veneer of the tourist gaze, this research has developed experience-close understandings of life in a low quality rental housing market. Community organisations on the island are doing important work, and more nuanced understandings of home life for island residents who are on the margins of the island's recent touristic transformation will further serve to inform their efforts. The Waiheke renters in this research have been an integral part of this contribution to deepen understandings of their own community, and have demonstrated their ability to be skilful, knowledgeable, and perceptive despite pressures and changes on the island.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Flyer



THE UNIVERSITY
OF AUCKLAND
FACULTY OF SCIENCE

School of Environment

Are you renting on Waiheke? Experience issues with damp housing?

We are Mr Elliott Serjeant, Professor Robin Kearns, and Dr Tara Coleman-geographers interested in housing at the University of Auckland.

We would like to speak with Waiheke renters who have issues with damp and cold housing. The research aims to understand how you deal with dampness in your home. We would like to hear your experiences and challenges in order to inform services designed to assist Island residents.

Interested?

There is a \$50 grocery voucher as koha for taking part.

Fill in your details below and then hand this form back to the person who offered it to you. We will then contact you to discuss your participation.

Name.....

Phone.....

Email (optional).....

Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 1/12/2018 for three years. Reference Number 022434

Appendix B: Sample Participant Information Sheet



SCIENCE
SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT

Human Sciences Building,
Level 6, 201N,
10 Symonds St, Auckland, New
Zealand
T +64 9 923 8465
W www.env.auckland.ac.nz
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142 New Zealand

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Renters' everyday management of dampness in their homes on Waiheke Island

Researchers: Mr Elliott Serjeant, Professor Robin Kearns, Dr Tara Coleman

This research is affiliated with 'Life When Renting' a project funded through the National Science Challenge 'Ageing well' and led by the Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment (CRESA).

The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of the everyday management of dampness among Waiheke residents. In particular, we are interested in the daily tasks, routines and techniques you perform in order to keep your home warm and dry. We would like to understand and support the work that renters undertake to keep their houses in a healthy and habitable state.

We are motivated to undertake this research because of the long-standing problems with cold and damp housing in Aotearoa, New Zealand. While it is common to focus on heating and insulation to mitigate the effects of cold and damp housing, there are other routine practices that can assist in keeping a home habitable and healthy. Tasks such as closing off parts of the house, additional layers of clothing, or opening/closing windows can also contribute to healthy 'atmospheres' within a home. However, these tasks may become stressful to perform resulting in adverse health outcomes. Waiheke has been chosen for its unique housing characteristics and because earlier research as part of this project has been carried out here.

Interview

We would like to interview people who are renting on Waiheke Island. First, we are asking participants to take part in a one hour interview about their daily routines of home heating and ventilation, and the known physical characteristics of their dwelling with regards to insulation and building materials. During this interview we may ask you to photograph any space or object in your home that you think illustrates your heating and ventilation routines. You may choose not to take part in undertaking photographs if you do not wish to. If you would like to take photographs, Elliott will provide a camera and work with you and at your direction. These interviews will take place at your home and you will receive a \$50 grocery voucher for your time.

Audio Recording

We request that interviews be audio recorded with your consent. If you consent to your interview being recorded, you may ask to stop the tape at any time. If you do not consent to be audio recorded, hand notes will be written by the interviewer.

Data use and storage

Data and images collected will be used for the purposes of Elliott Serjeant's thesis as well as potential use in publications and conference presentations. No real names or identifying details will be used when drawing on the data for thesis or publication purposes. Participants may review and request to edit changes to their interview transcripts. You may withdraw any data provided up to one month from the date of being sent the transcripts.

All hardcopy material collected will be held in a locked filing cabinet within the University of Auckland's School of Environment, and all digital data will be held on School of Environment servers. After six years, all research material will be either destroyed (paper shredded) or permanently deleted from servers. Participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

If any image from the interview is reported or published, this will either be done in a way that a) does not identify any individual; and b) is attributed via a pseudonym. You may choose to have a summary of the research findings sent to you at the end of Mr Serjeant's thesis year.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this research possible. Participants may contact Elliott directly should they have any further questions about this study.

Elliott's email address is e.serjeant@auckland.ac.nz. Elliott can also be contacted by telephone 373 7599 ext 88442. Alternatively, please email Tara: t.coleman@auckland.ac.nz.

My supervisor is:

Professor Robin Kearns, School of Environment
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019, Auckland
Phone: (09) 923 8442 xtn: 88442
Email: r.kearns@auckland.ac.nz

My Director of School is:

Associate Professor Julie Rowland
School of Environment
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019, Auckland
Phone: (09) [923 7412](tel:9237412)
Email: j.rowland@auckland.ac.nz

For any queries regarding ethical concerns please contact: The Chair, The University of Auckland Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office – Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland, 1142. Telephone: (09) 373-7999 extension: 83711. Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 1/12/2018 FOR 3 YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER 022434.

Appendix C: Sample Consent Form



SCIENCE
SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT

Human Sciences Building,
Level 6, 201N,
10 Symonds St, Auckland,
New Zealand
T +64 9 923 8465
W www.env.auckland.ac.nz
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland 1142
New Zealand

CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of six years

Project Title: Renters' everyday management of dampness in their homes on Waiheke Island

Researchers: Elliott Serjeant, Robin Kearns, Tara Coleman

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I agree to participate in interviews about my heating and ventilation practices in my home (approx. 1 hour of my time).. I understand that I may be invited to take photographs in this interview, and that I may choose not to take photographs if I do not wish to.

I understand that I may be left a notebook and pen to complete a diary of my home heating and ventilation practices over a short period of time (4-7 days). I understand that my completed diary will be collected by Elliott at a time that is convenient for me and that any information in my diary will be kept confidential. I understand that I may choose not to take part in this part of the research.

I understand that I will receive one \$50 grocery voucher as a token of appreciation for my time. In accepting this voucher I am not giving away the ownership of any information I offer. I will still receive the voucher if I withdraw without giving reason at any time during the research.

I understand that I will be sent transcripts of the interview and any photography or other data that may result from this interview. I understand that I may review and request to make changes to my interview transcripts. I may withdraw myself or any data traceable to me up to one month from the date of being sent the data. I understand that any data not withdrawn from the study at that time may be used in thesis production as well as in publication and conference proceedings.

I understand that all hardcopy research information will be kept in a locked cabinet for six years, after which time it will be destroyed. I understand that all digital data (transcripts,

audio and digital images) will be kept on a private University of Auckland server for six years, after which time it will be destroyed.

Consent:

I understand all of the above and I agree to take part in this research (please circle):

Yes / No

I **consent / do not consent** to this interview being audio-recorded.

I **wish / do not wish** to receive a summary of findings, which can be emailed to me at this email address: _____

Name (please print): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 1/12/2018 FOR 3 YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER: 022434