

Maintenance

Basic maintenance tasks might seem a little bit boring, and it can be difficult to find the time to do it, but it is one of the most important things a homeowner can do to ensure that their building is both comfortable to live in and performing the best that it can. A building which is suffering from damp, a common result of poor maintenance, can result in the building being up to three times less energy efficient!

What are the benefits of carrying out maintenance?

- It can improve a building's energy efficiency and make it feel warmer.
- It reduces the chances of having a large repair bill in the future.
- It can help lengthen the lifespan of building elements (e.g. windows, doors, guttering and pointing), which will not only save you money, but is also better for the environment, by reducing waste and the use of materials.
- It will ensure that any future energy improvement measures both works well and are appropriate for your building (to find out more about appropriate measures, please go to the [Benefits of Traditional Buildings](#) page).

What basic maintenance can I do myself?

- Check your gutters, fascia boards, bargeboards, soffit boards and roof valleys (this can be done a quick visual inspection). Do they look blocked, broken or rotten? Are there cracks or leaks in the rainwater goods (this might be evidenced by staining on the wall next to it)?
- Check your roof for slipped or broken tiles – this can be done by a visual check of the roof, and if you have access to the attic, look to see if there are any areas of damp.
- Are your windows and doors opening as there should? If they have ventilators, are these working correctly? Do they appear to be in good condition?
- Is there plant growth or soil build up around drains, ventilator bricks or gutters, which might prevent them working properly?
- Does the pointing look in good condition?

If some of the checks highlighted above reveal that repair is needed to the building, you might want to engage a professional to fix this for you. If you need help finding a professional, then please visit the [Choosing a Professional](#) page.

Do I need Listed Building Consent or Planning Permission for maintenance work?

If you live in a listed building, repairs may not require Listed Building Consent if they are small scale and like for like. For more information on this, please see Historic England's guidance linked below. However, where the repair works are extensive or will result in the replacement of some elements, then Listed Building Consent might be required. If you have any questions about this, then you use the Council's [pre-application advice service](#).

If you are carrying out maintenance works to your roof, cellar or outbuilding, you do need to be aware that disturbing protected species (for example bats, nesting birds) is a criminal offence. For further guidance on this please go to the Council's [Wildlife and Biodiversity](#) page.

Further guidance on maintenance

The SPAB (The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) provides a useful maintenance calendar, which can be found below. This is a simple, and easy to use guide showing what tasks to do and when and is appropriate for any type of building of any age:

[SPAB Faith in Maintenance Calendar](#)

The SPAB have also produced a helpful further reading list on [Maintenance Matters](#), covering animals, insects and fungi, damp and moisture control, and other maintenance guides.

Historic England also provide some useful advice about maintaining the fabric of your home. This provides a more detailed overview of the specific things to look for when inspecting your home.

[Maintenance Check List](#)

For other, detailed guides on maintaining your home, Historic Environment Scotland and the Government of Ireland of also produced good guides, with maintenance checklists, which you might find useful. Whilst produced for other nations, these are still good and equally applicable to buildings in England. See the links to these guides below:

[Maintaining Your Home](#)

[A Guide to the Care of Older Buildings](#)

If you live in a rented building, please see the following blog post, [Maintenance tips for renters](#), for advice on things that you can do. You should also check your tenancy agreement, to in case there are some elements of maintenance which you are responsible for, not the landlord.