

These notes are provided as a guide to enable you to inspect your property on a regular basis, to help keep it in good order. They must not be considered to be definitive or fully comprehensive. Regular maintenance inspections and prompt repair of any defects noticed will help keep your repair costs to a minimum. If neglected they may lead to more expensive repairs.

You should look at:

The roofs

1. Check that all the tiles / slates are in good order and replace any that are cracked, slipped or damaged. Ensure that the mortar pointing at the roof edges is kept in good condition.

Flat roofs

2. Make sure that any chippings remain evenly laid. If cracked or bubbled areas are noticed, have these repaired immediately.

Lead and mortar flashings

3. Lead flashing should lay properly; mortar fillets should be free from cracks. Mortar fillets are not fully satisfactory and are best replaced with lead.

Guttering

4. Should run to the downpipe heads at an even slope and be free from splits and cracks. Replace or repair missing or defective sections immediately to protect the property. Clean out the gutters regularly to remove weeds, leaves and granite chippings. Gutter joints do deteriorate with age and the need for resealing must be anticipated from time to time.

Downpipes

5. Check that the junctions of the gutters to the downpipes are in good order and also the joints between the downpipes and the underground piping at ground

level. If any downpipes discharge over gulley grids, clear and maintain brick surrounds to stop debris blocking the gulleys.

6. Replace or repair missing or defective sections immediately.

Chimneys

7. Keep chimney pots in good order and ensure they are securely joined to the top of the chimney. Keep the brickwork mortar joints in good condition. If you notice any cracking of the brickwork have it repaired at once.
8. If television aerials have been fixed to the chimney ensure that they are properly secured.

External Joinery

9. Keep in good repair and well decorated.

Outside walls

10. Keep the brickwork mortar joints in good order. Poor maintenance of brick pointing can lead to damp penetration and damage to the brick surface.
11. Make sure the mortar joint protecting the damp proof course is kept in good condition.
12. Keep the joints between the window and door frames and the brickwork in good watertight condition with pliable mastic sealant.
13. Make sure that the mortar around the waste pipes is in good condition.
14. Keep soil and paths at least 150mm below the level of the floors inside to prevent penetrating dampness.
15. If there are air bricks, make sure they are in good order and free from blockage.
16. If the walls are rendered, make sure it is not cracked or loose. Water will get behind poor rendering leading to dampness. All cracked or loose areas should be repaired or replaced.
17. Regularly redecorate any painted walls or timber boarded areas.

Windows and doors

18. Periodically inspect the frames and repair any timbers affected by wet rot.

Regular painting helps avoid timber becoming rotten.

19. Replace cracked and broken panes of glass and renew loose or missing putties before redecoration to avoid wet rot in the frames.
20. Replace broken sash cords and window catches.

Inside the Loft

21. Make a regular inspection to check for signs of leaks which can lead to wet or dry rot. Carry out any necessary repairs immediately.
22. Check the chimney brickwork for heat cracks.
23. Make sure the roof timbers are not broken, split or affected by rot.
24. Clean out water tanks, maintain ball valves and keep tanks and pipes properly insulated and covered.
25. Insulate the loft if this has not been done. Do not insulate right up to the eaves or below the water tanks. Make sure the electrical cables are not covered by the insulation.
26. Look for wood-boring beetle flight holes and if in any doubt have a specialist firm make an inspection.
27. Check ceilings under flat roofs for any signs of leaks and repair affected areas immediately.

Plumbing, heating and electrics

28. Ensure that the external and internal stopcocks are readily available in an emergency.
29. Keep the plumbing pipework in good condition and periodically clean out the traps to baths, sinks and wash basins.
30. Have the central heating appliances annually serviced by a Gas Safe registered contractor.
31. Do not make any alterations to the electrical wiring without qualified advice. Amateur repairs and additions can lead to failure of the circuits, fire and risk of electric shock.
32. It is advised that the electrical installation is checked by a suitably qualified person at least every ten years as cables and fittings deteriorate with age.

Decorations

- 33. Internally, keep the ceilings, walls and woodwork in good decorative condition.
- 34. External paintwork should not be left more than five years without redecoration.

Drainage

- 35. Periodically lift the manhole covers and have the drains cleaned out if necessary. Keep manhole covers and surrounding mortar in good condition.
- 36. If you have a septic tank; have it pumped out at least once a year.

In the Garden

- 37. Keep the hedges, walls, fences, gates, paths and driveways in good order.
- 38. Keep soil, shrubs and trees away from outside walls. Shrubs and trees can break drainage pipes and potentially cause subsidence.
- 39. Cut back wall creepers regularly as they can destroy the mortar joints between brickwork, stonework, etc which can encourage dampness and insects and block gutters.

Outbuildings/Garages

- 40. Check the roofs, gutters, downpipes and walls as suggested for the house.
- 41. Regularly redecorate timber surfaces.
- 42. Keep door hinges and locks well oiled. Regularly clean out sliding door channels.

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