

building maintenance

For Home Owners and the Private Rented Sector



BUILDING MAINTENANCE

As a homeowner, whether it's a house or flat, you are responsible for its repair and maintenance.

Modest spending on regular maintenance can reduce the need for costly repairs, protect the fabric of your building and save you money in the longer term.

Maintenance is the routine work which is necessary to protect the fabric of a building. When carried out on a planned basis, maintenance helps to prevent future and more significant defects from occurring.

MAINTENANCE FALLS INTO THREE MAIN CATEGORIES

- Inspection to assess condition, report any problems and decide whether repair or other work is necessary
- Specific tasks, such as painting and clearing debris from gutters etc; and
- Minor repairs, such as fixing slipped slates, replacing broken glass etc

Maintenance differs from repair, which is work carried out to put right defects, significant decay or damage, and work to return a building to a good condition on a long-term basis.

STEPS TO FOLLOW FOR MAINTAINING YOUR HOME

GET YOUR BUILDING CHECKED REGULARLY

Regular inspections followed by prompt remedial action will reduce the costs of minor and major repairs. Delaying remedial work will only make a problem worse and increase the cost of the eventual repair work.

Ideally you should get a building condition survey carried out every five years by an experienced professional such as an architect or surveyor.

You can undertake a planned periodic inspection survey yourself. The leaflet **checking your buiLding** can assist you with this.

PUT TOGETHER A LIST OF PAST REPAIRS

Prepare a file that includes a list of items from previous inspections (to recheck). A sketch of the outside of the building, floor plans and roof plan is always useful.

If you are in a shared building ask your neighbours and check out any surveys carried out in the past.

You should try to record what work was done, when, by whom and if there is a guarantee. This is useful information so keep it safe and up to date and pass the file onto another owner when you move.

PREPARE A MAINTENANCE PLAN

Maintenance is most effective when carried out regularly, on a planned cycle.

Good maintenance needs the regular investment of small amounts of time and money, but the cost of preparing and carrying out a planned maintenance programme should be far less than the costs resulting from a series of unplanned major repairs, and will help you plan your future financial commitments.

A maintenance plan will include a schedule of inspections and routine maintenance needed on the building. In shared properties a joint maintenance plan will cover the common areas but can also include works that are the individual owners responsibility.

DECIDE WHICH BUILDER TO EMPLOY

Consider how you are going to choose a builder suitable for any work which needs done. Small building firms do small jobs well but bigger jobs need bigger firms with the resources for more complex work. It can be difficult choosing the right builder. See the leaflet **Organising Repairs to your Building**, for more details.

MAJOR REPAIRS

Occasionally you will need to have major works carried out on your building, so it is useful to understand how to deal with them. It will be difficult to obtain comparative estimates from different building contractors unless you can describe the work in detail. Professional advice from a property manager, surveyor or architect could save you costly and unnecessary work.

ASSISTANCE

Direct Grant is no longer available for repair work however Scottish Borders Council can provide information and advice on property maintenance, repair and improvement. See the information leaflet **Scheme of Assistance** for more details.

The table below examples a schedule to show what you should be doing to maintain your property and how often. This is only a general guide. You will need a detailed survey to establish the condition of the building and to tell you where you are in the life cycle of its various elements.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Every year	gutter cleaning, roof inspection and minor reactive repairs
	check flashings on the roof and cupolas
	check and repair harling and render cement coatings
	chimney heads and chimney pots
Every 3–5 yrs	TV aerials and fixings
	door-entry systems
	external paint work on doors, windows, gutters and downpipes
Every 5–10 yrs	stair painting
	mastic around windows
	repair felt roof coverings
Every 10–15 yrs	pointing – mortar between stone/brick in walls
	replace uPVC windows
Every 10–20 yrs	renew render coatings on walls or chimneys
Every 20–30 yrs	replace felt roof coverings
	major overhaul of tiling on roofs
Every 40–50 yrs	replace lead roofs
	replace tiled roofs
	some work to sandstone walls and chimney heads
Every 50–100 yrs	replace slated roofs
	replace cast iron gutters and downpipes
	replace external woodwork
	replace cast iron railings

HOW LONG SHOULD BUILDING PARTS LAST

This is a general guide only, based on regularly maintained buildings. You should get a survey carried out every 5 years to establish the actual condition.

Building Element	Life Span
Render Coatings on walls or chimneys	replace after 10-20yrs
Plastic Gutters or pipes	replace between 15-20yrs
Felt roof coverings	repair after 10yrs; replace after 20-30yrs
Tiles	repair from 20yrs; replace after 40yrs
Lead roof coverings or flashings	repair after 30yrs; replace after 50yrs
Slates	re-fix every 30yrs; replace after 90yrs
Cast iron gutters and downpipes	replace after 35-90yrs
Sandstone walls and chimneys	expect some repairs after 50yrs
Cast iron or steel railings	replace after 55-90yrs
External woodwork	replace after 55-90yrs

FURTHER INFORMATION

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING TEAM

For advice on improving, repairing and maintaining your building.

Galashiels Area Office | Paton Street | Galashiels | TD1 3AS

Tel: 01896 661393

[email: housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk)

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HOUSING STRATEGY TEAM

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