

MAINTAINING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Like many things in life (cars, gardens, people!) properties perform best when they are maintained. Regular inspection can help keep you and your property safe, warm and watertight.

Maintenance can also prevent or delay bigger problems developing, which can save money on large repair bills in future.

Ideally, you should complete a full visual inspection of your buildings at least once a year.

Autumn is a good time to do a thorough maintenance check, ensuring your property is ready for winter.

However, it is important to regularly inspect, particularly after periods of extreme weather such as storms, snow or drought.



Try our maintenance workout!



Maintenance is routine work which keeps your property in good working order.

10 MINUTE MAINTENANCE WORKOUT!



Regular maintenance should focus on keeping your property water-tight.

- **Clear leaves from drains, the bottom of downpipes**
- **Sweep or scrape any moss or plant growth from the base of your building or within easy reach**
- **Check air-bricks and flues aren't blocked**



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There are numerous resources available to help you plan regular maintenance through the year.



A great place to start is the SPAB [Maintenance Matters](#) campaign. Every November, they run a week long campaign to raise awareness of the importance of maintenance. Look out for helpful resources, such as this [calendar](#) of simple checks you can do to maintain your building. There is also practical advice such as [Maintenance tips to keep your home warm and dry in winter](#).

Historic England have a useful [illustrated maintenance checklist](#) on their website.

We have produced a Maintenance Checklist. You can print this off and complete it yourself, or use as a basis to instruct a tradesperson or handyman.

The SPAB Knowledge Base has [guidance on a range of maintenance topics](#) including roof, windows and floor maintenance.

Preventative maintenance is also important, such as [cold weather precautions](#).

Grants and financial assistance are not usually available for maintenance, but if you can prioritise it, you are likely to save money in the long term.



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You may be able to carry out some maintenance checks yourself. Here are some top tips:



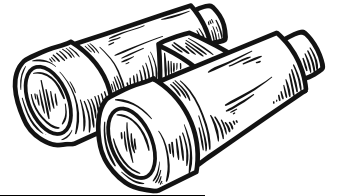
- 1. Be systematic.** Start with the exterior of the property and inspect from top to bottom. Use the printable checklist or SPAB's more detailed [template](#)
- 2. Ideally carry out the inspection in the rain,** it's much easier to tell if a gutter is blocked!
- 3. Take lots of photos,** they can be useful to include when getting quotes for work
- 4. Use binoculars** to inspect roofs and upper floors- only attempt to inspect from ladders or scaffolding if you are confident, trained and have well maintained equipment. If in doubt, call someone in to help
- 5. Carry a torch** or camera or phone with a flash for seeing in dark and hard to access places
- 6. Watch out for slippery bits- wear boots** with good grip and gloves if inspecting cellars or little accessed areas
- 7. Don't stand in the road!** Or, if it can't be avoided, inspect at a quiet time and wear high visibility clothing.



Make sure you stay safe, and only carry out maintenance work if you feel confident.

If in doubt, call in help.

Maintenance Checklist



Date of Inspection: _____

Exterior

- Roof. Inspect with binoculars for damage or loss of slates/coverings**
- Chimney. Broken pots, missing pointing, damaged brickwork**
- Gutters. Blocked, missing, damaged, staining below, plant growth**
- Walls. Cracks, missing pointing, damp, missing paint/render**
- Windows. Flaking paint, cracks, damaged timber or glass, rusting locks/catches and hinges.**
- Doors. Rot, cracking, flaking paint.**
- Drains. Blocked, damaged, draining slowly.**
- Boundary walls, gates. Flaking paint, rusting, missing mortar, bulging.**

Notes/Actions:

Interior

- Walls. Check for damp, peeling paint/paper, staining, condensation.**
- Floors. New cracks, dips, springiness, bulges.**
- Ceilings. Cracks, bulges, patches of damp or staining**
- Cellars. Damp, mould, rot, cracks.**



Notes/Actions:

Services

- Water. Get boiler serviced, check for leaking taps and pipes**
- Heating. Get boiler serviced**
- Burglar alarm. Test and check batteries.**
- Smoke alarm. Test and check batteries**
- Fire extinguishers. Check.**

Notes/Actions:



Weather: _____

