



Under One Roof

Impartial advice on repairs and maintenance for flat owners in Scotland

COMMON REPAIR PROBLEMS IN STONE BUILDINGS

1

Maintain your gutters

Maintain your gutters

- This is one of the most important things you can do to protect your building from damp and rot

Clean your gutters every year





Leaks from gutters damage stonework



Check your gutter fixings



Check the joints between gutter sections



Secret gutters lie behind parapets and upstands



Blockages in secret gutters can go unnoticed until its too late



A blockage in a central valley gutter leads to damp in the middle of the building



A good roof repair undermined by a weedy gutter.

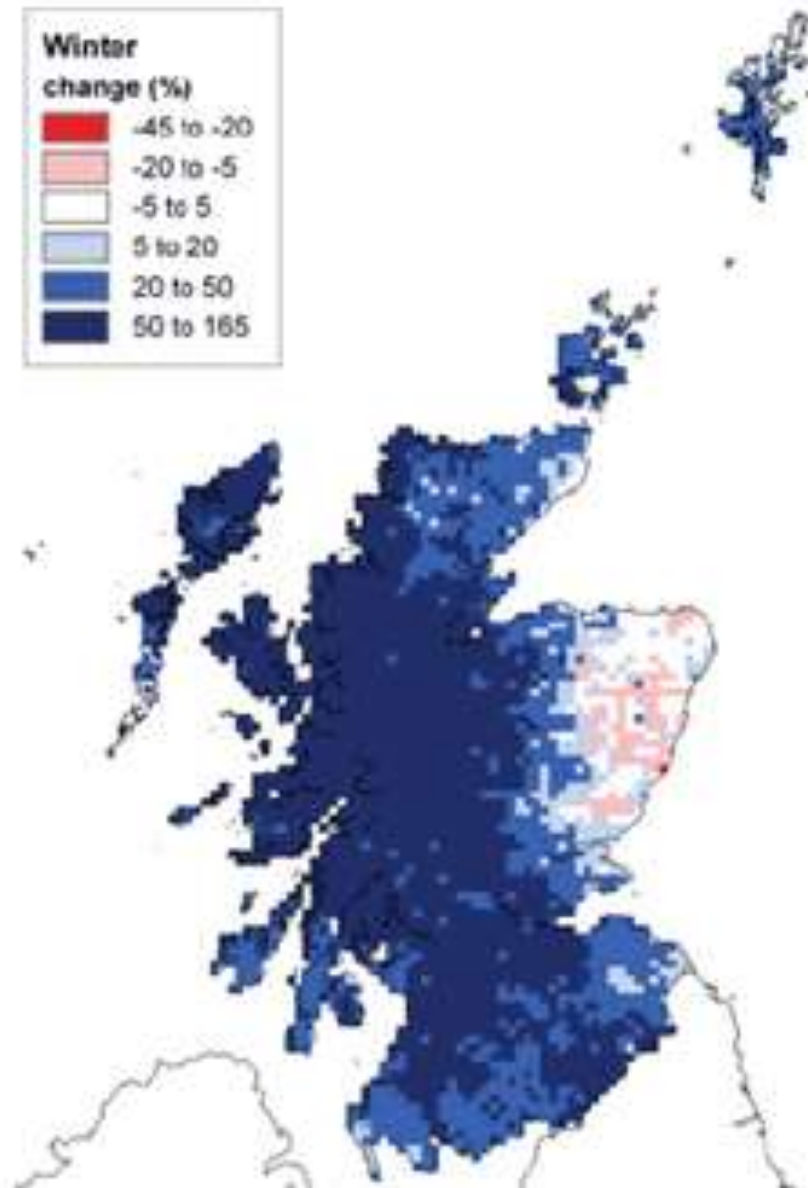


Get leafguards fitted if trees are near



Climate change – our winters are getting much wetter

Rainfall increase in Scotland
1961 - 2004



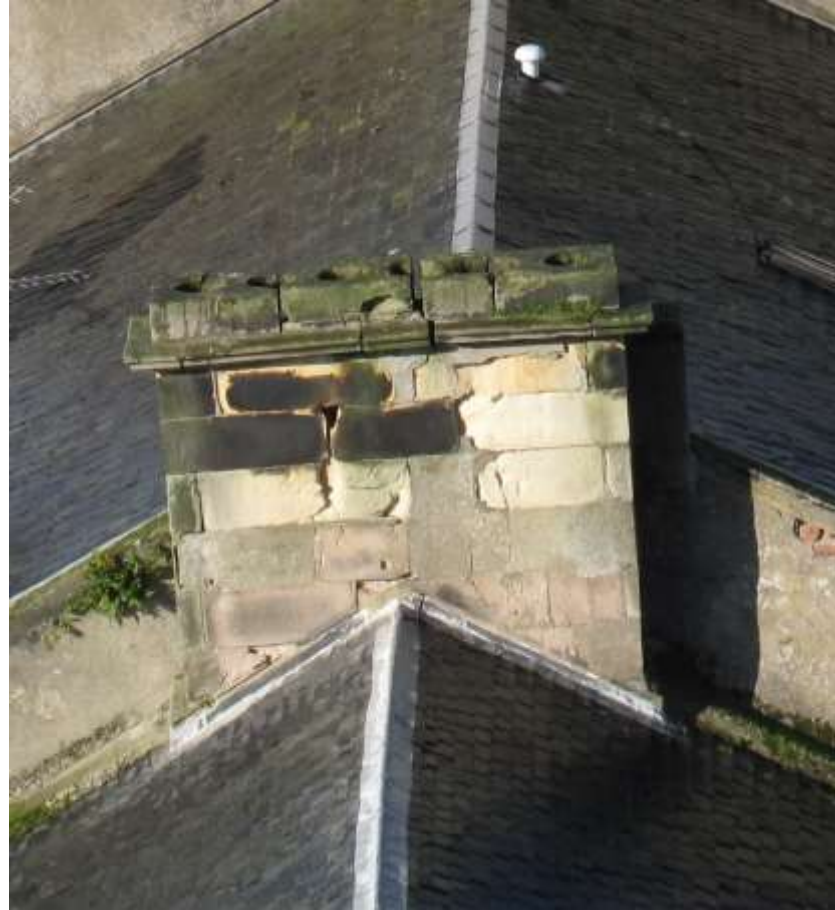
Get your gutters enlarged to cope with higher rainfall



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Check your chimneys

Uncapped flues and poor stonework lead to damp



Stonework on chimneys is especially vulnerable to decay



Potential danger



Plants force stonework apart



Half a repair is no use



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Repairing roofs

Repairing your roof is not just about slipped slates



Keep the ridge repaired



The ridge protects the slates





Flashings cover the joints between different parts of the roof



Ridges can sag if timbers decay



Cement flashings wear and crack





Damaged lead flashing



An extreme case of flashing problems



Flashband will last long enough to get proper repairs organised



Dormer windows are vulnerable to weather



Check the loft for signs of damp



Keep lofts clear and ventilated to prevent damp



Check your water tanks



Flat roofs

Bitumen flat roofs need to be protected from solar radiation which causes decay



Asphalt roofs should be also be protected



Asphalt can slump on vertical surfaces



Light ponding is often not a problem



Flat roof problems over a bay window



Better! Lead can last for 100 years



4

Safeguarding stonework

Stone walls are not solid – they have a middle section filled with rubble



Hard cement mortar stops stone from breathing and leads to stone decay.
Always use lime mortar







Plant growth leads to damp





Covering stone with cement is a long-term problem







Damage to stone caused by leak above





Salts from flue gases decay stone



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Windows, doors and lintels

Check the stone around your bay and oriel windows



Stone mullions are prone to delamination



A rusting iron staple has broken stone



Rotten window cills allow damp into walls



Window mastic helps keep damp and draughts out of your building



Rot in inner timber lintel



When the inner timber lintel rots, the outer stone lintel often cracks



Your front door says a lot about your building



Window repairs being carried out safely



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Drainpipes

Paint cast iron drain pipes regularly to protect them from rust.



- Make sure your painter deals with the back of the pipe too!

Damp caused by breaking a pipe to fit a new sink drain



A choked drainpipe



Some buildings have internal drainpipes



7

Close and Stairs

Skylights should be able to be opened to prevent condensation dampness



Missing nosings are dangerous and allow flooring to become damaged



Gaps in balusters are dangerous – especially to small children



8

Cracks and bulges

Separation cracks are quite common but get them monitored for ongoing movement



Cracks running between stones can often be dealt with by repointing with lime mortar



Get immediate structural advice if you notice bulging walls



9

Rot and damp

Don't let soil levels build up and keep under floor vents clear



Typical signs of rot



Typical signs of rot



Dry rot in a structural beam



Treat the damp that is causing rot or it will just come back in new timber



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Check your building regularly

Ask your neighbours if you can look from their flat



But you can't always see
these things yourself

So get a professional
survey every 5 years

More information from
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