

Britain's oldest conservation body gives old buildings a future. We advise, we educate, we campaign!

Love your building!

A calendar of simple checks that you can do to maintain your building, saving you time and money.



January

YES NO

- Have your electricity system checked by a qualified person every 5 years. **TO DO**
- Smoke alarms should be regularly tested and cleaned. Remember to replace the batteries too! **TO DO**
- If your property has valley gutters they will need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions. **TO DO**

Regular checks are a vital part of building maintenance. Check as frequently as you can, it will save you a lot of time and money in the long run! The best time to look at gutters and rainwater goods is during or just after the rain as this will help you to spot any leaking sections.

February

YES NO

- If your property has valley gutters they will need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions. **TO DO**
- If appropriate, check that roofs and windows are bird-proof before nesting starts. *Do not disturb bats.* **TO DO**
- Check the condition and safety of any ladders, personal protective equipment or any other kit used as part of regular maintenance. **TO DO**



March

YES NO

- Check that gutters and downpipes have not been damaged by frost. Look for cracks and leaks in rainwater goods and note damaged sections. **TO LOOK FOR**
- If your property has valley gutters they will need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions. **TO DO**
- If your roof space has safe access and is boarded, check whether there is evidence of leaks or damage to the roof covering during heavy rain, especially below gutters. **TO DO**

TOP TIP Use a hand mirror to look behind rainwater pipes as splits and cracks in old cast iron and aluminium often occur here and are not easily noticed.

April

YES NO

- Check roofs for frost, snow and wind damage. Debris on the ground from broken slates and tiles can indicate a problem. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Check for splits and cracks in areas of flat or sloping sheet roofing. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Inspect lead flashings and mortar fillets at chimneys and roof wall abutments for signs of decay. Problems include holes or splits in lead-work and erosion of mortar fillets. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly. Frequent attention may be needed if the building is surrounded by trees, or perched on by pigeons. Cast iron gutters may also require repainting. **TO DO**

TOP TIP Fit bird/leaf guards to the tops of soil pipes and rainwater outlets to prevent blockages.

May

YES NO

- Drains should be cleaned and rodded out if they overflow during wet weather. Remove silt and debris to ensure water discharges freely. **TO DO**
- Make sure that windows open and that ventilators are working so that the building can be ventilated on dry days during the summer months. Lubricate door and window fittings and check security locks. **TO DO**
- Shut down heating system and have the boiler serviced. Bleed any radiators and ensure that the frost thermostat is operational. **TO DO**
- Clear away plant growth from drains and drainage channels around gulleys and the base of the walls generally. **TO DO**

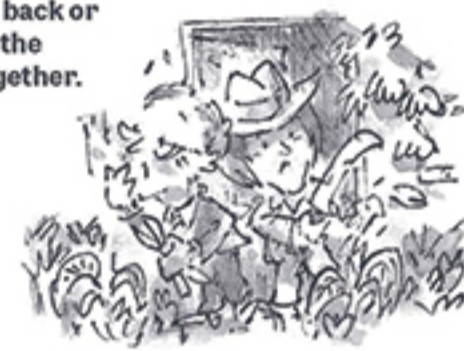
TOP TIP Have gutters refixed if they are discharging water onto the wall – look for staining on the brickwork or plaster.

June

YES NO

- Inspect your windows. Check the glazing, putty, lead cames and wire ties back to saddle bars for signs of damage. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Check timberwork for signs of rot including less accessible areas such as floor and roof voids, under stairs. Don't forget to check in your cupboards. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Remove vermin from floor and roof voids. **TO DO**

TOP TIP Remove potentially damaging vegetation from behind downpipes by cutting back or removing the plant altogether.



July

YES NO

- Look at timber windows, doors, fascias and bargeboards. Check for cracked and rotten wood. Repair and redecoration may be required. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Clear away any plant growth from around the base of the walls and in particular around gulleys and drains. **TO DO**
- If the building has a lightning protection system have it serviced every five years. **TO DO**

TOP TIP Regular painting of cast iron is essential to prevent rust – and keeps your property looking good!

September

YES NO

- If your roof space has safe access and is boarded, check for evidence of leaks or damage to the roof covering during heavy rain, especially below gutters. You might spot light coming through gaps left by missed or slipping tiles. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Clear away any plant growth from around the base of the walls and in particular around gulleys and drains. **TO DO**
- Make sure that water tanks and exposed water pipes are protected from frost. Repair any leaks. **TO DO**
- Make sure that any airbricks or under floor ventilators are free from obstruction and clean if necessary. **TO DO**

TOP TIP Check ground level gulleys and drains to make sure they are clear of debris like leaves, twigs and even things like balls and toys – and have them cleaned out if necessary.

October

YES NO

- Check masonry for signs of damage. Seek expert advice on any deeply eroded mortar joints, cracks, or signs of movement. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Check that the heating system is working properly. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly. Frequent attention may be needed if the building is surrounded by trees, or perched on by pigeons. **TO DO**

TOP TIP The best time to look at gutters and rainwater goods is during or just after the rain as this will help you to spot any leaking sections.



November

YES NO

- Check roofs for damage. Debris on the ground from broken or missing slates and tiles indicates that there may be a problem. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Check that snowboards and access walkways are in a good state of repair. **TO LOOK FOR**
- Clear leaves and debris from gutters and rainwater pipes regularly. Frequent attention may be needed if the building is surrounded by trees, or perched on by pigeons. Cast iron gutters may also require repainting. **TO DO**



December

YES NO

- If your property has valley gutters they will need to be cleared of snow to prevent melt water rising above them and causing damp internally. Extra caution is needed in icy conditions. **TO DO**
- Gullies beneath rainwater pipes and drains should be cleaned out regularly. Drains should be rodded out if they overflow during wet weather. Remove silt and debris to ensure water discharges freely. **TO DO**
- Make sure that any fire safety equipment has been serviced. **TO DO**

Well done! You've kept your building well maintained for another year.



Safety

Ensure you maintain your building safely. Ladders, lofts and roofs present particular hazards. It is best not to work alone, but to think of the safety of helpers and others beneath.

Safety equipment is needed for some jobs, including gloves for the clearance of drains or removal of pigeon droppings from gutters. Do not touch gas or electrical supplies unless you are qualified.

If in any doubt about safe access, particularly on roofs and in attics, use a reputable, professional builder for inspection of work. Binoculars, mirrors and selfie sticks can be useful tools to help you inspect roofs and other high level items.

Don't undertake routine maintenance work at high level unless you are accompanied and have suitable equipment. If in doubt always seek help from a professional.

For further advice contact the Health and Safety Executive, www.hse.gov.uk

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