

# Technical Notes for repairs and restoration work and for extensions in conservation areas

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Maintenance and repair are essential for long term sustainability of buildings.

**Maintenance** can be defined as “routine work necessary to keep the fabric of a place in good order” ([Conservation Principles 2008](#)). The primary objective of maintenance is to limit deterioration. Regular maintenance regime is cost-effective and protects the building from decay and also helps to ensure the health and safety of building users and the general public.

**Repair** can be defined as “work beyond the scope of maintenance, to remedy defects caused by decay, damage or use, including minor adaptation to achieve a sustainable outcome, but not involving alteration or restoration” ([Conservation Principles 2008](#)). Repairs are carried out to remedy defects and to keep the building in use and prevent decay and to sustain the significance of the building or place. It is important to understand the significance of the building and how the various elements of the building contribute to its significance before carrying out repairs to establish how the elements will be affected by repair and thereby affect the significance of the building.

Historic England’s [Conservation Principles](#) defines **restoration** as returning a building to “a known earlier state, on the basis of compelling evidence, without conjecture”.

The distinction between restoration and repair can sometimes be not very clear but repair works often provide opportunity for restoration. In some cases, restoration may provide conservation benefits that cannot be achieved through repair alone.

As the owner of a home in a conservation area or as owner of a listed building you may be faced with the challenges of structural decay and need for modernisations. Owners have an important role to play in managing and maintaining the character of the conservation area. Keeping your home well maintained is the best way to ensure long term future of the building and the conservation area that it’s an integral part of. Regular maintenance such as clearing gutters, stopping leaks or repairing windows will help keep the building weatherproof and watertight and help to prevent more serious problems developing. For more complex work you will need the advice of a specialist who will be able to advise you on what sort of proposals would be suitable for your building and what materials would be best to use.

Historic England, the UK government's statutory adviser on all aspects of the historic environment provides a wealth of easily accessible advice and information to help building owners.

The following links provide advice about routine maintenance and the ongoing care needed to keep your historic building in a good state of repair.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/looking-after-your-home/>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/>

General advice is offered regarding common types of repair works needed, together with advice about how to find professional assistance. Under the [Your Home](#) section on their website. They provide valuable information about looking after historic buildings. Topics covered include maintaining and repairing an older home, understanding decay, materials, restoration, structural movement, repairing walls, repairing windows, repairing roofs, and energy efficiency.

Under the technical guidance section, energy efficiency in ways sympathetic to the historic character of the older buildings is considered as are topics around how to maintain and repair older buildings.

### **More specialist technical advice**

Historic England also provide advice and detailed technical guidance for the specialist. A series of 10 Practical Building Conservation Books are available –

<http://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/buildings/practical-building-conservation/> -

These ten new volumes provide a comprehensive and practical reference for carrying out repairs to historic buildings. The ten-part series looks at the conservation of buildings, materials and systems and is aimed at those who work on or look after historic buildings but also for owners.

The ten volume series includes:

[Building Environment](#)  
[Concrete](#)  
[Conservation Basics](#)  
[Earth, Brick and Terracotta](#)  
[Glass and Glazing](#)  
[Metals](#)  
[Mortars, Renders and Plasters](#)  
[Roofing](#)  
[Stone](#)  
[Timber](#)

### **Contact details**

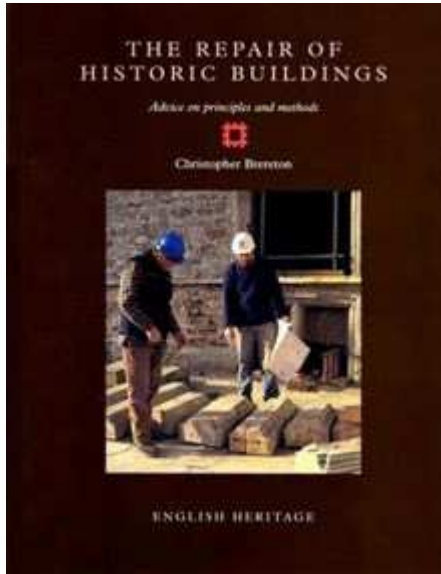
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The Repair of Historic Buildings  
Advice on principles and methods  
Paperback by Christopher Brereton  
Published 15 February 1995

The Repair of Historic Buildings offers comprehensive advice on correct maintenance and repair. The first section is concerned with general principles and day-to-day maintenance, followed by a detailed discussion of repair techniques, covering each of the main materials and features associated with historic buildings. In addition, the author addresses the difficult questions of when sensitive replacement rather than repair becomes necessary, and when appropriate.

## CONTACT DETAILS OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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