

HOMEOWNER MAINTENANCE SERIES

AN ACTION OF THE HERITAGE COUNCIL'S TRADITIONAL
BUILDING SKILLS INITIATIVE AND SPAB IRELAND

RAINWATER GOODS

WHY?

Love your gutters, they work hard. Check your gutters a few times in the year and make sure to clean them at least once a year. This will stop moss, leaves and twigs from building up and allow water to flow away from your building. Inspect your gutters every six months for cracks or leaks.

When water is continually running down the face of a wall, over time it can cause serious problems such as mortar erosion, increased plant growth, interior damp, as well as full on leaks into your building.

During heavy rain is a good time to inspect your gutters. It will be obvious if there are any cracks, blockages or leaks.



Clogged with vegetation at one end and with a clear gap at the other, this gutter is bringing water back into the building.



Water from this downpipe is being directed against a wall, causing it to be saturated.

HOW?

1. Make sure that gutters are sloping the correct way towards the downpipe, and not overflowing at the ends. Otherwise, this will wet the wall below and soften the ground around its base. Ensure that gutters and downpipes are adequately fixed and that gutters do not sag between brackets, particularly when full of water.
2. Downpipe outlets should be fitted so as to direct water away from the building and not against the wall.
3. If you have parapet gutters, take care when clearing as they are usually lined with soft materials such as lead.



If using a ladder to clean your gutters make sure someone is there with you to hold the bottom. Gutters can be messy. A good pair of kitchen or garden gloves might be a good idea.

For video on rainwater goods scan the QR code or visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCuU41VsNmg&list=PLIKz_DMJSUkEcOQp2zhItlS885a1Tfy1&index=2



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INTRODUCTION

The maintenance series is a collection of five sheets providing the owners of older homes (i.e. built before World War II) with basic guidance on essential maintenance.



1

Wood and ironwork



2

Render and mortar



3

Roofs



4

Vegetation



5

Rainwater goods

Each maintenance sheet is complemented by a short explanatory video. The videos are available to view on the YouTube channels of both the Heritage Council and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings Ireland (SPAB).

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIKz_D-MJSUkEcOQp2zhltIS885a1Tfy1

WHY MAINTAIN YOUR OLD BUILDING?

Well-maintained buildings improve the quality of life of their occupants and the community in general. Beyond preserving the intrinsic heritage value of these buildings, carrying out regular maintenance to your building has strong economic benefits:

1. Conducting regular maintenance costs significantly less than waiting for problems to grow and resolving later. Over time, as building problems worsen, the cost of repair tends to grow not at a constant pace but at an ever-increasing rate.
2. Maintenance will extend the life of your building and thereby support the preservation of its resale value.
3. Communities that maintain their buildings, improve the property values of all.

FURTHER READING

An excellent document to read on building maintenance is *Maintenance: a guide to the care of older buildings* (Donnelly, 2007).

www.chg.gov.ie/app/uploads/2015/07/Maintenance-A-Guide-to-the-Care-of-Older-Buildings-2007.pdf

A full resource webpage on the repair and maintenance of historic buildings has been created by the Heritage Council. Relevant information on rainwater goods can be found in the roofs section of the webpage. www.heritagecouncil.ie/news/news-features/how-historic-buildings-can-be-repaired-and-maintained

There is also advice on maintenance and building repair available on SPAB's website and by contacting their Technical Advice Line:

www.spab.org.uk/advice

USEFUL CONTACTS

Almost every local authority has either a Heritage Officer or Architectural Conservation Officer, many have both. They can provide you with very helpful advice on caring for your historic building.

To find your local Architectural Conservation Officer visit: www.buildingsofireland.ie/app/uploads/2020/07/Architectural-Conservation-Officers-01.07.2020.pdf

To find your local Heritage Officer visit:

www.heritagecouncil.ie/our-work-with-others/county-heritage-officers

