

HOME BUILDING SURVEY – RISING DAMP TREATMENT – GENERAL ADVICE

The notes below are a simple guide to the traditional way of treating true rising damp in older houses with solid 9" brick walls. A chemical damp proof course is not always required, as in many cases dampness may be caused by high outside ground levels, old plaster, defective concrete floors, condensation or water from outside. Prior to carrying out treatment work a full analysis of the problem should be carried out. Chemical damp proof courses do not always work. **This guidance is given with the best intentions but nothing in this advice shall create or be deemed to create any obligations whether expressed or implied.**

On external wall surfaces, the ground level should be kept at least 150 mm below the line of either the original damp proof course or the internal floor, whichever is the lower, and the rendering should be removed below this line to avoid the risk of bridging. Outside it is important to allow the bottom of the wall to breathe out moisture which is sucked up from the ground. Attention should be paid to prevention of penetrating dampness by maintaining rainwater pipes and gulleys, as well as pointing between bricks and around windows.

Injection Process Consists of drilling 10 mm holes to a depth of approximately two-thirds of the thickness of the masonry to be treated, at pre-determined centres. Where specified, drilling may be carried out from both sides of the wall. A specially formulated fluid is then injected into the wall along the line of the required damp proof course. External drill holes are then plugged. Complementary vertical damp proof courses are positioned where necessary to isolate treated walls from the effects of rising damp in adjoining walls as, for example, in semi-detached or terraced houses or properties with abutting walls.

After treatment of rising damp, it will take some time for the dampness already within the wall to evaporate. An old solid 9" wall may take a year or more to dry out but drying should be encouraged whenever possible by the removal of any plaster or rendering.

Replastering Defective plaster should be removed and the wall re plastered with a coating that has been designed to overcome the effects of hygroscopic salts. This is to inhibit damage to internal decorations caused by chlorides and other salts deposited by rising damp as these salts can attract and retain moisture after rising damp has been eliminated. Replastering should preferably be left for several weeks to facilitate the initial drying out process.

1. Remove defective plaster and approximately 600 mm beyond, brush off any efflorescent salts that have formed on the surface to the brickwork.
2. Render with three-parts washed sand and one-part cement and include water-proofing additive, this salt inhibiting render coat to be a minimum of 10 mm thick or alternatively use a renovating plaster such as Limelite or Thistle.
3. Apply a coat of heavyweight finishing plaster, minimum of 3 mm thick.
4. Leave a 50 mm channel between rendering and the floor. I prefer to leave the exposed brickwork so the wall can breathe out moisture but some contractors will treat this brickwork with two coats of liquid bitumen such as Synthaprufe.
5. Refix/renew skirting boards, pre-treated with wood preservative. MDF products should not be used.

PREMIXED LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTER MUST NOT BE USED.

Dry Lining Where referred, as an alternative to wall plaster or where additional insulation is required, internal wall linings may be used. Foil-backed plasterboard should be fixed on pre-treated timber battens set at approximately 400 mm centres. Greater insulation values will be obtained if fibreglass or foam insulation is inserted beneath the plasterboard. The battens and plasterboard must be terminated approximately 25 mm and 50 mm above the floor. The gap thus formed may be covered using pre-treated timber skirting's. MDF products should not be used.

Condensation Adequate heating and ventilation must be maintained in order to avoid damage to internal decorations caused by condensation. Please see my separate advice sheet on this subject.

Decoration The use of non-vinyl emulsion is recommended on all treated walls. **DO NOT USE VINYL EMULSION OR WALLPAPER** for a period of six months. 04/10/2016