

#OurSixTowns

Building a bright future together



Stockton Town Centre Conservation Area

Maintain to gain

**A guide to caring for property
and preserving investment**

Delivered by



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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Introduction

Traditional and historic buildings are an integral part of the townscape, widely valued for their character, form and distinctiveness. They are, however, often considered expensive to run and difficult to maintain compared to modern structures. Nevertheless, there are some practical and economical steps that can be taken to maintain historic buildings and there are many professionals with the right skills and access to appropriate materials to help you to protect your building's value as an asset.

Context

Stockton-on-Tees has much to celebrate and cherish. It has a long, diverse and proud heritage. The town is characterised by the width of its High Street, reputed to be the widest in England. Stockton benefits from a varied and interesting townscape with a mix of architectural styles encompassing the 17th Century to the present day.

Improvements have been made to the historic environment of Stockton Town Centre through Stockton Heritage in Partnership (SHiP) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) projects.

This work is being built upon thanks to the Stockton Northern Gateway Townscape Heritage (TH) project. This is a five-year scheme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It aims to protect the special characteristics of the historic environment at the northern end of Stockton High Street through a series of restoration projects of identified historic buildings and works to the surrounding area.

The Townscape Heritage improvements are situated within the Stockton Town Centre Conservation Area, an area recognised and protected because of its special architectural and historic interest. This guide has been developed to support the positive management of the historic and architectural character of the buildings of Stockton.



Photograph: Finkle Street
Stockton-on-Tees



Photograph: Church Road
Stockton-on-Tees



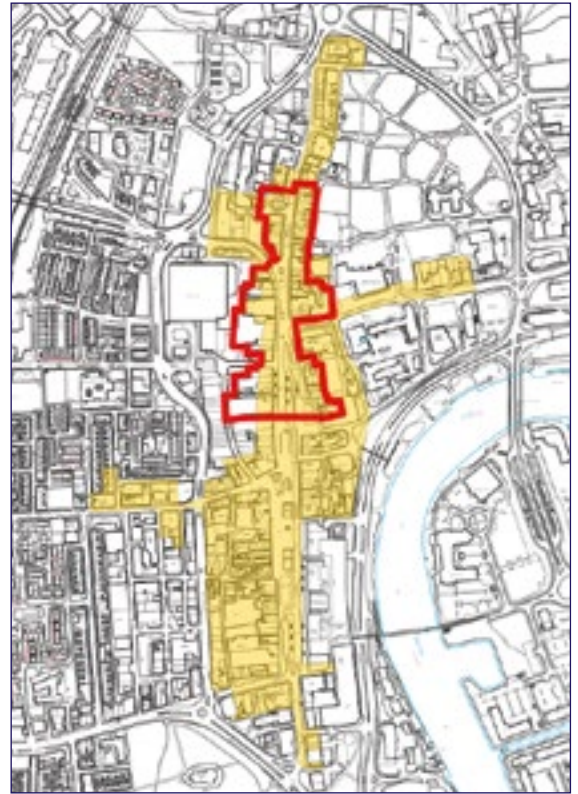
Photograph: Globe Theatre, under construction 2021

Why maintenance is important

All buildings require maintenance. Lack of maintenance is one of the main reasons buildings deteriorate.

An effective maintenance regime is likely to save you money and time. By carrying out regular inspections it is possible to establish the nature of any problems, giving you the opportunity to remedy defects promptly, economically and maintaining the value of the building as an asset.

Historic buildings matter to communities, often being the focus for regeneration in our towns. Maintenance of your building will contribute to the attractiveness of the local area and will help preserve its value as a local point of interest, contributing to the vibrancy of the townscape. Maintaining historic buildings can inspire local people to take pride in Stockton's story and will also encourage visitors to enjoy the town's heritage offer.



Map 1: Details Stockton Town Centre Conservation Area (yellow) and the Townscape Heritage Area (red boundary)

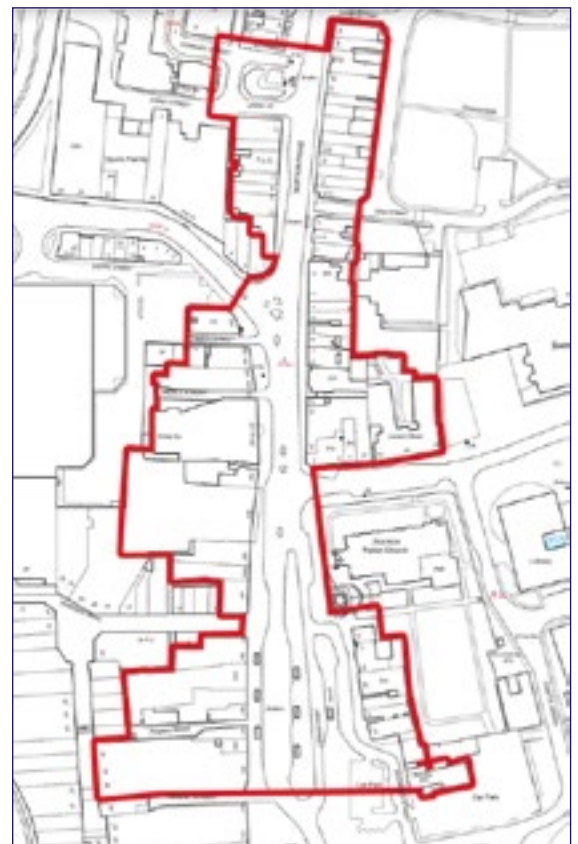
Finding the right help

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's Heritage Strategy aims to help us all to celebrate and appreciate the heritage we have in the Borough. This document supports that strategy by providing some basic practical guidance on how to manage and protect buildings within Stockton's historic environment.

There may be situations where it is necessary to consult a professional for advice and there are many resources available to help you identify suitable building professionals:

- The Clients Advisory Service of the Royal Institute of British Architects
- The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) provides a free, independent technical helpline for anyone who has a query about the care and repair of a building.



Map 2: Boundary of the Townscape Heritage area

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is committed to working with communities to preserve and regenerate the historic environment and has many useful contacts. Although council officers cannot direct you towards particular contractors or service providers, they can provide advice and guidance. Our Planning and Building Control Teams can provide advice and guidance. The Townscape Heritage team can also support you in taking forward projects through the Townscape Heritage Scheme. Our Historic Buildings Officer has a wealth of knowledge and in depth understanding of the historic buildings of Stockton.

Maintenance of historic buildings: the practicalities

A maintenance plan is an effective way to manage the routine tasks that are essential to the upkeep of your historic property.

Carrying out regular inspections of your property will enable you to pick up early warnings of any decay and deterioration. Ideally, you should aim to undertake a full visual inspection of your building at least once a year and there are some routine checks you can do throughout the year.

Condensation

What it is	Water may condense on surfaces indoors, as warm damp air comes into contact with colder surfaces particularly where ventilation is poor.
The signs	Crescent mould in the corner of external walls is a typical indicator. Condensation is often misdiagnosed as rising damp and used to justify unnecessary damp-course treatment.
Resolve	Improving ventilation is often very effective in combating condensation problems. Ensure that lofts, floor voids and redundant chimneys are well ventilated.

Rising damp



Photograph: Rising Damp

What it is	Rising damp is the upward movement of moisture through walls by capillary action from below ground.
The signs	You may notice salt deposits forming a horizontal tidemark with discoloration below.
Resolve	The solution rests with the breathability of the structure. The use of coatings only serves to trap moisture in. Ventilation may be improved by using humidity-controlled extraction, or air exchange units. If ventilation fails to resolve a dampness issue, consider employing an independent surveyor to find the cause of the problem.

Insect damage



Photograph: Insect Damage

What it is	Insect damage is often due to woodworm- wood boring beetles that thrive in damp conditions. It is vitally important to address dampness as the root cause of the woodworm issue. Damage is caused when the larvae (woodworm) tunnel down into the wood, followed by the exit of a fully formed beetle leaving a circular 'flight hole' about 1 - 2mm in size.
The signs	Check for signs of decay on all exposed timbers within a building that can be safely accessed. Look out for signs of insect attack, often indicated by flight holes and a powdery dust (known as frass) left on the surface of the timber.
Resolve	Ventilating and drying out after rectifying the causes of damp may be enough to deter woodworm if not, seek advice as to the most appropriate woodworm treatment. Determining whether the holes are old or new is a critical deciding factor in whether, or not, woodworm treatment is required. Flight holes are not, in themselves a sign of an infestation, they can be many years old because the infestation took place in the living tree before it was felled.

Dry rot



Photograph: Dry Rot

What it is	Dry rot is a wood destroying fungi. It leaves timber dry and brittle with cracks running through.
The signs	Tell-tale signs are a musty, mushroomy smell, a creamy or lilac coloured cotton-wool like substance known as mycelium spreading across the timber, along with red dust from the spores or even pancake-like mushrooms. Also look out for brittle, shrinking timbers and cracking.
Resolve	Again, addressing the root cause i.e. Eliminating damp and restoring and maintaining dry conditions is the key. Conduct regular visual inspections to check for signs of moisture ingress. Taking measurements of moisture content with a hand-held probe will help identify vulnerable timbers. If you suspect dry rot, seek the advice of a reputable professional who can diagnose and determine the extent of the spread and level of decay.

Wet rot



Photograph: Wet Rot

What it is

Wet rot is caused by fungus, typically found in timbers that have been exposed to damp or wet conditions over long periods of time. The fungal infection makes the wood soft and unstable. The moisture can come from a variety of sources including excessive condensation, leaky roofs, damp basement walls, or defective guttering or drainage.

The signs

Wet rot in timber is relatively easy to spot though is often confused with dry rot. Tell-tale signs for wet rot are a damp, musty odour, dark patches, a soft or spongy texture and/or discernible shrinkage and cracking to wood, and visible fungal growth.

Resolve

As with dry rot, effective remedy for wet rot starts with identifying the source of the moisture and rectifying it. Be aware sometimes expensive and ineffective treatments can be recommended so don't be afraid to seek independent specialist advice.

Damaged brickwork or stonework



Photograph: Brick Damage



Photograph: Brick Damage

What it is

The appeal of brick buildings lies in the character of the mortar joints as well as in the bricks themselves. Unsuitable repointing including the wrong materials can affect not only the look but also the durability of masonry. It is amongst the most frequent causes of damage to the character and fabric of historic buildings, so be sure to think carefully about the maintenance of the mortar as well as the bricks themselves.

The signs

There are several signs that brickwork is suffering.

- Surface growth and staining or efflorescence (white powdery residue building up on the wall face)
- Soft, loose or crumbling mortar or spalling (deterioration of the surface of bricks) or even bricks becoming dislodged
- Cracks appearing through the bricks or mortar.

The deterioration of stonework is often water related. Common problems include:

- Decay of mortar joints and stones, because of salt crystallisation, attack by acidic rainfall or frost action
- Cracking of stonework due to tree root activity
- Staining arising from rusting of cast iron rainwater fittings or metal window bars.

Resolve

Complete repointing of a building is rarely necessary. Sound historic mortar should be left undisturbed as it can be an important part of the character and significance of a building. If repairs are required to the walls of your historic building, you should seek advice. This is especially important where a building is listed or in a conservation area.

Steps to take in different areas of your building

Repair should always be the first consideration as this is the best way of conserving the character and fabric of a historic building. Listed buildings and some properties in conservation areas are protected by law from unnecessary window and door replacement, as well as other alterations.

Chimneys



Photograph: Chimney High Street, Stockton-on-Tees

Key issues

Chimneys can contribute to the significance and character of historic buildings. They may also fulfil structural functions. Chimneys are prone to water penetration as they are very exposed to the weather and often have thin brick skins. Dampness in chimneys may be caused by water penetration down open flues, through the walls of the chimney or as a result of condensation within blocked or partly blocked flues. Water penetration may also be caused by deterioration of the fabric -which will be noticeable in the form of cracks or worn pointing.

Inspection

Look at the exterior of the chimney for signs of damage as well as internal chimney breasts for indications of dampness. There is a risk of bird nests or other debris entering the chimney from above blocking flues and leading to damp, smells and staining.

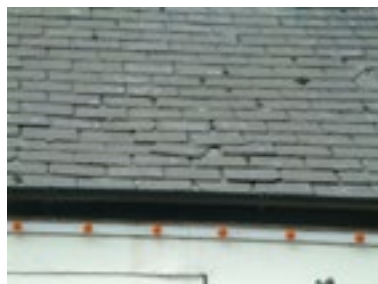
Resolve

Chimneys should be regularly swept and inspected to ensure that they are free of obstructions. Using lime-based mortars for pointing and rendering (both internally and externally) can significantly reduce the impact of water penetration.

Traditional buildings need ventilation to help the fabric 'breathe'. When in use, the chimney and the fire beneath would have contributed to the ventilation rate. A disused flue needs some residual ventilation to help keep it dry:

- A ventilated cap at the top of a chimney will prevent water ingress but allow ventilation
- Venting internally may also help- this is a process where a disused chimney is sealed from the outside by a hard capping at the top and the flue is vented both at the base and at a high level in the upper floor with through ventilation provided by warm internal air.

Roof



Photograph: Slipped roof tiles

Key issues

Common problems in the roof include:

- Missing, loose or cracked slates or tiles
- Blocked gullies or gutters
- Worn or cracked flashing (the lead finishing around the tiles or slates).

Inspection

Checking a roof regularly, particularly after bad weather, will help you to identify and correct faults. A basic check can often be carried out from the ground. Look carefully at any junctions in the roof structure such as the ridge line or where the roof slope meets a parapet. These are often weak points allowing water ingress. Watch out for holes and splits and general deterioration of lead flashing or mortar fillets as these defects will provide a route for water into the building. If the roof space can be safely and easily accessed, evidence of external defects is likely to be visible to you. Ventilation at the eaves is important as it reduces condensation, however, any other gaps letting in day light are also possibly letting in water, tell-tale signs being recent staining of roof timbers and finishes.

Resolve

Simple repairs, such as replacing dislodged or missing tiles or slates, should be carried out as soon as possible to minimise the amount of water entering the building.

Walls



Photograph: Walls

Key issues

The majority of buildings in Stockton are brick built. Some facades are rendered whilst some properties in the high street are faced in ashlar stonework. In the 19th century different coloured brick was often used to pick out detail or to add decorative strips to buildings. Keeping the walls of a building in good condition prevents water ingress.

Inspection

Look out for cracks greater than 5mm in width and monitor to see if they grow in width or length and seek advice from a structural engineer if a crack grows, or one that has been filled in, reappears. Where there is a damp course, avoid covering this protective barrier as this will trap moisture and compromise its effectiveness.

Resolve

Where possible, make sure that the ground level outside a building is below the floor level inside and 15cm below any damp course. Ensure that air bricks are kept clear - these are used to circulate air through voids under timber floors. If they become blocked, there will be less air movement under the floor, which may eventually encourage rot in the floor joists and floorboards.

Gutters, downpipes and drains



Photograph: Drainpipe in poor condition

Key issues

Regular cleaning of gutters and downpipes is an important maintenance task. Buildings that are surrounded by trees or used as a roosting place for birds are particularly prone to blocked rainwater goods. Obvious signs of problems are:

- Streaking walls during heavy rain
- Damp stains or green algae on walls
- Plant growth in gutters and hoppers
- Water overflowing from gutters can cause damage to internal plastering at ceiling level as moisture can penetrate through the wall.

Inspection

There are simple checks that can be done to ensure your rainwater goods remain in good condition:

- Downpipe fixings and gutters should be checked as they can work loose or become corroded - staining or algae around joints are clues that the connection may be faulty
- Inspect regularly for plants and debris accumulated in guttering which can cause extensive damage to masonry as well as impeding the flow of water away from the building.

Resolve

- Keeping paintwork in good condition will reduce the likelihood of corrosion
- Plant growth should be cleared away from the area around the base of the building and from any gutters or drainage channels
- Ensure that gutters are securely fixed and positioned so that they are discharging water correctly.

At all times care should be taken by anyone working at Height and make sure material is not dislodged onto Those below. Do not risk your own safety by attempting To inspect or repair difficult to reach areas. If there are access problems, make use of the services of someone who has the correct safety equipment and experience.

Mortar joint



Photograph: Damaged Mortar Joints

Key issues	The deterioration of mortar is often due to movement from thermal expansion. A common cause is excessive moisture entering a wall and freezing, causing spalling of the mortar by the expansion process.
Inspection	<p>Check for sources of moisture entry such as leaks in flashing, gutters, lintels, sills and sealant joints. Mortar joints are considered deteriorated when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have eroded back more than 0.25" From the face of the unit or beyond the depth of the original joint • Cracks are visible within the mortar • The bond between brick and mortar is broken or the mortar is soft and/or crumbling • Any portion of a mortar joint is missing.
Resolve	Where mortar joints in a wall have eroded, repointing may be necessary, but should be limited to as small an area as possible. Lime is a staple of historic building construction and is used in renders, mortars and internal plasterwork. The benefits of using lime are that it allows for moisture to evaporate, and is flexible, accommodating some movement without cracking. It is cheaper to repoint periodically than to replace stone or brickwork. Ensure mortar is suitable for your building's construction and will allow it to breathe.

Plaster



Photograph: Damaged Plaster

Key issues	The breathability of wall and ceiling finishes is an important issue in historic buildings. As with render, if hard plasters are used internally, moisture will be prevented from evaporating and the level of dampness in the wall will increase. A gradual increase in salt concentrations within the wall and the deposition of crystals below the surface will tend to blow the plaster off the wall or lead to expansion of the plaster layer itself, resulting in bulging.
Inspection	Look for cracking or flaking and missing areas.
Resolve	Deterioration usually looks worse than it is and repair rather than replace when possible.

Render



Photograph: Damaged Render

Key issues

Render is a type of plaster which protects external walls from weather. If a render has failed it is important to identify the cause and resolve the problem before repairs are undertaken. One of the likely causes of failure is poor building maintenance where, typically, failing rainwater goods or flashings have allowed a wall to become saturated.

Another common problem is brick damage caused by water trapped in porous masonry freezing and expanding causing the surface to disintegrate. Similarly, chemical salts in solution (derived from groundwater or from the masonry itself) can crystallise and expand as the water evaporates out of the wall, damaging the face. This, is again often related to the use of modern materials that will not accommodate movement or allow moisture out, causing render to shear away from the wall in patches, or sections.

Cracks can be serious issues that must be attended to, or the problem will get worse, and may cost more in the long term.

Inspection

A hollow sound when tapping the wall will give an indication of whether render is loose and needing repair. Where a problem is more acute you will see sections of render that have sheered off from the wall.

Resolve

The extent of repair necessary should be carefully ascertained by tapping the surface. Render that has detached from the backing will produce a hollow sound and may be noticeably loose. Patch repairing with the minimum of the original render taken off is the preferred option. Choose the type of render carefully. A modern cement render is incompatible with the construction of most old buildings and can cause or accelerate decay. Render should be above the damp proof course level if not it will suffer from water penetration and fall off.

Windows and doors



Photograph: Door

Key issues

Windows and doors can often appear to be in worse condition than they actually are, often mistakenly considered to be a problem requiring complete replacement, with upvc often promoted as a quick fix. Upvc is not a traditional building material and is unsuitable for historic buildings. It is visually harsh, tending to stand out from, rather than integrating with the building. Its rigidity does not accommodate the gentle movement of older buildings and it can become brittle with age, resulting in cracks that allow the glazing unit to fill with condensation. Its lifespan is around 20 years and it is considered to have an adverse environmental impact in terms of energy consumption during manufacture and impact on landfill. Timber, on the other hand has strong environmental credentials, is thermally efficient and, with regular maintenance, can last for centuries. Repair rather than replacement is considered more cost effective. An effective timber repair can harmonise with the original building fabric.

Inspection

One of the most common problems with timber windows and doors is rot, often caused through lack of maintenance and sub-standard repairs. Monitor the condition of all exterior woodwork, checking for cracked or rotten wood. If water can get through cracks in the paint, or a gap in the joint, it can be drawn up the timber, causing extensive decay. Internal condensation can also cause the same problems. Early detection allows a more effective repair to be made. Be aware that painted woodwork may mask problems with the timber underneath. You can check the condition of vulnerable areas, such as in the lower parts of cills or jambs, where deterioration most often occurs by probing with the point of a sharp knife or bradawl. If the timber has been affected by rot, the underlying surface will be soft and fibrous.



Photograph: Window

Resolve

Traditional windows and doors can often repaired be simply and economically, usually at a cost significantly less than replacement. Timber windows from the period pre 1919 are usually made from high quality, durable wood, so properly maintained, these can enjoy a long life. It is generally very straightforward to repair affected areas by cutting out the rotting wood and replacing it with a piece of sound, treated timber. All repairs should be on a like-for-like basis so that the new section matches the original in terms of the size of the wood grain and historic detailing such as moulding is retained.

- Filler can be considered for small areas of damage, helping to retain as much of the original fabric as possible
- Always rectify the root cause of the problem, identifying for example, the source of dampness.
- Maintaining a good standard of paintwork will protect woodwork from deterioration
- Traditional limewash or linseed-based paints should always be considered. They are economic in the long term because they require reapplying less frequently than many modern paints. They also provide a unique texture as well as helping to preserve the integrity of a building.

If lead based paint is suspected, seek advice on appropriate safety measures to avoid exposure to lead with any disturbance of the surface.

Services

Key issues	The services to your building are essential to its safe operation and the comfort of users and, if maintained properly can also protect your historic building from damage.
Inspection	Conduct regular visual checks of water pipes and radiators. Ensure that gas and electricity systems are regularly checked by qualified persons.
Resolve	Maintaining and conducting basic testing of services will help keep them in a good condition. Lag water pipes and tanks to prevent freezing and subsequent flooding.

Other issues

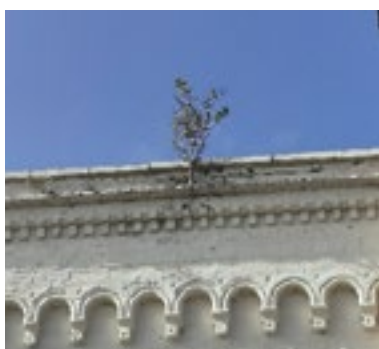
Bats



Photograph: Bats

Key issues	Historic buildings often offer an attractive shelter for bats. Almost all UK species have been found roosting in roofs therefore before doing anything with the roof internally or externally, check for the presence of bats.
Inspection	Signs of the presence of bats may include droppings and scratches on the wall. All bat species and their roosts are legally protected. You therefore have statutory responsibilities where these are present, and you should seek advice before continuing with any works.
Resolve	Maintenance can still be carried out in a way that is sensitive to the presence of bats. For example, to avoid disturbance, works can be carried out when bats are absent. In most re-roofing situations, this would be the autumn, winter or early spring months

Vegetation



Photograph: Vegetation growing on roof

Key issues	Vegetation growing unchecked close to buildings can cause several problems. Large trees can cause structural damage and leaves may block gutters.
Inspection	Look for plants growing within the walls and roof, as well as those at ground level
Resolve	You should be able to remove smaller plants at a low level without assistance and should do this regularly. If you have climbing plants, these should be kept in check to avoid possible damage to the walls, mortar and joinery. Where it is necessary to remove large areas of ivy, cut its main stems at low level and then leave the ivy to die back in-situ before gently removing it at a later date. This will minimise damage to mortar in joints. Dealing with a large tree close to a building is a specialist job and should only be undertaken with the aid of a professional.

Shopfronts

Shopfronts as we know them today were the result of improvements in technology that made wide window frontages possible. Traditional shopfronts contribute greatly to the character of an area and can provide an attractive High Street environment.

The character of a building and of the streetscape can be damaged by the replacement of traditional shop fronts with modern alternatives that are unsympathetic to the historic and architectural details of the building. In contrast, a successful shop front design respects the architecture of the building.

A shopfront is comprised of different architectural elements, each of which has a specific purpose. Paying attention to the small details that make up your shop front can make a huge difference to the overall attractiveness of your premises whilst protecting its value.

There are four key areas of a traditional 19th Century shopfront:

- **Stallriser** - The area between the window-sill and the pavement, usually constructed of timber, brick or stone.
- **Pilasters** – Columns that demark the vertical division between shopfronts
- **Fascia** - Providing space to advertise the business.
- **Cornice** – Gives a strong line across the top of the shopfront, providing protection from the weather.

Where a repair to a timber stallriser is required, good quality will be adequate for all weather conditions if correctly designed and painted. Hardwoods can also be used but must be treated with a suitable primer and painted. Plywood is unsuitable as it is prone to surface cracking and does not provide a good paint finish.

The fascia is the primary place where a shop displays its sign. Hand-painted fascia signs, created by an experienced professional are particularly appropriate for traditional shopfronts.

There is often also a fanlight above the entrance door allowing natural light into the building. Ensure the fanlight is not blocked up or painted over. The colour of a historic shopfront should be historically sympathetic.



Photograph: This modern shopfront successfully integrates many components of traditional shopfront architecture.

Good

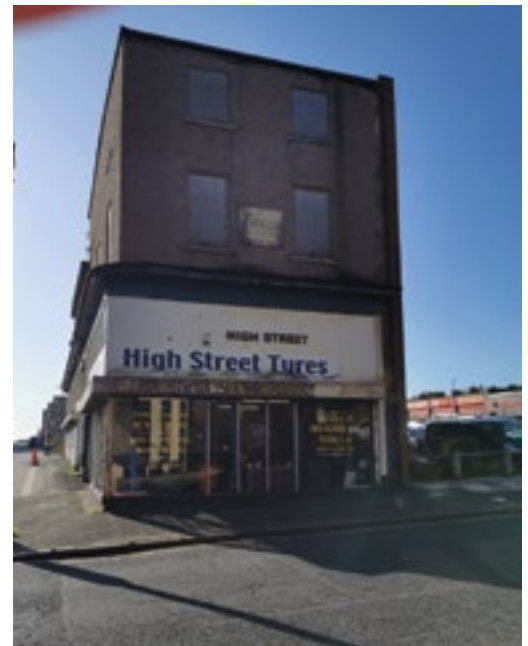
- Architectural details forming a feature e.g. stained glass
- Individual mounted or hand painted letters
- A single pale or rich heritage colour works best avoid, white shopfronts
- One traditional hanging sign on a simple bracket at fascia level or hand painted signage
- Painted timber works best in an historic environment
- Adverts should relate to the unit they are advertising
- Fascias should be in proportion to the building and shopfront and to include a cornice to the top and moulding to the bottom.



Photograph: Shows good quality shop fronts

Could be improved

- Projecting box fascias are too bulky
- Plastic and other modern materials should not be used
- Internally illuminated boxes dominate rather than complement a building
- High gloss white has a very stark appearance obscuring the architectural detail of a building and therefore should be avoided
- Excessively deep fascias have an adverse impact on the proportions of the historic shopfront
- Avoid clutter which confuses the message being displayed
- Reflective plastics make signs hard to read.



Shutters

The installation of grilles and external shutters can have a detrimental effect on the attractiveness of a street. There are sympathetic alternatives.

Security glass is a laminated glass that has the capacity to remain intact even when it is broken. This glass is virtually indistinguishable from ordinary glass, so is considered the most desirable option to retain the historic character of shopfronts.

Internal grilles are also less damaging to the streetscape. Internal grilles can be fitted behind the shop window and are retractable. When used in conjunction with security glass, these grilles normally provide a good level of shopfront security whilst allowing visibility into the shop. External grilles which leave the contents of the shop visible for window shoppers and display illumination might also be an option. Check local planning requirements before installing grilles or shutters.



Photograph: Norton Road, solid shutters do not contribute towards active frontages at the street level.

Your safety

Ensure that you consider your safety and the safety of others. Routine inspections can be carried out by yourself and your staff but there will some jobs that should be referred to professionals.

Ladders, loft and roof present particular hazards. Make sure you use the right type of ladder and you know how to use it safely. Watch where you step especially in the roof space. If possible, have another person with you while carrying out the inspection. Some safety equipment might be needed for some job e.g. gloves for clearing drains and gutters. Removing bird droppings may require specialist protective equipment. Also, be aware of your surroundings if working on a public highway so that you do not present a hazard to yourself or others when looking up and, perhaps stepping back to inspect your building.

Asbestos

Be aware that buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. When materials that contain asbestos are disturbed or damaged, fibres are released into the air. If inhaled these fibres can cause serious diseases. If you come across potential asbestos, the advice from the Health and Safety Executive is to stop work immediately and seek specialist advice.

Legislation

Be mindful of the regulations that govern alterations to your building, particularly where any works such as alterations to fascias, windows and doors or the installation of security shutters materially affect the external appearance of a building. It is advisable to seek advice from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Planning Services Team.

Remember to maintain to gain

- Carry out regular inspection and maintenance
- Use the specialists that are available to help and guide you
- Use suitability qualified contractors
- Always think 'Repair' rather than restore or replace
- Obtain necessary planning and legal consents.



Photograph: View of Stockton-on-Tees High Street

Building maintenance plan

Every Year	<p>Gutter inspection & cleaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check condition of rainwater goods• Remove accumulated debris and any plants that have taken root in guttering <p>Roof inspection & repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check condition of slates/tiles for any gaps• Look for damage to flashings• Check for damage to chimneys, including render, chimney head and pots <p>Interior & exterior walls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look for defects in stonework, brickwork and rendering, checking for loose render• Check for dampness or salt deposits• Always use the most appropriate type of mortar for repairs- lime-based mortars help the building breathe• Check the base of the wall to ensure that any vents are not obstructed• Remove plants and vegetation abutting and growing on the building <p>Window inspection & repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check condition of windows, looking for signs of rot, particularly at the cill joints• Check condition of paintwork <p>Timber inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look out for signs of insect infestation such as flight holes and 'frass'• Monitor dampness in timber• Look for signs of timber cracking or shrinkage <p>Building services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check water and heating systems for leaks• Ensure that pipes are lagged• Electrical and gas installations should be regularly inspected by certified experts• Inspect chimney flues, ensuring that they are clear from obstruction and do not leak
Every 2 Years	<p>Exterior painting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repaint doors, windows gutters & down pipes (paint may last longer in less exposed areas)
Every 5-10 Years	<p>Interior paintwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repaint interior <p>Repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace any mastic around windows
Long-Term Every 10+ years	<p>Renewal of the following may be required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Render coatings on walls or chimneys (10-20 years)• Felt roof coverings (10-15 years)• Roof replacement (40-50 years)• Replacement of cast iron guttering & downpipes (50-100 years)

Throughout the year

This section of the guide provides you with some reminders of tasks that you can undertake at different times of the year to ensure that your building is well maintained.

Spring		
Arrange for any external painting when required	Check that air brick vents are unobstructed and ground levels at the base of the building are not less than 150mm below the damp proof course (if there is one)	Inspect roofs for broken and displaced slates or tiles, lead flashings or perished felt underlay
Check for deterioration of render finishes, brick and stone faces and unsound pointing to walls, parapets & chimneys		Trim back ivy around openings and at the leaves
Check condition of glazing and putty and operation of doors, casements and sashes	Remove old nests from unused chimneys and install wire mesh grilles to prevent further nesting	Sweep chimneys that are in use
Summer		
Examine underfloor voids for dampness and rot, check that voids are adequately ventilated	Examine wall and ceiling finishes	Check condition of woodwork (especially windows and doorframes) ironmongery
Autumn		
Clean out gutters, hoppers, downpipes and gullies as often as necessary	Inspect for broken manhole covers and gully grates	
Winter		
Check water-based heating systems for an even heat distribution throughout the building and bleed radiators	Inspect roof spaces for water and vermin penetration, adequacy of ventilation and condition of roof structure	Monitor the potential for trees and shrubs to constitute a problem in respect of roof invasion, collapse onto building
	Clear snow regularly from vulnerable areas	

Further information and useful contacts

Historic England

Historic England offers a range of useful guides on their website: www.historicengland.org.uk

SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings)

SPAB has a website containing lots of useful information: www.spab.org.uk. SPAB provides a free and confidential service for anyone with a technical enquiry related to old buildings. Helpline advisors are qualified building surveyors and architects. The helpline offers advice and information on a diverse range of topics, from controlling dampness to repointing mortar joints and upgrading energy efficiency. SPAB can also direct you to professionals, contractors and specialists.

If you have a question about an old building, the helpline is available **02074 560916**. Weekdays 9.30am-12.30pm.

TRADA (The Timber Research and Development Association)

TRADA is an international membership organization, dedicated to inspiring and informing best practice design, specification and use of wood in the built environment and related fields. Members can access all online information and resources. The TRADA website is available at <http://www.trada.co.uk>.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Building control

For further information on building control services offered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council visit the website: <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/our-places/planning-and-building-control/building-control/>

Business and enterprise team

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council's Business and Enterprise Team offer a range of services to support new and local businesses. For further information on the support they offer. View: www.stockton.gov.uk/supportforbusinesses or email business.enquiries@stockton.gov.uk.

Planning

Your works may require planning permission or listed building consent. For further information on planning and the informal advice service that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council offers See: <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/our-places/planning-and-building-control/> or email: planningdevelopmentservices@stockton.gov.uk.

Town centre investment team

The team has expertise in capital project delivery, design management, property and asset management, heritage, business engagement, markets management, finance, marketing and communications. They have lead responsibility for regeneration projects. If you have any questions or need more information please email: towncentresinvestmentteam@stockton.gov.uk.

Stockton Northern Gateway Townscape Heritage Project

The aim of the project is to improve the historic environment at the northern end of Stockton High Street and raise awareness of the local history of the project area. For more information about how they could assist you email: fiona.riley@stockton.gov.uk or telephone: **01642 524551** or email: eleanor.blyth@stockton.gov.uk. The link to the website is www.stockton.gov.uk/townscapeheritage