

What is Inverness City Heritage Trust?

Inverness City Heritage Trust was established to take a strategic view of the conservation needs of the buildings forming the historic core of the city and to co-ordinate a programme of repair and restoration work funded by grant assistance.

Owners of buildings within the **Inverness Riverside** and **Crown Conservation Areas**, like all property owners, are responsible for the repair and maintenance of the fabric of their buildings. However, the traditional materials and craftsmanship required to preserve the appearance and character of old buildings may demand abnormal expenditure. Inverness City Heritage Trust grants are intended to help meet these additional costs, and to assist with the reinstatement of original features.

For further information on the grant scheme and conditions please contact the project officer at the address shown on the back cover.



For more information

The following publications go into more detail about what to look for when a property is inspected and how to deal with repairs.

SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings) & **IHBC** (Institute for Historic Building Conservation)

A Stitch in Time

http://www.ihbc.org.uk/stitch_in_time.htm

Historic Scotland

Guides for owners and occupiers

<http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk>

For more general information contact:

Inverness City Heritage Trust

Town House

Inverness IV1 1JJ

01463 724384

<http://www.heritage-inverness.org>

Conservation Officer

The Highland Council

01463 702281



INVERNESS
CITY HERITAGE TRUST

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Looking after your property



INVERNESS CITY HERITAGE TRUST
2011

Looking after your Property



Vegetation growing out of City Centre property—roots of plants and trees cause opening of mortar joints and can lead to damp problems and unstable stonework.

No two buildings are affected in the same way but the majority of building repairs can be traced back to a lack of maintenance. When maintenance slips, owners are often surprised how quickly a building can deteriorate. The good news is that small regular investments in maintenance can limit the need for, or extent of, expensive repairs. The annual cleaning of gutters and drains can be much cheaper and more convenient than having to cope with a serious outbreak of dry rot in timber roof trusses following years of neglect.

A well-looked-after building will almost always retain maximum value and the cost of regular maintenance will more than repay itself whether or not you sell your property.

Regular inspection is good practice. You should be able to visually inspect your own property from the ground, but if you don't feel sufficiently able or confident or cannot get safe access you should call in the professionals. See the back cover for further information.

Always take care of your own safety and that of others when undertaking inspections and maintenance.

When was the last time your property was inspected?

Key Vulnerable areas of your property to check are:

Roofs:

The roof of your property is the most important feature to inspect regularly as it is the most likely source of dampness or water penetration problems. Look for loose or missing slates (binoculars can help) or signs of holes or splits on flat roofs. Also check inside the attic space for leaks after heavy rain or stormy weather – don't wait until you get staining at lower levels!



Chimneys:

As with the roof, check for cracked, broken or leaning chimney pots as well as for holes or missing pointing in the chimney stack.

Drainage:

Gutters, eaves and rainwater pipes can easily become blocked at any time of the year with leaves and general debris – external pipes can also crack in cold weather. Look for staining on the surface of external walls and weeds and plants growing out of the gutters. Also check for areas of damp or staining internally particularly when in similar areas to external pipes.



Walls:

Older properties generally do not require a high level of maintenance to the external walls though it is worth checking for new cracks and missing mortar. Missing pointing should be replaced with a matching mortar and only after discussion with a building professional as using the wrong mortar can seriously damage existing stonework.

If your building is rendered or painted, this needs to be checked to make sure that it isn't damaged, particularly at ground level.



Windows and doors:

Windows and doors should be checked regularly particularly where they are exposed to extremes of weather. Check for cracked or broken glass and rotting sills – often individual components of windows and doors can be replaced or repaired

rather than having to replace the whole unit.

Services:

Make sure that all of your pipes and water tanks are properly lagged to avoid bursts in cold weather and check water and heating systems for leaks. Have your gas and electricity systems regularly checked by a qualified person.

Removal of Vegetation from Stonework

The best way to remove vegetation from stonework is to cut back as much of the plant as possible and then to treat the remaining vegetation with a proprietary weed killer. Once the roots are dead they will be easier to remove.

External areas:

Avoid a build up of leaves or debris at the base of walls. Brick vents should be cleared using a stick as these let air circulate and prevent internal damp problems. Remove climbing plants from around pipes and drains and watch for trees that may be damaging stonework or gutters.

If you want to carry out work to trees in the Conservation Area, speak to the planning department in advance as all trees in the Conservation Area are protected and you may need permission to carry out thinning or felling work.