SAMPLE DAMP SURVEY REPORT

Report Reference number: 0000000

Client Name:

Report Date:

Property Address:

Survey Date and Time:

Surveyor Name:

The Damp Specialist Company Ltd
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www.thedampspecialistcompany.co.uk Company Registration: 09853967

A. Introduction

Client Instructions & Additional Information Supplied

As per the written instructions received, we have carried out a pre-purchase survey aimed at documenting the presence of damp within the property.

Limitations and Restrictions

1.Access Restrictions

- Access was not possible to certain areas of the driving test centre, including the test room and server room.
- No inspection was undertaken of areas obscured by furniture or loose items in the residential flats and commercial units. The survey was observational only and limited to readily accessible areas.
- We understand from the landlord's management team that no other access to uncovered loft spaces is present at the property.
- Most of the loft spaces, including those in flats 11 and 12, have been converted into living areas. Therefore, access to structural timbers was not possible. However, no deterioration was noted in the exposed timber rafters visible in the converted loft space in flat 11 or slanted ceilings.

2. Standing Water in the Basement/Cellar

- Standing water in the basement/cellar prevented a close-up inspection of the affected areas. Consequently, the full extent of any underlying damp-related defects in these areas could not be assessed.

3. Other General Limitations

- The report is limited to visual inspection and non-invasive testing methods. No responsibility can be taken for hidden defects, or for any missed diagnosis arising due to these limitations.
- The inspection does not include liability for issues related to areas not inspected due to access restrictions or concealed areas, such as behind built-in units or under floor, wall or ceiling coverings.

4. Dry-Lined Walls in Commercial Units

- Both the driving test centre and the jewellery and bullion shop have been fitted with multiple dry-lined walls, which prevented inspection of the original wall surfaces behind. While no visible signs of damage were noted on the dry-lined surfaces, we cannot comment on the condition of the concealed walls.

5. Ground Level Inspection Only

- The inspection was conducted from ground level only and in the areas were safely accessible. At the time of the survey, the roof and associated flashings were not inspected as part of the survey. It is recommended that the client commission a drone survey or specialist roof inspection if a comprehensive assessment of the roof related issues is required.

Property Description

The subject property is a large Edwardian building converted into 12 residential flats and two ground-floor commercial units—a driving test centre and a jewellery and bullion shop. The construction is of 9 inch (215mm) solid wall construction using soft red bricks with limestone quoins and decorative window surrounds.

The ground floor features concrete floors, while many loft spaces have been converted into residential flats, limiting access to structural timbers.

Background

Weather - sunny

Point of reference – All left, right, front and rear references are taken from standing outside the property facing the main front elevation. Walls are classified as ‘outside of external walls’, ‘inside of external walls’, or ‘interior walls.

B. External Examination

External Observations and Defects

1. Rainwater Goods

- Front Elevation London House and Front Elevation of Anugraha Bullion: The cast-iron downpipes and hoppers show significant corrosion, most likely allowing for leaks on the external elevations below.
-The channel drains responsible to directing the water from the downpipes into the street, show extensive moss growth and vegetation growth around them, which could indicate blockages. This is likely allowing water to pool at the base of the walls and on the adjoining tarmacked pavement, which is also evidenced by the moss growth on the tarmacked areas at the floor-wall junction. This has likely contributed to damp ingress on the other side of the front elevation, including the areas in the Office in the Test Centre, but also in the two Entrance Hallways to the flats.



- A cast-iron hopper and down pipe on the front right-hand side corner of Anugraha Bullion was observed to show sings of leaks in the form of blown render on the areas adjoining the hopper and down pipe. This defect is almost certainly the cause for the damp issue found in the Office of Anugraha Bullion on the other side of the affected wall area.


- Rear Elevation: Hoppers and downpipes were replaced several months ago, as confirmed by the landlord's management team. Prior to this replacement, water damage would have affected the solid wall

construction, allowing moisture ingress into the soft red brickwork, which is highly porous and prone to saturation. Water marks and efflorescence are still visible behind the new downpipes. In addition, one of the downpipes was found to be disconnected just above ground, which will allow water to discharge at the bottom of the wall and likely cause internal damp.

Evidence of historical damage was noted in flat 4 and 6 on the inside of the rear elevation.

An old cast-iron hopper and downpipe still remains of the rear elevation.

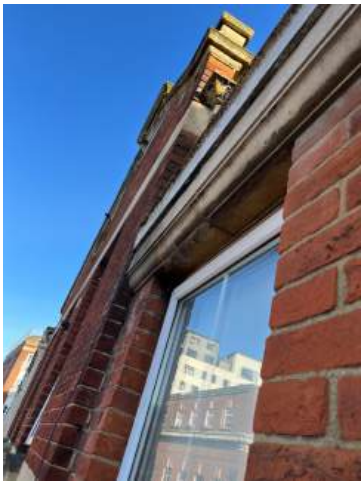
- Courtyard Gutters: Gutters in the courtyard are filled with vegetation, indicating poor maintenance. Overflowing water from these gutters has left visible watermarks below, evidencing prolonged exposure to leaks. These defects are likely to allow water to seep into the walls, further compromising the internal areas. Evidence of this was noted in flat 9.

2. Brickwork and Limestone Features

- The building's solid walls are constructed using soft red bricks, which are prone to water saturation. Prolonged water exposure, particularly from defective rainwater goods, would weaken the structure and contribute to dampness internally.

- Several limestone window surrounds and features were noted to show signs of crumbling and deterioration. Pieces of crumbled limestone were noted, especially on the front elevation. Deteriorated stonework creates gaps where water can penetrate the walls, leading to internal damp issues.




3. Roof Coverings & Chimney Stacks

- Moss growth and deterioration were noted on the chimney stacks. These issues suggest a lack of maintenance and point to potential defects, such as compromised flashings or perished mortar joints. Such defects could allow water to penetrate into the chimney stack and the moisture is likely to be migrating down into the chimney breast and surrounding areas. This is consistent with elevated damp readings found in flat 11 but also flat 4.

-The torch felt covering in the courtyard elevation shows extensive moss growth which could indicate water pooling on the membrane which can shorten its life expectancy. Moss growth was also noted on the tiled roof coverings, which can trap moisture against the roof tiles and allow for penetrating damp.



4. Air-Conditioning Unit (Rear Elevation)

- An air-conditioning unit installed on the rear elevation is leaking directly onto the wall and ground below. This is likely causing a localised damp issues which can allow for moisture ingress if left unattended to.

5. Window Fillets and Mastic Seals

- Window fillets and mastic seals around some windows were noted to be cracked, creating pathways for moisture ingress around window openings. Evidence of this was noted in flat 7.

6. Damp Proof Course (DPC) & Ground Levels

We were unable to see a DPC, however, we believed that due to the age of construction, the property is likely to benefit from a slate DPC.

Despite this, the DPC is likely to be below the external ground levels, given these appear too high, meaning the DPC is almost certainly bridged by the high external ground level or by the render on the rear elevation which extends down to ground level. This is likely to be allowing moisture to rise into the wall through the capillaries of the bricks into the wall areas above DPC. The British Standard recommends for an 150mm separation between the ground levels and the Damp Proof Course (DPC). Evidence of this was noted in the Test Centre and two Entrance Hallways to the flats (at the front) and vacant room (at the rear).

7. Render

The cementitious render on the rear elevation of the ground floor is showing extensive cracking, particularly in areas where hoppers and downpipes had been removed following previous leaks. These cracks can allow moisture ingress into the solid walls beneath.

Other observations:

- A new block of flats, abuts the rear elevation of the property. Damp issues in flat 11, particularly on the chimney stack wall, suggest possible defects in the junction between the new construction and the Victorian building. Potential causes could include defective flashings or insufficient sealing at the junction. No close-up access was possible to those areas.

C. Internal Examination

1. *Moisture Meter Readings Note: Protimeter moisture meter readings were taken using an MMS machine reading with records moisture using 2 settings: (a) Relative Scale (RS) of 60-999 RS where any reading over 200 RS is considered damp. Readings were taken via radio frequency at a nominal depth of 19 mm. (b)Wood Moisture Content (%WMC) represents a qualitative wood moisture equivalent measurement scale for affected building materials using penetrating moisture meters which u se electrical conductivity. Dry readings are normally classified as <=20% WMC, and damp readings 21-99 %WMC.*
2. *Wood Rot Conditions Note: Microbial growth multiplies rapidly in conditions above 60% RH at ambient temperature 21 degrees C. Timber with moisture content above 16% WMC is at risk of surface microbial growth and will decay above 20%WMC.*

Internal Observations

The following sections include detailed correlations between external defects and internal damp readings.

- Bullion Shop Entrance

Elevated damp readings were noted on the inside front elevation (of Anugraha Bullion) in the far right-hand side corner, in a small localised area over the whole height of the wall, but appearing to be coming from top-down. Paint was noted to be blistering in the area too.

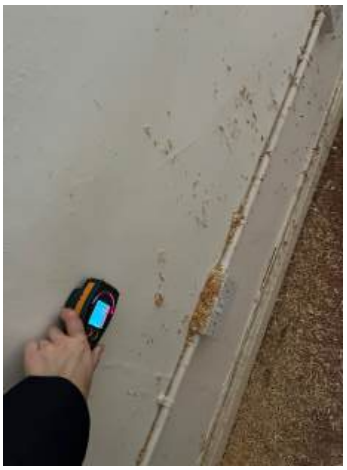
Issues with the hopper and downpipe suspected to be leaking and overflowing onto the wall behind as evidence by the deteriorated render are almost certainly responsible for the damp.

-London House

Ground Floor

- Flat 1A: Located on the ground floor. Elevated damp readings were recorded at low levels on one of the walls in the hallway. The flooding from the basement below is almost certainly responsible for these readings.

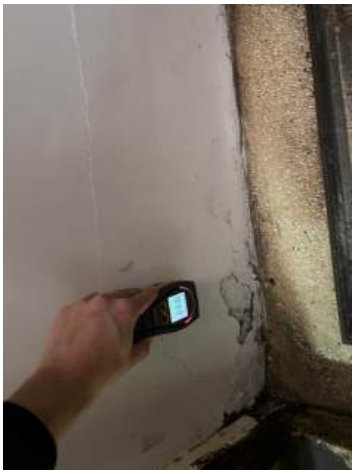
- Vacant Store Room: Elevated damp readings and signs of water damage including blown internal plaster, water marks and peeling paint were noted on the inside of the external rear and side elevation. External defects to the render and historical and present defects to the rainwater goods are almost certainly responsible for this.



- Basement/Cellar: The basement was found to be flooded and standing water prevented close inspection. Signs of water damage, including blown plaster, watermarks, and peeling paint, where noted on multiple walls.

Victorian basements often flood due to their original construction, which lacked modern waterproofing. Built with porous brickwork and mortar, these basements were never designed to stay completely dry. Over time, issues like high water tables, poor drainage systems, and structural degradation (e.g., cracks in walls or deteriorated mortar) increase vulnerability.

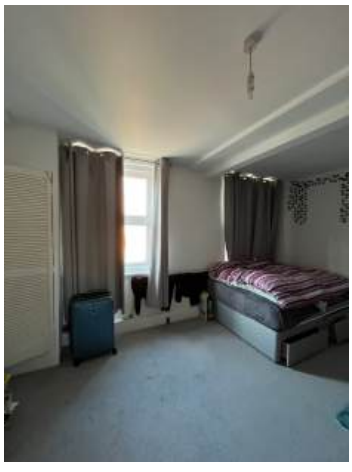
Communal Areas: Elevated damp readings and signs of water damage were recorded at low levels in the walls in the Entrance Hallways and stairwell. External defects to the bridged DPC and flooding to the basement below are almost certainly responsible for these readings.



First Floor

- Flat 2:
Elevated damp readings were recorded in two small localised areas below the window sills in the two bedrooms on the inside of the front elevation wall. External defect to the rainwater goods and limestone sills are likely responsible for this.

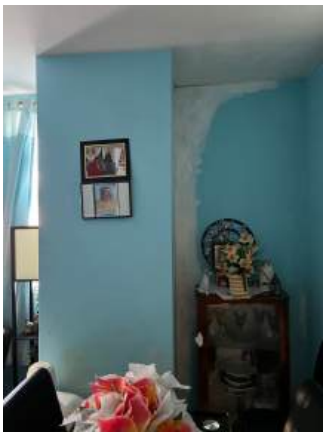
The property also is suspected to suffer from a bathroom leak due to elevated damp readings on the floor by the bath.

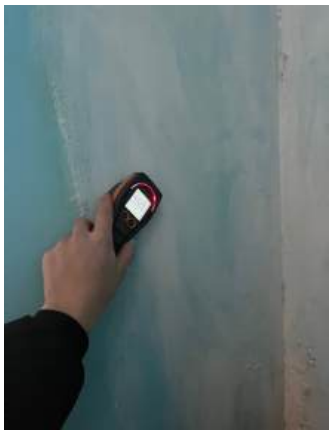


- Flat 3: Ceiling watermarks observed, corresponding to a suspected leak from the bathroom in flat 7 located directly above.

- Flat 4:

Elevated damp readings were recorded in the living room and bedrooms, on the inside of the rear elevation wall which includes the chimney breast in the living room. Water damage in the form of blistering paint was noted also. The historical hopper and downpipe leaks and chimney stack defects are likely responsible for this.



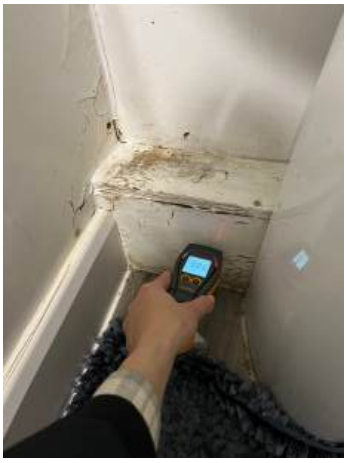


Second Floor

- Flat 5: No significant issues noted.
- Flat 6: Elevated damp readings were recorded in the living room and bedrooms, on the inside of the rear elevation wall. The historical hopper and down pipe leaks and chimney stack defects are likely responsible for this.

Mould was also noted on some of the wall areas, especially in the left-hand side bedroom.

Bathroom leaks are suspected due to the elevated damp readings in the floor and boxing in. And this is likely to have caused water damage in the adjoining communal area, directly opposite flat 8’s entrance.


- Flat 7:

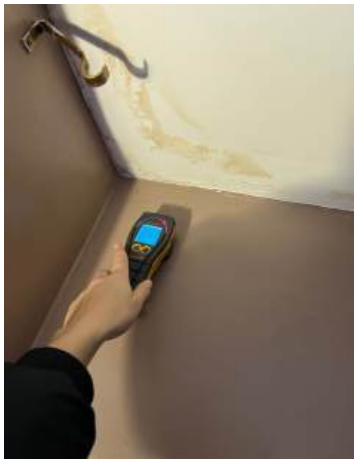
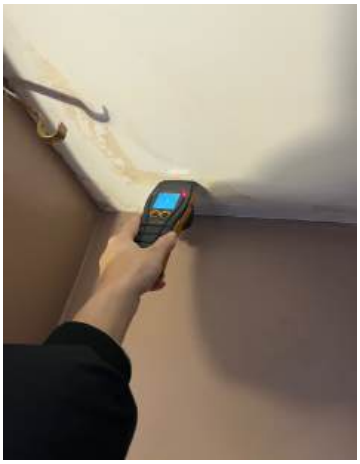
Suspected bathroom leaks noted, causing water damage to the ceiling of flat 3 below and to the communal area outside flat 7's bathroom.

Elevated damp readings were also recorded in a small localised area, on the inside of the front elevation in the bedroom. External defect to the window fillet/ mastic seals and rainwater goods are likely responsible for this.



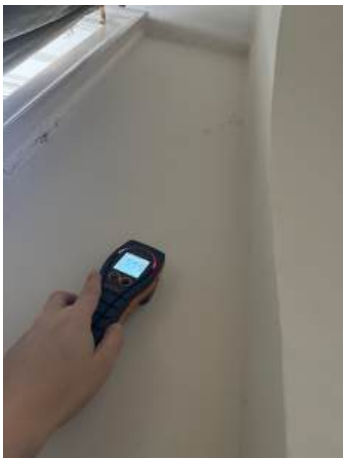
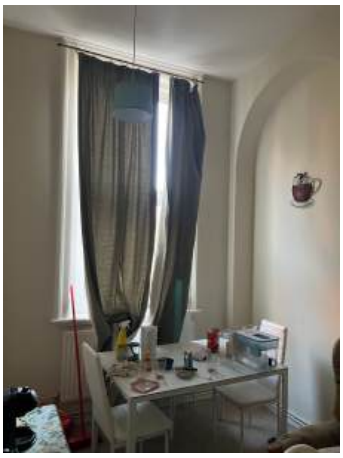
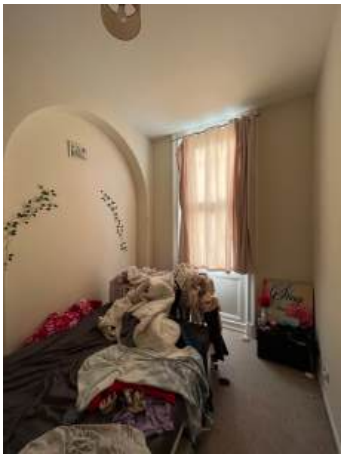
- Flat 8 (1st floor and ground floor):

Elevated damp readings were recorded in a small localised areas on the inside of the front elevation and adjacent ceiling. External defect to the rainwater goods, limestone detailing & lead flashings are likely responsible for this.

- Flat 9: Elevated damp readings were recorded on the inside of the right-hand side elevation in the bedroom (Victoria Road). External defect to the rainwater goods and limestone features are likely responsible for this.

Elevated damp readings were also recorded on the inside of the side elevation in the courtyard, where external defects to the gutters where noted.

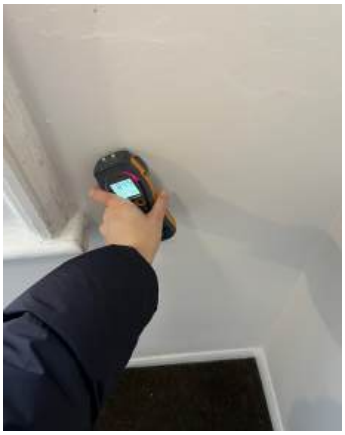

- Flat 10: Elevated damp readings were recorded on the inside of the right-hand side elevation and adjacent front elevation in the living room. External defect to the limestone sills & window surround and lead flashings are likely responsible for this.The property also is suspected to suffer from a bathroom leak due to elevated damp readings on the floor by the bath and in the bath panel.

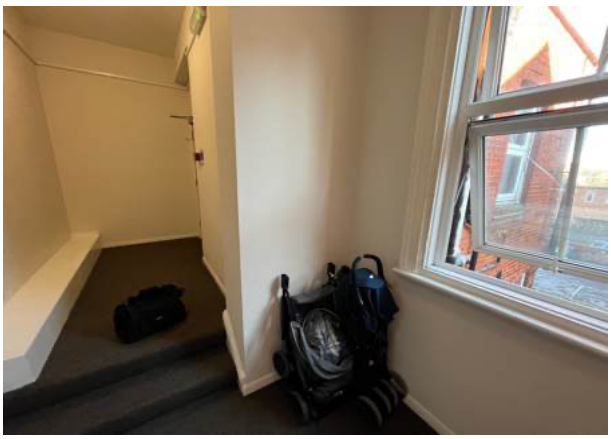


Communal Areas

- Outside Flat 7 Bathroom: Significant water damage noted in the communal area caused by the suspected leak from flat 7's bathroom.


- Opposite Flat 8 Entrance: Water damage observed due to both external gutter defects and suspected leak from flat 6's bathroom.

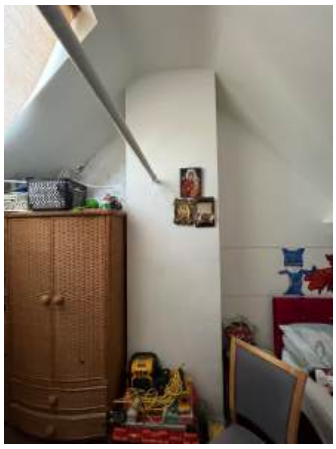




Third Floor/Loft

- Flat 11: Elevated damp reading and signs of dampness on the chimney stack wall were noted, almost certainly due to external defects, such as defective flashings, pointing, or junction issues with the adjacent block of flats.

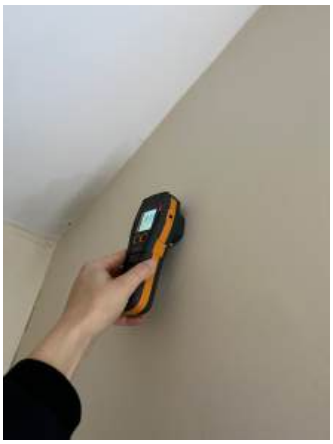
Other signs of water damage was noted in the other rooms at the eaves, and around the Velux windows which included water stains and blistering paint. Despite this, the readings were found to be dry during our visit, indicating some of the damage might be historical.



- Flat 12: Elevated damp readings were recorded on the inside of the front elevation in the bedroom and adjacent skeilings. External defects to the lead flashings on the gable end, limestone features are likely responsible for this.

The property also is suspected to suffer from a bathroom leak due to elevated damp readings on the floor by the bath and in the bath panel.





D. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the observations made at the property, it is highly likely the property suffers from the following issues which are causing the internal damp, namely:

(A) Rising Damp due to a bridged Damp Proof Couse (DPC) by the high external ground levels around the property allowing for damp at low levels in the Entrance Hallways (2) to London House and Test Centre

The suspected defects to the channel drains in the tarmacked pavement or leaks from the downpipes and hoppers are likely to contribute to the damp at low levels in the walls on the ground floor as hydrostatic pressure will build up against the external elevations and allow for the walls at low level to become saturated.

The flooded basement is evidence that hydrostatic pressure is being exerted on the structure and the flooding is also responsible for the damp at low levels in the walls on the internal walls in the stairwell and in flat 1A.

In more detail:
A Damp-Proof Course (DPC) is a barrier typically made of materials like slate, bitumen or plastic installed in a building's walls or foundations to prevent moisture or groundwater from rising through the masonry and causing dampness or damage to the structure. It is crucial for maintaining a dry and structurally sound property.

Works to be Organised by the Client

-With the acceptance of the council, it is recommended that a channel drains are cleared and tested to ensure they flow property into the road's drainage system. Remove all vegetation and remove moss from the areas using a biocide such as SoluGuard (Safeguard Europe) or similar.

-The downpipe on the rear which was disconnected above ground level should be reconnected as a matter of urgency.

Internal DPC Treatment to the affected ground floor wall areas in the communal hallway, stairwell, vacant room and flat 1A

A damp proofing specialist providing the necessary guarantees should be instructed to carry out the following works*:*
-Inject new chemical damp proof course using Thixotropic cream/other water-based water repellents injected into mortar joins at correct height in line with the floor level internally.
-New plaster to a minimum thickness of 12mm and up to 1.2m up the wall. Plaster should be the correct specification of 3:1 sharp sand/ cement mix incorporating a salt retardant and water proofer

The plaster should be left to dry, and any visible salt neutralised before redecoration.

-The standing water in the basement should be pumped out as this will likely lead to further issues including secondary issues with mould growth and contribute to damp on the lower parts of the ground floor.

To prevent flooding in the basement, modern waterproofing solutions will need to be employed.

(B) Penetrating Damp due to external defects to the brickwork, chimney stacks, limestone detailing render, and perished window fillets

Works to be Organised by the Client

Brickwork and Limestone Features

- Repoint areas of deteriorated mortar using a lime mortar mix no stronger than the bricks or other existing pointing in order to avoid bricks delaminating.
- Repair or replace crumbling limestone features around windows, ensuring that these areas are properly sealed to prevent moisture ingress.
-Where necessary, remove moss and clean brickwork using a biocide such as SoluGuard (Safeguard Europe) or similar.

Chimney Stacks, Roofs and Flashings

- Inspect and repair any defective flashings.
-Remove moss and lichen growth from the chimney stacks and clean stacks using a biocide such as SoluGuard (Safeguard Europe) or similar.
-Rake out any perished pointing from the stacks. Repointing brickwork using a lime mortar mix no stronger than the bricks or other existing pointing in order to avoid bricks delaminating. Spalled brick faces to be repaired using a brick filler tinted to match the surrounding bricks.
- Moss to be removed from the roof coverings.

Windows & Mastic seals

- Repair cracked window fillets and mastic seals around affected windows to prevent water ingress into internal areas.

Rear Elevation Render

- Rear Elevation Render: Tap test render for blown areas and repair cracks and other areas where render has delimited from the wall to prevent further moisture ingress.

Natural Drying

The affected walls are likely to dry out naturally, however this will take several months of Spring/Summer weather (Masonry drying time is usually 25mm/month). If any salts or other contaminants appear then

these must be neutralised before re-decoration. Any damp stains should be neutralised with a stain block such as Zinsser before redecoration.

(C) Penetrating Damp due to external defects to defective and blocked rainwater goods allowing for water to overflow the rainwater goods and splash onto the external elevations of the property

Works to be Organised by the Client

Rainwater Goods

- Replace or repair all defective cast-iron downpipes on the front elevation. Ensure proper alignment and sealing to prevent leaks and pooling at the base of the walls.
- Clear vegetation and debris from gutters in the courtyard and inspect all hoppers for leaks.

Clear vegetation and debris from all gutters.

(D) Hidden plumbing leaks in several flats

Works to be Organised by the Client

Flat 2, 6, 7, 10 & 12:

- Identify and repair the bathroom leaks in those flats and ensure any water damaged timbers are exposed and checked for decay or woodborer infestation.

To treat structural timber affected by water damage, first, identify and fix the source of moisture to prevent further exposure. Thoroughly dry the timber using dehumidifiers and ensure proper ventilation. Remove any mould with a fungicidal cleaner and treat the wood with a fungicidal treatment to stop or prevent rot. Severely decayed or structurally unsound timber should be replaced, while minor damage can be strengthened with wood hardeners or epoxy resin.

Flat 7: Assess the ceiling in flat 3 below for further damage and implement necessary repairs.

- Repaint and restore the communal area outside flat 7's bathroom after the source of the leak is resolved.

Flat 6 Bathroom Leak: Repair the water-damaged ceiling in the communal area opposite flat 8's entrance.

Other recommendations:

- Repair or replace the leaking air-conditioning unit on the rear elevation.

Signed: Bianca Hedesiu BSc (Hons) CSTDB WRT ASD

Please note the above report, including all findings, conclusions, and recommendations, is subject to our Terms and Conditions which are available on our website. A copy of these Terms and Conditions is available on our website, alternatively, please request a copy.