

A review of a Victorian Flat with black mould

Independent Building Surveyors

As Independent Building Surveyors we can provide you with help and advice with regards to property issues including dampness and black mould. If the property has been poorly maintained over the years please call our Surveyors on 800 298 5424 for a friendly chat.

1stAssociated.co.uk can carry out structural surveys, home buyers reports, independent valuations, property surveys, engineer's reports, structural reports and defect reports.



Street view of
Victorian properties

How one of our Surveys can help you

We have recently carried out a survey for the owner of a flat in a converted three storey Victorian property.

The flat has been suffering from condensation and black mould and we were called in to advise our client on the best way to solve the issues.

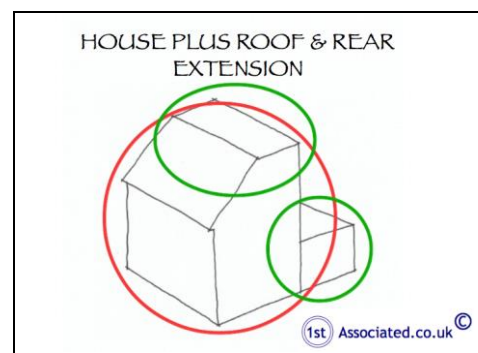


Converted Victorian flats

Buying an older property with modern amendments

There can be problems with an older property when newer extensions are added and amendments carried out without thought or consideration given to how the older property was designed to be used.

In this case the property has been extended to the rear and the loft/roof has been converted / extended and the property has also been subdivided into flats.



Modern extensions to
older properties

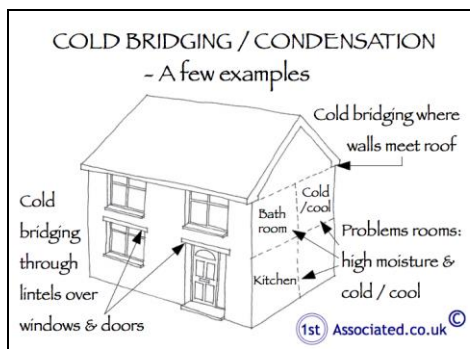
Combination of problems

As is often the case with this age, type and style of property there were a combination of reasons for the black mould and condensation. These included:-

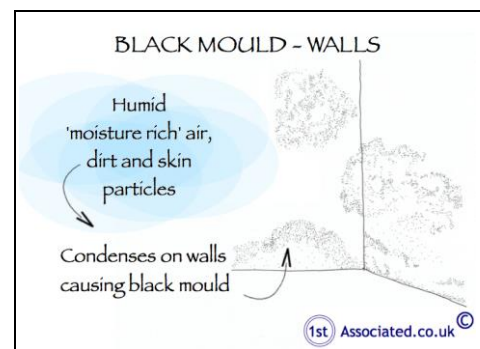
1. Original construction and modern renovation
2. Poor design details
3. Lack of maintenance
4. Occupier lifestyle
5. Lack of ventilation



Black mould



Condensation



Black mould

Amendments to the original property

The problems within this property made it clear that the builders were not familiar with dealing with older properties.

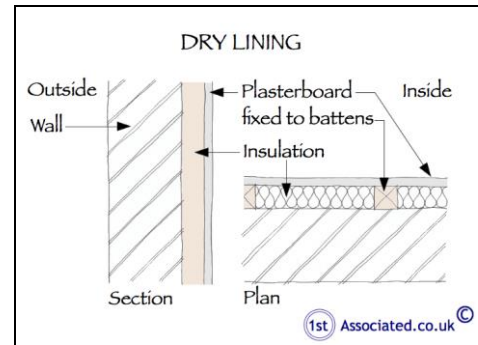
High levels of modern insulation had been added to the newer extensions without any thought given as to how it would affect the original building. The added insulation to the newer areas meant that humidity was being drawn to the older, colder, original areas to the rear of the building which was resulting in black mould occurring.



Black mould

Insulation levels, old and new

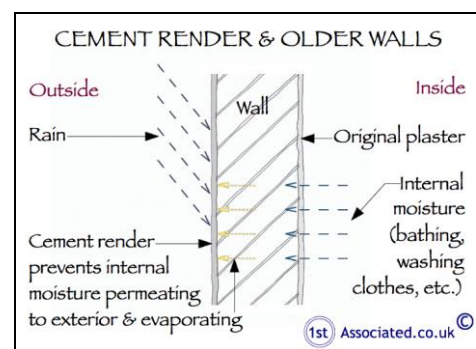
We advised our client that the insulation levels would ideally need to be balanced but that this could be expensive as it would mean alterations to the roof and around the windows. The alternative would be to dryline the rooms that were affected



Dry lining

Older buildings need to breathe

We also noted that the exterior of the property had been rendered with a cement based render which was too hard and was cracking. We also believed that plastic based paints may have been used which will prevent the building from breathing as it is supposed to.



Cement render

Ponding and flat roofs!

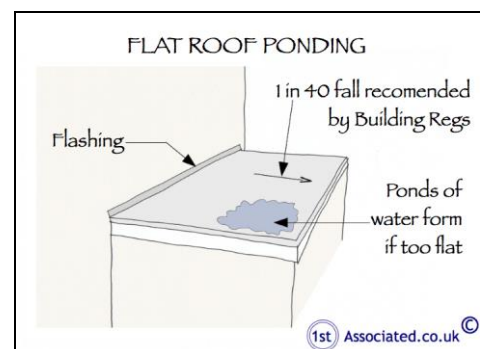
The property had a flat roof to the rear; this is a roof with no pitch or fall. Water is unable to run off this type of roof and we could see ponding which adds weight to that section of the roof and causes deterioration.



Example of ponding on a flat roof

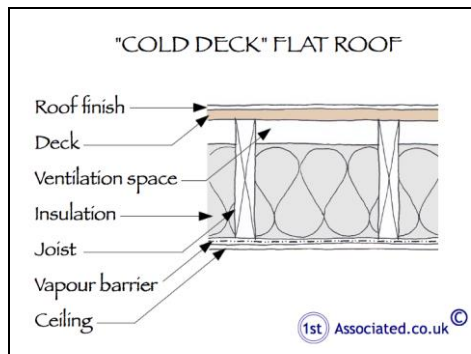
Ponding defined

This is where a pool or pond of water sits on a flat roof and the weight of it builds up and starts to depress the roof which then deteriorates the felt on it.

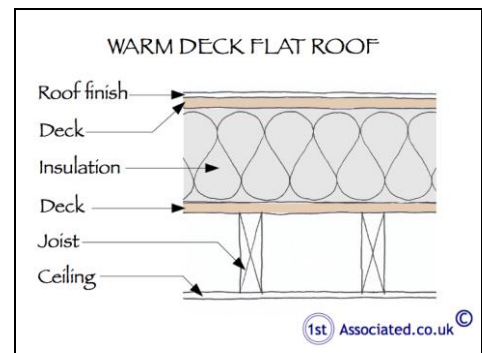


Ponding

We also believed this to be a cold flat roof with no insulation and would have preferred it to be a warm flat roof with insulation.



Cold flat roof



Warm flat roof

Some other surveying articles that may be helpful to you

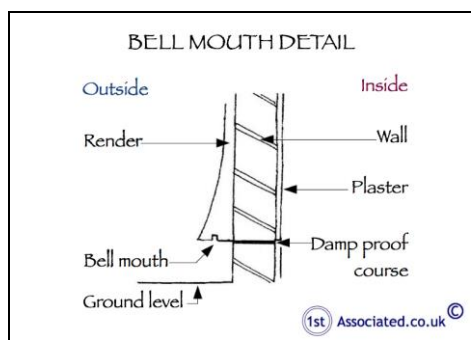
<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/condensation-mould-air-movement-in-home.asp>

<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/flat-roofs.asp>

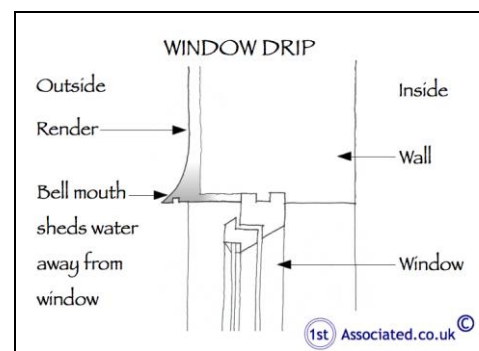
<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/Render-problems-render-cracking.asp>

The best way forward for our client

We advised our client that solving the issues with this flat may take some time and a lot of money. We firstly recommended that large humidity controlled extract fans were added to the property to remove moisture in the bathroom and kitchen and that a full air conditioning system, again with humidity control, should be installed. We also felt that the rear of the property should be dry lined and the detail to the render should be improved by adding a bell mouth to the base and a drip detail over windows to prevent dampness entering the building.



Bell mouth detail



Window drip

Independent Building Surveyors

We are experienced independent building Surveyors who are knowledgeable in carrying out structural surveys on all types, styles and eras of buildings. If you are looking to buy a period property it makes sense to have a structural survey carried out by an Independent Surveyor. Phone us for a friendly chat on 0800 298 5424.

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