

Agenda item 27 – Proposal for possible work in the Old Courthouse

Parts of the old courthouse are showing significant evidence of rising damp on internal walls which most likely is caused by their construction without any damp proof course. A check with a photometer revealed very high readings well into the red zone and it is unlikely that there is any other cause.

I also noted evidence of dry rot in a skirting board by the rear door. This is currently not extensive but has the capacity to spread rapidly. The mycelium can travel behind wall plaster over a substantial distance and pass through walls via the mortar joints.

Parts of the building already have an injection damp proof course and most probably do not need treating.

The only proper advice when rising damp is present is that it be treated as soon as reasonably possible as it damages the wall plaster and decorations and can throw off mould spores into the atmosphere.

Most importantly it is rarely found without dry rot which can cause substantial damage to affected timbers and can travel long distances within building.

Treatment is to remove skirting boards, cut off plaster to 1m approx. insert injection Damp proof course, replaster and make good.

Treatment of dry rot is to remove all affected timber to 1m back into clean wood, treat area with fungicide replace timber and make good.

This is not cheap and will cause disruption during the works as the contractors cannot work around staff. I presume that the build is listed and therefore we are likely to have a duty to maintain.

The proposal at this stage is to ask Preserva who have attended the building before to re survey and report back to T&E. Dependent upon findings and costings, T&E will then consider and report to full Council.

Compiled by Cllr J Berridge

Proposed Cllr J Berridge