

London Building Contractors

47-49 Park Royal Road

London, NW10 7LQ

T/F: 020 8935 5159

[www.Londonbuildingcontractors.uk](http://www.sentricdesignltd.co.uk/)

Registered No. 12217020

**Repointing: -**

Repointing is the process of filling the outer part of the joints between masonry units with mortar. This can be done either as work proceeds, by striking off the bedding mortar flush with the face of the masonry, or as a separate exercise if the outer part of bedding mortar has been deliberately left recessed or is raked back from the surface.

**Consideration: -**

First and foremost all areas of the site will be cleared of and rubble to ensure site is safe to commence works.

Independent scaffolding will be erected to provide safe working platform from which to old pointing and repointing.

All windows and doors within the vicinity of the works will be temporary boarded to prevent dust from entering the building and to prevent accidental damage.

We’re going to carry out visual inspection to determine which area needs pointing; some area would definitely need repointing than other.

As well as deciding on the extent of work and proposed joint finish before works start, we’ll consider the likely weather conditions.

Ensured provision made for suitable protection from all weather conditions during the work and at completion, to prevent rapid drying which would damage the mortar before it has set properly.

**Specification of lime mortars: -**

Check for a suitable match to the existing mortar and the preparation of sample panels.

Correct specification of lime mortar and its application will ensure better performance and prevent avoidable masonry decay, saving on future maintenance and repair costs.

**Process: -**

Removing old mortar and raking out.

Shallow hard cement mortars tend to crack and loosen as they have no flexibility. We’ll consider removing old or inappropriate mortar to a minimum depth of 25-40 mm or until sound mortar. Depth of the joint is relative to the width between stones.

As a guide, joints shall be raked out to twice the width of the joint – so a 1cm wide joint should be raked out to at least 2 cm, preferably 2.5 cm. We’ll then dust in the slot so a good vacuum comes in handy or brush it clean. To get the debris out of the deep, we would consider using a narrow slots slightly crushed piece of 15mm copper pipe, this is easily held by hand in the nozzle of the vacuum hose.

We would then moisten the joint and masonry to ensure water in the mortar is not drawn into the surrounding masonry causing the pointing to dry out too fast.

Care would be taken not to damage the existing bricks.

**A good soaking before pointing: -**

Before pushing in new lime mortar the bricks and surrounding mortar need a thorough soaking with water using a pressurised garden sprayer or similar method, so that the new mortar can become workable straight away as the brick sucks the water out of the mix.

**Lime mortar mix for old brickwork: -**

Mixing small quantities of NHL and sand and water

The new mortar will be well mixed.

We’ll be using a preferably NHL 3.5 (Natural Hydraulic Lime) with grit sand at a mix ratio of 1:3 by volume. The NHL stays workable for longer than OPC (ordinary Portland cement), it's softer and breathable so it’s much kinder to old bricks.

To avoid sticky at the bottom and easy mixing, we’ll apply 2 sand into the bucket then the one lime topped off by the final 1 sand will keep the lime dust down while mixing. The mixing process will usually need less than a pint of water, so after the half pint we’ll only add a splash at a time until we get a good mashed potato like mix. The mix does need to be quite stiff. If it’s sloppy it’ll be difficult to trowel in and then to compress in the joint.

**Repointing and filling deep holes in old mortar:-**

Using the purpose made hawk and finger trowel makes it incredibly easier for us to actually get the mortar in to the joints. Each load from the trowel / knife shall be well pressed in. If the gap goes all the way through, we’ll start on one side, for horizontal gaps or from the bottom of vertical gap. Build up the filling with more mortar towards the back so there’s angled build up. Pressing it well and it should fully fill the gap without too much dropping out or pushing through. The deep holes would be fully tamped in to ensure the mortar and aggregate is fully compressed and compacted in the joint.

**Final Finish of the repointing:-**

We would slightly over fill the gaps and then leave it for ½ to 1 hour so the mortar has started to dry out. How it’s next worked depends on the finish required. We’ll adopt a brushed finish a sharp troweled effect matching the existing pointing. Normally we’ll use the handle of our “knife” Finger trowel to give a flush finish matching the existing. This stage will re-compress the joint and fill any small cracks that may have formed due to shrinkage as the mortar dries out.

The joints will still look messy with crumbly excess bits of mortar around the joints. This is best left a little longer to allow the mortar to set even more. After a while, we’ll then tackled the joints with a stiff brush. The excesses can be easily brush of, and a quick rub removes the surface of the mortar and exposes the aggregate.