

Again, our apologies for not seeking your advice or applying for planning application in advance of the work being carried out. We were naïve enough to believe trades people who quoted for the work that planning permission would not be needed, despite explaining that we are in a conservation area.

We have suffered problems with penetration damp on our western wall, since we moved here in 2010. We hoped that most of these issues would be resolved by painting the exterior walls of the house and that permission was given. However, the problems persisted and worsened because of that work. We sought professional advice at the beginning of last year and we were informed that our problems lay with the cement render that had been used to blanket the house before our tenure. As previously mentioned, we were assured by 3 quoting lime renderers that a return to the traditional lime render would solve the penetrating damp issue and, as that was the original material, this would not need planning permission.

On that, misguided assumption, we began removing the cement render on the lower parts of the west, south and north facing walls last year. Lime renderers then let us down and only in the past 2 weeks has work finally taken place. We were given short notice and our removal over the past 2 weeks attracted the complaint you received. It was never our intention to remove the cement render and leave the house with brick and stone exposed for as long as it has been.

Our intention has always been to sympathetically repair the exterior walls and alleviate the damp problems we have. We are acutely aware of our responsibility to conserve the rural aesthetic of our house and promote the traditional built of the house we are custodians of. We believed that returning the render to lime would enhance this by celebrating an earlier wisdom that allowed the house to breathe and not retain damp.

It has always been our plan to repaint the re-rendered areas in lime paint and return the colour to that agreed in a previous planning permission.

The attached photos show how sympathetic the work is and how passers by see the house as they travel along the public highway and footpath.