

# Maintenance

Historically old buildings have had little or no maintenance to them in several years if not decades. Prior to any renovation or reconstruction of a building, a building owner should first look at the following.

## 1. Gutters and water runoff



Are the gutters of your building working to keep the water off your building? Do the gutters need to be cleaned, fixed or replaced? One of the biggest problems we see when we look at a building is the damage caused by water on the building. When you fix the gutters, often you can help stabilize the building in terms of water damage to the brick, roof, and interior

## 2. Vents

Do you have vents on the outside of your building that help to evaporate the moisture underneath your building? Another problem we see with historic buildings is the problem of rising dampness. Rising dampness will cause mortar problems and can also cause wood floors to deteriorate. First identify if there are any vents on the bottom outside of your building. If there are, check to see if they are free from debris and are in good working condition. You may need weep holes to allow moisture to evaporate instead of wicking out through the mortar. Check with the city staff on how to properly install weep holes.

*Rising dampness. There needs to be vents or weep holes to allow the moisture to evaporate. Rising dampness is a concern for downtown building owners.*



# *Maintenance*

## 3. Roof

Does the roof leak? If so, where and when was the roof replaced? There are several options to repair or replace your roof. Contact an architect or the Economic and Community Development Office at Elgin City Hall.

## 4. Brick & Mortar Repair

When you repair mortar joints and brick, make sure you look at the color, size and type of brick or mortar joint you are repairing. If you have to replace brick, be sure to match the color and size of the brick to the original size and color of the existing brick. When you replace the mortar, also make sure you use the same color mortar and joint size to replace the mortar.

Moisture problems prevail with this structure. Poor drainage, the need of a new roof and rising dampness have caused tremendous structural problems.

