Keep your House in Good Order....

Introduction

You live in a CONSERVATION AREA which means that your house and neighbour hood are special to Winchester. They are important to the way this fine city looks.

Some buildings are, of course, very old, and some are quite modern, but many in our Conservation Area are between seventy and one hundred and fifty years old. If you live in an old house either within or outside the Conservation Area, The City of Winchester Trust hopes you will find this leaflet particularly useful.

Of course your house is not a museum piece and you want to live in it in comfort. But maintaining it well does not necessarily mean changing everything - windows, doors, roofing, chimneys, guttering ....

"I fully support this initiative by the City of Winchester Trust which I hope will contribute to our joint task of keeping Winchester an attractive and lively place to live in and to visit."

Mr. Steven Bee, Director of Development Services,
Winchester City Council

Keep your House in Good Order....

Windows

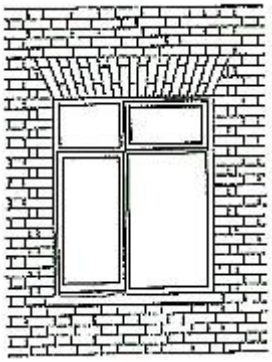
Replacement windows of one sort or another are often the first piece of "modernisation'. They can be expensive, unnecessary and damaging to the appearance and value of your house.

Why change? Let's look at the usual arguments:-

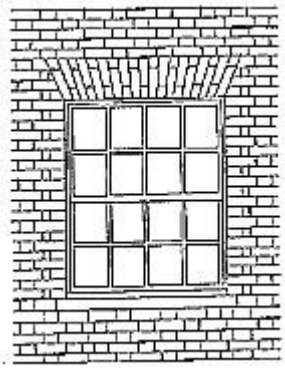
Replacement windows save on fuel bills.

Yes, if they are double glazed. But secondary glazing which is fitted behind your existing window can limit heat loss and reduce draughts at least as effectively as more expensive double-glazed replacement windows. Secondary glazing also provides better noise insulation and in creased security.

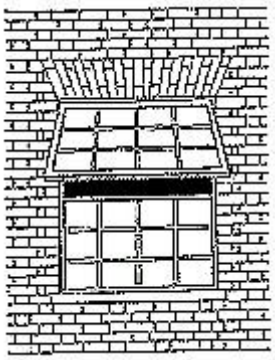
Remember, too, that only 10% of heat is lost through the glass of your windows (the rest goes through the roof, walls, floors and cracks), so loft insulation and draft excluders are likely to be better value for money than costly replacement windows.



Lop-sided Casement
NO



Wooden Sash
YES



PVC/Aluminium
NO

PVC and aluminium replacement windows seldom look right in a house built more than fifty years ago. It is almost impossible to reproduce the detail of original timber windows in plastic, in spite of the efforts of some manufacturers to do so.

Wooden windows need frequent repainting

This is quite true but it has been shown by research that it is cheaper to paint windows every five years than to install "no maintenance" alternatives. You may not have to paint UPV or aluminium replacement windows but think of the high initial cost and ask yourself how long will they last. Most plastic, for instance, has

ingredients which are weakened by sunlight, whereas most 100 year old houses have their original windows!

Old windows tend to jam and rattle

This is probably something a craftsman can put right relatively cheaply. It is most unlikely to mean wholesale replacement. Look in the yellow pages for specialist firms who can do this economically.

Old wooden windows become rotten

Older windows are often quite sound and, because they were made of the good timber available when the house was built, they may outlast replacements. If the rot is confined to the bottom rail or cill, they can almost always be repaired economically, particularly now that new resin-based systems exist.

Replacement Windows look smart

This is a matter of opinion of course! But remember that more and more people, including, of course, housebuyers, are coming to appreciate the charm of "original features' such as slimmer glazing bars and traditional mouldings.

If you do have to replace the window try and match the original design and materials as possible.

A window that looks wrong can let your house down badly. A valuable "original feature' has gone and everyone knows it - including a potential buyer.

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Roofs

If you have to replace or repair your roof, use roofing materials as near the original as you can. Ask your roofer to save as many tiles and slates as possible for reuse and to take care in matching any new ones.

Remember concrete tiles do not look good on older houses and some heavier ones may even put a strain on the structure.

Dormers and roof-lights which are too big, poorly designed or badly placed can damage the appearance of the whole house. There are conservation roof-lights available that suit older houses. Dormers should, as far as possible, conform to the style of the house.

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Walls

Repointing over the whole house is seldom necessary. If it has to be done, use an experienced craftsman who won't damage your bricks or use the wrong mortar mix or methods. Inappropriate repointing can actually make your house less able to withstand damp and harsh weather, as well as spoiling its appearance. Hard cement used in repointing will risk increasing damp and cause the decay of older brickwork, for instance. Lime mortar is always best for older houses.

Painting brickwork: Winchester has beautiful bricks. Admire them - don't cover them with a layer of paint which you will have to renew regularly and expensively. Salesmen's claims for new super-plastic paints are mostly unfounded and they can cause severe long-term problems. A cheap rate for a "show house" is invariably a sales gimmick.

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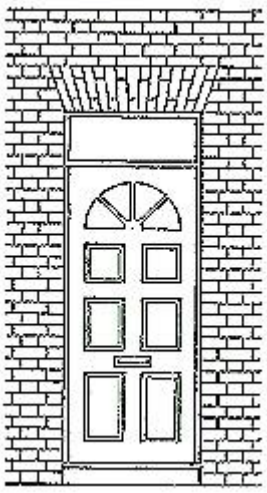
Doors

An original door can lend style to your home

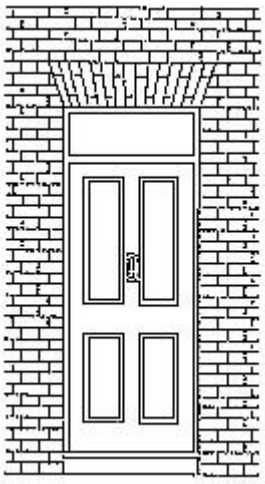
So try to repair rather than replace it. Fit draught excluders if necessary, and if you have to replace, fit one that looks as much like your original as possible.

Some firms make wooden front doors that are very suitable for older houses, but don't be satisfied with some "off the peg' models that are poor imitations (fanlights for instance were designed to go above the doors, not in them).

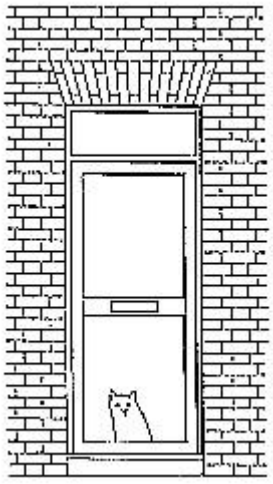
A painted door, rather than a varnished door, usually looks better on an older house - and of course this gives you the opportunity to add your own personal touch in your choice of colour. You may even find an original door in "good order' in a local salvage yard.



Varnished fan light
in door
NO



Painted wood door
with fanlight above
YES



Aluminium and Glass

NO

Keep your House in Good Order....

Maintenance

Good maintenance means -

- keeping the original fabric in good order
- only replacing where necessary
- when you have to renew, using materials which suit your house

If your house has already been altered and you would like to restore it, there are firms producing very acceptable products, like draught-proofed timber sash windows for instance, and local craftsmen with the necessary skills.

If in doubt, you could always seek advice. Talk to:

The Conservation Officers of the Winchester City Council
(telephone - 01962 848293)

The architects and experts of the City of Winchester Trust
(telephone - 01962 851664)

The Lime Centre
(telephone - 01962 713636)

Bursledon Brickworks Trust
(telephone - 01489 576248

they are all pleased to give advice.

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Overdoing it

Chopped off chimney

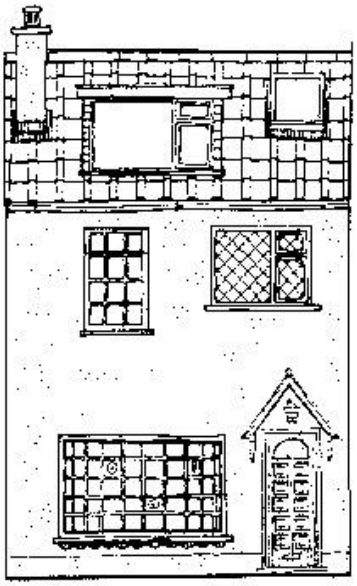
Large, flat-roofed dormer

Sagging plastic gutter

Mock "Georgian" plastic windows

Rendering or paint

Bogus bay window



No! No! No!

Overlarge roof-light

Ridged cement tiles

Wrong shaped window
Leaded lights

Cottage-like porch

Stained hardwood door

Of course not many people living in older houses in Winchester would think of going as far as this. But it can happen, if not all at once, then by degrees, until the character is lost.

It may be in salesmen's' interest to get you to replace and renew, but not necessarily in yours.

Every ill-considered change, or repair is likely to undermine the VALUE and appearance of your property and of the neighbourhood.

So particularly when you first move in.....

Please think before you act!

"We have had houses in Winchester over modernised - original windows, doors, fireplaces etcetera removed - which take much longer to sell. Then, when we find a sale, the buyer usually wants to restore these, at a cost to themselves, and that of course is reflected in the price they are prepared to pay."

Diana S. Bridle Small & Partners, Winchester.

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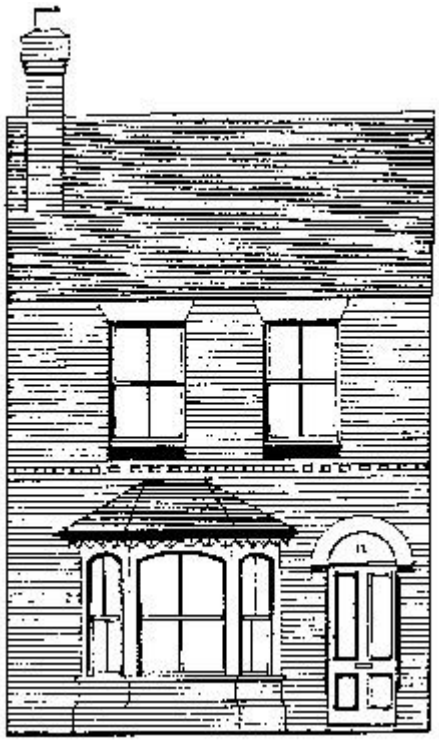
Well maintained

Proper chimney and pot

Wooden sash windows

Original detail

Sash window in original bay



Yes! Yes! Yes!

Real slates or clay tiles

Neat pointing between bricks

Fanlight over door

Painted wooden door

This house, built about a hundred years ago, has been well kept up and has all its original features. It will probably sell well, and at the same time it makes a great contribution to the character of the city.

Of course there are many different sizes and types of houses, shops, pubs, and commercial premises in our Conservation Areas. Together, and in their surroundings of trees and gardens, we must look after them.

"In Winchester, Victorian town houses go much better if they look the way they were meant to look. The one that is closest to the original will sell quicker and, probably, for more."

Mr. Michael Dunning Lane Fox, Winchester.

"Period houses which have been maintained with their original appearance and features always sell best"

Mr. Colin Lee Pearsons, Winchester