

# TRADITIONAL Vs MODERN BUILDING GUIDANCE

It is important to be aware of the age of your property when protecting your home against flooding. Older, more traditional properties are sometimes harder to protect and require different methods of protection to that of modern buildings. Both resistance and resilience measures are useful at reducing the impact of flooding on both modern and traditional properties.

## How they are built

- Traditional properties are often built of stone, brick or timber with lime based renders or mortars. Lime renders allow moisture absorbed during a flood to evaporate through them so are more flood resilient.
- Modern properties have cavity walls with cement mortars and renders which prevent moisture percolating through. They often have suspended floors and a damp proof course to prevent moisture rising through walls and causing damp.

## Differences in flooring

- Traditional properties typically feature flagged or earth floors with water-resistant or lime mortars, requiring regular maintenance for optimal condition. Stone flooring may only need cleaning and disinfecting after floodwaters recede.
- Modern properties commonly have suspended timber floors with voids that may fill with floodwater; sump and pump systems are effective for water removal.
- Rugs are preferable to carpets in both modern and traditional properties as they can be easily rolled up and stored during floods.

## Insulation

Selecting the right insulation is crucial for enhancing energy efficiency while complying with Building Regulations. Traditional buildings require special considerations due to exemptions and potential dampness issues with certain insulation types. Opt for breathable insulation that dries quickly to minimise flood damage. Porous options like loose fill are effective but can collapse if saturated. Remove non-absorbent insulation temporarily after a flood to facilitate drying, reinstalling it afterward.

## Resistance and resilience methods

### Traditional Buildings:

- Use lime-based mortar for repointing to absorb moisture and remain breathable.
- Apply lime-based paints and plaster to allow walls to dry out post-flood without needing replacement.
- Avoid waterproof coatings to maintain breathability; consider breathable sealants as an alternative.



### Modern Properties:

- Use water-resistant mortars and renders for repointing or rendering work; consider waterproof coatings up to likely flood height (~500mm).
- Replace gypsum plaster with breathable lime-based plasters for improved resilience.
- Install gypsum plasterboard horizontally to save time and money during flooding, unless water rises significantly (over 3 or 4 ft); consider water-resistant magnesium oxide boards.
- Address potential water entry points like air bricks with covers or self-closing mechanisms to protect the property during floods.

