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**YOUR GUIDE  
TO OUR  
WEBSITE**

**HOW TO  
REPLACE  
YOUR ROOF**

**SETTING UP  
A RESIDENTS  
ASSOCIATION  
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# How to REPLACE your ROOF

*There are times when, despite the best maintenance plan, you will need to invest in a new roof. Here are **EARL KENDRICK'S** seven steps to making the right decisions along the way*

## STEP 1

### IS IT REALLY NECESSARY?

Replacing a roof is not a quick or easy business. It will cause disruption to the residents and any other occupiers of the building. So don't act in haste.

For a start, consider whether your roofing project could (safely) wait until your next cycle of external repair and maintenance? If so, you'll only require a single use of scaffolding and all the disruption can be contained in a single period of external maintenance. This is the ideal scenario, and is worth considering if you are making a decision on economic rather than safety grounds.

If the decision is out of your control and the roof is either dangerous or irreparable, then you will need to move fast. This scenario is likely to be caused by:

- Ongoing water ingress that has created significant/structural damage with the threat of more;
- A series of widespread and ongoing repairs that would be more expensive to repair than the cost of a new roof.

## STEP 2

### APPOINT AN IMPARTIAL, QUALIFIED BUILDING SURVEYOR

Roofs are, by definition, complicated elements of a building. They are usually awkward, require high levels of workmanship

and must be watertight. Once constructed, they will rarely be inspected and may be inaccessible. Future repairs will inevitably be costly and you don't want to leave anything to chance.

The best way to ensure long-term peace of mind, is to commission a comprehensive, independent report on the condition of the roof; the requirements for maintenance and associated costs, and ensure that a strategy for eventual replacement is in place.

A surveyor will be able to do all this, and, assuming a replacement is necessary, will offer impartial advice on the suitability of all available roofing types and materials. The advantage of using a qualified professional is that they will:

- Have in-depth knowledge of the life expectancy of the existing roof
- Can predict the necessary frequency of and costs for ongoing maintenance
- Can assess all the suitable replacement options, and
- Provide an objective view on architectural, legal, statutory and structural limitations.

Whether the surveyor's view is repair

## KENSINGTON GARDENS SQUARE, LONDON W2

**The development of** 50 Kensington Gardens Square was completed around 20 years ago and the roofs over the modern buildings have been covered with a single ply, rubber membrane. Many of the roofs had been suffering from leaks as the single ply system had been punctured and was poorly detailed. Earl Kendrick has been involved in implementing major roof refurbishment works. Where in good condition, the single ply membrane has been left in place and the roofs have been coated with a new Liquid Plastics repair system, providing a guarantee of 25 years. Part of the decision to use the liquid applied refurbishment system was the presence of communal plant and machinery on some of the roof areas, which could be left in place and the new liquid system worked around the equipment.



or replace, he or she will provide detailed recommendations that will need to include:

- Investigating hidden defects (particularly where new roofs are being laid on top of old roofs that may contain defects such as rot)
- Obtaining planning approval and listed building consent where required for new materials
- Preparing applications for Building Regulations (for example where a new roof is being installed)
- Preparing the specification of works and managing the tender process
- Assessing tenders
- Advising on the appropriate choice of formal Building Contract for the works
- Managing the works on site and administering the building contract
- Checking quality of works, progress and financial management, ensuring that payments are made to contractors only for works that have been completed.

Replacing a roof is not quick or easy





## STEP 3

### ASSESS YOUR OPTIONS

A new roof is not like a new carpet or a lick of paint - you can't go back and change it next year. So it's vital that you investigate your options, which are vast. The alternatives will depend on the shape and size of your roof, but materials come in many forms. One type doesn't fit all and roofs and roofing materials are constantly changing. The well-known materials such as slate and tiles on pitched roofs and asphalt and felt on flat roofs are now being used far less frequently, due to advancements in architectural design and materials (where planning regulations allow). More traditional materials have recently given way to liquid plastics (or polymers) that are often used for flat roof surfaces. The liquid systems are applied in layers and often have the benefit of a guarantee period of between 15-25 years, depending on the number and thickness of

**Consultation is vital both from a statutory legal and management perspective**

the layers. The liquid systems are favourable to insurance companies as they reduce the amount of "hot works" and thus the risk of fire. Maintaining and repairing this type of roof is also relatively easy and as the roof deteriorates it can be re-coated in the future to extend the guarantee.

It may be worth replacing your existing materials to bring your roof into line with the more modern approaches that you will take for granted elsewhere in your life. In other cases though, due to the cost of removing the old roof coverings, if the existing coverings are in good condition it can be worth leaving an old roof in place and applying the new liquid on top of it. A particular advantage of liquid systems is where there is plant and machinery on the roof as the liquid systems can often work around the plant, minimising the cost and disruption involved in temporarily removing it.

## STEP 4

### CONSULT WITH RESIDENTS FROM THE START

Replacing a roof will constitute "Qualifying Works" under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the cost of replacing a new roof will almost inevitably breach the cost threshold of the Section 20 consultation procedure (subject to changes following the recent High Court case Phillips and others v Francis), requiring Notices to be served.

Consultation is vital both from a statutory legal and a management perspective. If your block is managed by a professional block manager, you have a legal right to be

consulted. If you self-manage, then your management company is also obliged to keep residents informed. When planning a major project, good communication is key, especially when it is the residents who will be paying for it. Involved leaseholders will be more sympathetic towards the project and this will help minimise delays further down the line. By holding an AGM to discuss your project right from the start it will be easier to get buy-in from all flat owners in the block. If you have a Residents' Association make sure progress is reported in the newsletter or emails sent out to members.

When appointing surveyors and contractors, ask them to come along and meet the residents before you decide which one to use. If they are not keen to do this - they are not the best firm for the job. The secret to a successful project is to get buy-in from those involved but to delegate liaison with the project team to one or two members of the Residents' Association or RMC and task them with reporting progress back to the block as a whole. Allowing too many people to get involved is almost as bad as having too few and will slow progress, as everyone is likely to have a different view. Keep it simple but keep talking and your project should run smoothly.

## STEP 5

### GET THE TENDER RIGHT

A detailed survey with a comprehensive specification will minimise the risk of costs rising during the works on site.

It is good practice for between three and five contractors to be invited to tender. This should be a sealed tender in accordance with the National Joint Consultative Committee for Building (NJCC) Code of Procedure for Single Stage Selective Tendering. The entire tender should be based on the surveyor's specification of works, any specific requirement for guarantee periods, programming constraints and any supplementary information, such as information provided in accordance with the Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM).

A surveyor will assess the tenders to ensure that the specification has been priced properly and that the contractors have priced for use of the same materials to ensure like-for-like comparisons.

## STEP 6

### BE REALISTIC ABOUT TIMINGS

New roofs don't appear overnight. The length of the project will depend on:

- The size and type of roof and the condition of the existing coverings/structure
- Whether the old roof is being removed or will remain under the new one and
- The weather:

1 during wet periods a temporary scaffolding

## IVERNA COURT, LONDON W8

**Earl Kendrick** has been involved in the overhaul of the main roof areas, including the replacement of the coverings to the dormer roofs to all five blocks. The maintenance plan for the building identified that the main pitched roof areas were in poor condition and replacing the dormers would minimise the risk of leaks and maintenance costs and frequencies going forward.



roof will avoid delays and minimise the risk of damage. But temporary roofs come at a price

- 2 liquid applied roofing materials cannot be used when the temperature is below 5°C
- 3 asphalt and felt roofing cannot be laid in damp conditions.

## STEP 7

### AVOID THE OBVIOUS PITFALLS

There are a number of issues that can delay and complicate roofing projects. To avoid them you should ensure that the:

- System selected is robust and facilitates future repairs. Liquid applied roofing materials are relatively adaptable.
- Future of the roof is considered. Don't leave the installation of mechanical plant for next time. Integrate it in the initial build. Where future roof alterations may need to be undertaken, plan the detailing in advance.
- Materials are suitable. Single ply membranes, for example, are susceptible to damage in a heavy trafficked areas.
- Guarantees offered by roofing manufacturers and installers are robust. Read the small print to ensure that any requirements for periodic inspections and maintenance are adhered to once the new roof has been installed. Consider taking out a separate bond or insurance for the roofing guarantee.
- Contractors price the job on a like-for-like basis, using the same specification and manufacturer for materials. Alternatives may look similar, without offering the same quality and guarantee.
- Schedules of Condition are prepared for the top floor areas/flats beneath the new roof, to help determine liability for any damage as a result of the project (which may be caused by vibration, water ingress etc).

It is important to remember that a new roof won't be the easiest job you and your fellow residents have undertaken, but with careful management, consultation and planning, it should not cause undue nightmares. ● ►►



# TOP 10 TIPS

for making the most of your ROOF

## 1 HAVE A MAINTENANCE PLAN

I regularly visit residential blocks where there is either no plan in place or the existing plan does not include the roof. The former is shortsighted – roofs are, by definition, exposed to the elements more than any other part of a building and, in time, they will incur problems – from loose tiles to significant leaks. The latter simply wastes money – because there are huge economies to be gained from inspecting and maintaining your roof to minimise unnecessary or premature deterioration. An integrated approach to maintenance makes complete sense, ensuring that your roof is checked regularly and maintenance or replacement is well planned.



Ensure your roof is checked regularly

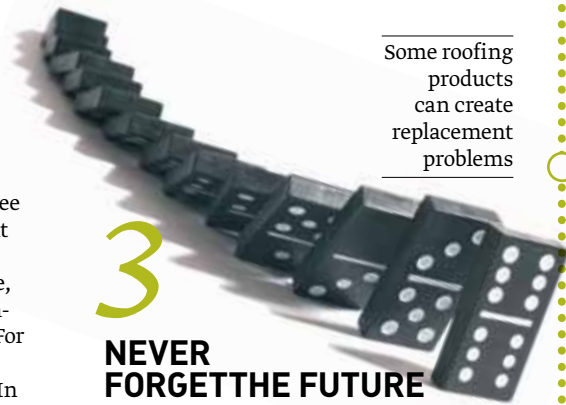
## 2 READ THE GUARANTEE

It's not the most exciting tip you'll ever receive but it is vital that you adhere to the terms and condition of any guarantee for your roof. This is really only relevant in modern buildings, but if you treat a roof in a way that ignores the guarantee, or if you ignore the terms of any guarantee, future defects may not be covered. For example, some roofs require regular inspection during the guarantee period. In the case of new asphalt roofs, the asphalt usually requires treating with a solar reflective paint every two years in order to maintain the guarantee! Those responsible for managing buildings are often unaware of the inspection and maintenance regimes required for a new roof, and there is a risk that the guarantee will not be available when it may be required.



## 3 NEVER FORGET THE FUTURE

There are all sorts of relatively inexpensive (and attractive-looking) roof products and solutions for roof repair and refurbishment works. However, some can create massive problems going forward when maintenance or replacement become due. One of the many examples is a process called turnerising; a budget repair where bitumen paint and meshing are applied over an existing roof. Pulling it up is a major job, and can create a domino effect of issues. And at some stage, the odds will be on you having to do just that.



Some roofing products can create replacement problems

## 5 BEWARE OF SINGLE PLY MEMBRANES

This is only one type of roofing system, but it is always worth considering. Single ply or rubber membranes have many advantages. They include low cost and speed of installation. But there's a catch. Even rubber-coated roofs can leak. The problem is trying to detect that leak. Imagine a small puncture in a large tyre that you can only isolate by testing it in water. Unfortunately, once you test a roof in water it's too late. A tiny hole in a roof membrane, can sometimes be even more costly than a huge leak – as water can seep-in slowly over time, creating damp and other nasty surprises! Single ply membranes are easily damaged, it is often difficult to locate the source of a leak and comparatively, this type of roof is difficult to repair.



## 4 CHECK IT OUT

A roof maintenance programme doesn't mean you can forget all about what's going on up top. Structurally, it means you should be in good shape, but it is important to keep an eye on your roof to side-step easy-to-avoid problems. On one recent site visit I was called to a huge leak on a gently sloping flat roof in the City. The amount of water suggested a fundamental problem, but the presence of an empty champagne bottle floating on its surface suggested the mystery might have a simple solution. A little rummaging around did, indeed, reveal a drainage hole blocked by two champagne corks! Leaves, sheets of paper and food wrapping can cause similar havoc. The lesson is simple: a quick and regular check of your roof and roof drainage systems can save a myriad of problems in the longer-term.





## 6 DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE BOY WITH HIS FINGER IN THE DYKE

Every school child has read about Hans Brinker, the little Dutch boy who saved his village on his way to school by plugging a leak in a dyke with his finger. Hans was an admirable boy, but his approach may not always work for leaky roofs. Because these are often not as simple as they look. I regularly see patch-up jobs on roofs where one problem has simply created another, rather than creating a solution. This equivalent of filling the most obvious hole doesn't always work, largely because water doesn't tend to hang around close to its source. It will always find the lowest point, which means it may gather away from the original problem. If you have a leak, it's worth having a proper survey carried out to ensure that the original issue is fixed once and for all. There are many techniques that surveyors can use to locate the cause of a leak, including water dye testing, chemical tracers and non-destructive surveys such as the use of thermal cameras and electronic resistance testing.



Hans' approach may not work for leaky roofs



## 7 MAKE MONEY FROM YOUR ROOF

In business terms, roofs tend to be associated with costs. But there are increasing opportunities for your roof to make you money. The most obvious is by installing solar panels. These make economic sense, and as designs develop, they are increasingly aesthetically pleasing. There is also the potential to lease part of the roof to mobile operators for the installation of masts. Subject to some legal and technical hurdles, these installations can generate income.

A roof refurbishment or upgrade programme will often be an opportune time to increase the thermal insulation on the roof and this is often required to comply with the current Building Regulations. Increasing the thermal insulation can help to minimise running costs, particularly in large buildings with communal heating systems.

Consider also the potential to develop the roof or roof space. A developer may purchase the rights to develop the roof to create a new residential flat. The revenue generated from the "purchase" of the roof from the building can be used towards the maintenance of the building, such as replacing lifts. A further benefit is that this type of development will also provide the building with an entirely new roof. I recently carried out a survey of a large mansion block where the original pitched tiled roofs were in a very poor state of repair and required replacing. One of the recommendations in my survey report was for the residents to consider selling the vast amounts of attic space to a developer who would create residential use and replace the roof as part of the development agreement. The development opportunities are currently being explored ahead of the major roof replacement programme.

## 8

### ROOF GARDENS CAN WORK

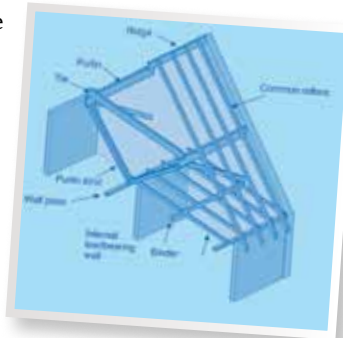
City space is increasingly expensive and gardens are shrinking. Growing grass on a roof was once considered eccentric, but it is becoming increasingly popular. Flat roofs benefit from exposure to the elements that help grass grow. But the usual risk warnings apply. You won't want to rip your grass/green roof-up every time there's a maintenance issue up top, and you will need more than your gardener to plant and maintain the roof. It is vital that you consult a green roof specialist and prepare a comprehensive maintenance plan going forward.



Green roofs are now popular in cities

## 9 THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

I recall hearing a case of a surveyor who went to inspect a building and expressed immediate concern about the state of its flat roof. Such was his worry that he didn't just recommend a series of repairs, but that the entire flat roof be replaced with a new pitched roof, completely changing the appearance and style of the building. After a series of disputes, the LVT found in favour of the surveyor who had presented the proposal for the pitched roof as the most practical and economic repair strategy for the building! Fortunately, most of us are not faced with this sort of dilemma very often, but where roofs are concerned it pays to consider all the options - even the ones that do not at first seem obvious.



## 10 MAKE THE MOST OF IT

Finally, never under-estimate the value of making the most of your roof - and putting a sensible maintenance plan in place to protect it. There's a reason that there's a roof on top of your property, and it pays not to forget it! ●

**earl kendrick**  
ASSOCIATES

Julian Davies MRICS is the Managing Director of Earl Kendrick Associates Limited, a firm of Chartered Building Surveyors based in London and the South West. Julian's philosophy is that his is a relationship-driven business. Simple projects can be complicated by the often conflicting interests of owners, tenants, builders, architects, agents and solicitors. Earl Kendrick aim to take the strain with a remit that goes way beyond surveying. For more useful guides and technical factsheets, go to: [www.earlkendrick.com/downloads](http://www.earlkendrick.com/downloads)

**Email** [Julian@earlkendrick.com](mailto:Julian@earlkendrick.com)  
**Tel** 020 3667 1510  
**Twitter** @earlkendrick

# Let the SUNSHINE in

**PAUL HICKS**, Sustainability & Design Manager at VELUX, offers some product advice on ways to introduce daylight into a top floor flat



Velux Cabrio



Velux Sun Tunnel

## VELUX CABRIO® BALCONY SYSTEM AND ROOF TERRACE

If the floor space is limited in your loft flat, or you have the potential to extend into the roof space above, it is worth considering the VELUX CABRIO® Balcony System. It makes the most of any limited or unused roof space without impacting on the amount of living space available. When opened, the CABRIO® Balcony System allows you to enjoy the flow of outside space and light that a regular balcony brings without compromising the use of the available floor area. When closed, it fits snugly in to the roof and looks like a regular roof window. It can also be combined with VELUX Top-Hung Roof Windows and fixed bottom elements to offer extra views, ventilation and increased daylight.

Another way to let more daylight and fresh air into your flat is with the VELUX Roof Terrace. This innovative system offers a doorway to the outside which adds air, light and a great view by combining sloping and vertical elements together, through which you can step out onto an external decking as an extension to your room and really bring the WOW Factor into any home. ●

For more information on VELUX products visit the website here: <http://www.velux.co.uk/products>



**NATURAL LIGHT IS** essential to the quality of our lives and living environments. Daylight can have a hugely positive effect on both our physical health and mental wellbeing and is something that should always be considered at the early stages of design. While modern, urban living has restricted the space available for development, these product recommendations can help you to incorporate natural light and transform a property of any size.

## VELUX SUN TUNNEL

Many properties, especially flats, struggle to achieve natural daylight in bathrooms, hallways and kitchens, either through lack of consideration at design stage or more often, because of imposed limitations on the layout of the spaces due to site restrictions. Often daylight only enters these rooms when you open a door or have a fanlight over a door, but installing a VELUX Sun Tunnel enhances the daylight provision and can improve the usability of the space without having to rely on artificial lighting.

VELUX Sun Tunnels can bring natural light into even the darkest and most isolated spaces through a specially designed tunnel from roof to ceiling. Due to the unique flat glass design,

the VELUX Sun tunnel sits well on any roof, in the same style as VELUX roof windows. It also has the added benefit of fitting into spaces that regular roof windows do not, which makes it perfect for smaller rooms and areas.

Daylight can have a hugely positive effect on both our physical health and wellbeing

## DON'T FORGET... THE SMALL PRINT

**If you are** thinking of installing products such as the ones showcased here from Velux, you will need to speak to your landlord first as you may need his permission to carry out any works involving the fabric of the roof. If you own the freehold of your block together with the other

residents, you will need to talk to your neighbours as the roof is likely to be part of the fabric of the building that is held in common ownership. This doesn't however mean that you can ask your neighbours to contribute to the cost! Always check the terms of your lease to determine

what is and what isn't part of your property and don't forget that many alterations and improvements will need planning permission before you set about getting the works done. It is vital that the works do not damage the fabric of the roof or affect any existing guarantees.