

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF DOMESTIC BLOCK PAVED SURFACES

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This code is intended to provide householders with guidance on simple pavement care and maintenance. It is not intended to be exhaustive in making recommendations to deal with any problems, but the association will do its best to advise on any special problems that may arise. Variation in requirements may be expected, depending upon e.g. whether clay or concrete blocks have been used and sealers are available that, when properly applied in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, will help to provide protection against staining and biological growth. Some sealers will also help to stabilize jointing sand and may enhance colours.

2 Regular cleaning

- 2.1 The key to good care and maintenance is a regular cleaning, using a good stiff broom, together with water when necessary; or with special cleaners in specific cases.
- 2.2 This should be sufficient in all normal circumstances to preserve a clean and tidy appearance, without causing harm to the service to be expected from the pavement.
- 2.3 Drainage channels should be removed and the grates cleaned out twice a year.
- 2.4 Recess manhole covers need to be lifted once a year. Any debris that has accumulated around the edges should be removed.

3 Joints

- 3.1 The small gaps between the blocks – the joints – must always be completely filled with the special fine sand used for this purpose. If, for any reason, sand is missing an opportunity should be taken during dry conditions to brush fresh kiln dried sand in.
- 3.2 As the new pavement settles down and matures the natural detritus which is always around will accumulate at the top of the joint. This stabilises the jointing sand and enables the joint to become impervious to water penetration. When this stability has been established topping up would only be necessary if, probably by some mechanical means, sand becomes dislodged.

4 Staining

- 4.1 Should staining occur, an obvious first remedy is to eliminate the source to avoid any recurrence.
- 4.2 During external decoration, as is normal practice, the pavement should be covered with protective sheets.
- 4.3 Whenever possible it is desirable to remove the stain before it can be absorbed into the pores of the block material.
- 4.4 Simple stains will be removed by a stiff broom and water – e.g. bird droppings.
- 4.5 As a second stage, to restore colour or remove light discolouration, either domestic detergents or industrial cleaners may be used, but whenever using any cleaning material always apply it to a small area in an out of the way position first, as a trial for suitability.
- 4.6 In the extremely unlikely event that you should experience efflorescence (lime bloom) – that appears as a white stain on the surface of new pavements on drying out after a

period of rainfall – this is an unavoidable natural phenomenon that is normally of limited duration. Any guidance that is required should be sought from the manufacturer of the product.

5 Oil stains

- 5.1 This is a good example of when to act promptly. For a new stain use an absorbent material – paper towel or cloth – to mop up, but avoid spreading the stain. For an old stain, or if deep penetration has occurred, then the best solution is likely to be the use of an emulsifying degreaser. This type of cleaner – typically used for cleaning vehicle engines – is applied by brushing in onto a dry surface and left to dissolve the oil. Then when water is applied it emulsifies and can be carefully washed into a suitable drain.
- 5.2 As an alternative, cleaners that act by bio-degradation are also available, and are used in a similar manner.

6 Biological discolouration

- 6.1 Mosses, lichens and algae can all grow on all surfaces, including block pavements and weeds can grow in the joints. The rate of growth will vary according to prevailing weather conditions and interference with growth by use and by maintenance brushing of the pavement.
- 6.2 If considered to be desirable weed killers can be effective, particularly those designated for pavement use which persist for up to a year. Weeds are relatively easy to control, but moss and algae can persist in wet, shaded places. Before using the treatment clean as much as possible with brush and water, then apply it to a trial area. If successful continue the application, spraying or brushing the weed killer well in.

7 Specialist cleaning techniques

- 7.1 Experience is necessary in the use of specialist techniques, if you are in any way uncertain – be sure to consult a suitable advisor.
- 7.2 Use of a hosepipe is normally helpful – e.g. after washing the car, but a high pressure hose can easily remove sand from the joints unless used with care; a pressure jetting – although a very effective cleaning process – will almost certainly result in the need to carry out joint maintenance. Refer to Section 3 – joints
- 7.3 Vacuum cleaning with industrial equipment, particularly on a newly laid pavement, will remove sand from the joints. Refer to Section 3 – joints
- 7.4 Steam cleaning is unlikely to damage the pavement, but might damage adjacent areas and is a job for a specialist.

8 Specialist maintenance

- 8.1 Many installers are able to offer a maintenance contract, which will ensure that your pavement is always reliably trouble free.