

# Listed Home insurance explained



## What is a listed building?

There are 3 grades for a listed property in the UK: Grade I – buildings of exceptional interest, Grade II\* – particularly important buildings of more than special interest, Grade II – buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

There are around 500,000 listed buildings in the UK. A building becomes listed once it is added to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special

Architectural or Historic Interest. It means that the building cannot be demolished, altered or extended without expressed permission from the Local Planning Authority. They will often be made using non-standard or 'traditional' methods and materials or require specialist workmen at the request of the LPA. This in turn may make sourcing workmen or materials more timely and/or expensive.



## Listed property building insurance

One main concern for insurers of listed buildings is the extra time it can take to source materials, workers and gain approval from the council to get repairs done. In the event of a claim this extra time often means extra expense at a cost to them. For instance, if the property needed demolishing, it could take much longer when parts of the property want to be salvaged for use in the restoration or rebuild. The other issue is simply that non-standard construction does not compute on some insurers heavily computerised systems! Specialist brokers and insurers have more ability to calculate risk and work on a more case by case basis with individuals.

## The re-build cost

The re-build cost is the figure you should be insuring the building for and it is based on how much it would cost to rebuild the property, brick by brick. Remember to take into consideration the cost of the demolition of the building, the clearance costs and solicitor/architect fees as well as the re-building cost itself.

## Contents insurance

A great way to understand the difference between your 'contents' and your 'building' would be to (hypothetically) tip your house the wrong way up. Anything that would fall is considered contents. This would mean furniture and decorations are contents but the walls, ceiling and kitchen cabinets come under buildings insurance. Don't forget the small things too – It can be surprising how quickly things add up if you really had to replace everything in your home.

Make sure you understand the level of cover you are agreeing to and importantly which valuable items may not be covered your contents insurance. Items of high value and or personal items such as phones may not be included. You may then want to consider high-net worth insurance or separately insuring specific items.

## Property owners' liability

Every property owner should have property owners' liability. Should a guest or any third party injure themselves on your property, POL can pay out should a compensation claim be brought against you. You may be liable because the property owner is responsible for maintaining the premises.

## Subsidence insurance

If your property has suffered from some subsidence you will need to declare this during a quotation. It is vital that you do because otherwise further complications could be uninsured. You will need to provide proof that this has been checked by a professional and although it will most likely raise your premium, a specialist insurer should not have a problem sourcing you a policy that provides adequate cover and will be able to consider each situation on a case by case basis

## Exclusions

Whether you have your insurance with Towergate or any other specialist insurer, always be confident you understand the features and exclusions of your policy. Especially when you are insuring something as dear (and expensive) as your home.

- **Un-occupied** – Unoccupied properties are much more susceptible to break-ins, petty crime, squatting etc. This being so for instance, our insurance will not cover a property that remains unoccupied or unfurnished for more than 60 days. Your listed building may need major refurbishments that require you to leave or you may have a second home in another location. Whatever the reason, we can easily convert your policy to an unoccupied listed property policy should this be the case.

- **The cost of normal maintenance work** – Normal wear and tear, maintenance work, refurbishments and decorations are not insured on our policy (please see the policy document for details). Listed buildings however have a higher likelihood of issues such as damp, drainage and decay due to the age and may need more maintenance than a modern property so it is important to keep on top of these things. There are many things you can do such as; Looking out for any signs of damp patches and checking bricks for erosion, having your roof inspected to check for broken tiles which may need repairing and regularly clearing guttering of leaves and debris.



## More advice

It's a simple fact that there is a higher risk to the insurer, there are however a few ways you can lower your premiums:

- **Raise the voluntary excess** – The higher the excess, the lower the premium. This is because the larger percentage of each claim you agree to pay yourself the less risk the insurer has to take and the less they can charge to cover their share.
- **Add additional security measures** - In certain high risk areas, or with higher levels of valuable contents to insure you may be required to meet certain security measures. Your advisor will be able to discuss this with

you. With or without these requirements you can often get a discount by installing higher levels of security including specific locks and intruder alarms. Be sure to speak to your advisor if you would like to know more about these options.

- **Change of use** - Don't forget that your insurer also needs to know if you change the use of your property. Will you be renting out your property to tenants as a short term letting/holiday home? Or do you yourself use this property as a holiday home? We can update your policy to cover you for these circumstances as they change.

## Optional cover

- **Accidental damage cover** – This is not offered as standard. You must make it clear early on that you want to be covered for accidental damage. Accidental damage is considered damage to property not classed under another insurable peril. E.g. Foot through the loft or nail through a pipe.
- **Legal cover** – This is help with legal fees if legal action is taken out against you. Legal cover is not usually found as a standard policy feature but can be requested as an optional add on to your policy. As with all optional extras they are not deemed essential or legal requirements, an advisor can discuss with you the costs and levels you might be interested in.
- **Emergency Assistance** – This is a unique cover provided by MARAS in partnership with Towergate - designed to cover you for emergency call outs 24 hours a day. Covers plumbing, gas or electricity failure, security to windows or doors, roofing, hot water failure, vermin, central heating or boiler failure, as long as they are serviced yearly. Other typical exclusions are external water supply pipes and boilers over 15 years old.

