

Damp Proof Course

- A.1 There are different types of DPC materials available, can you give full descriptions of the various types of DPC's.
- Plastic DPC, this comes in rolls it can be in varying widths starting with 100mm. This DPC has an irregular surface for bonding of mortar, it is recommended to lay a DPC on a thin bed of mortar then mortar on top of the DPC to start laying bricks (a DPC sandwich?). This is particularly important when using bricks with a sunken frog.
- Hi-load DPC, this is a fibre and bitumen based product this is used in areas where plastic DPC may get damaged or punctured.
- The DPC should be the correct width, not project into the cavity, not set back from the edge of the masonry, be fully lap jointed and be visible from the outside.
- A.2 Can you think of a reason why we should use a DPC within the construction of a chimney or parapet wall?
- Moisture not only rises from the ground it can penetrate downwards into the structures from above through rain or snow.
- A DPC should be installed in a chimney at the intersection point of the chimney with the surface of the roof through which the chimney passes.
- Parapet walls should have a DPC below the coping and a DPC tray 150mm above the roof.
- A.3 What type of DPC would we provide in this location?
- A double DPC, that is the normal DPC 150mm above finished ground level then another on the next course to stop 'DPC bridging'.
- A cavity tray DPC is also advisable to protect the inner masonry.
- A.4 What was used as DPC's before plastic?
- Many things were tried prior to the invention of plastic, Mastic asphalt DPC's made from tar. This was very brittle and in hot weather and with compression from the structure would 'bleed' out of the joints, you can see some times where it has run down the face of the masonry. Other materials tried were slate over lapped and laid in mortar, engineering bricks, lead and copper were also used, these were expensive so only used on high value structures.
- A.5 What is the minimum distance to the DPC?
- From the external finished ground level the minimum distance is 150mm.
- From the cavity fill it is 225mm minimum, if you are using trench block they need to finish 225mm below the DPC and form the cavity, this is to

allow for any debris that may gather in the cavity, ie mortar droppings. These need to be kept to a minimum so the DPC is not 'bridged'.

A.6 What is the difference between a DPC and DPM, 2. How would we link a DPC and DPM?

The DPC is primarily used to stop moisture movement in masonry courses, where as the DPM would be placed below concrete.

The DPM would be laid below the concrete and turned up the wall and on to the DPC bed joint, masonry is then laid on top of the DPC /DPM to hold them both in place. The two then form a barrier against rising moisture.

A.7 Can you list all the locations within a property and name the type of DPC's used.

Vertical DPC in window and door reveals, cavity tray over openings, in a cavity tray around the perimeter of cavity wall, in masonry at floor level to stop rising ground water, in a chimney, in a parapet wall etc.