

Case Study: Old Poplar Library, Gillender Street, E14.

This substantial Grade II Listed building was built in 1904. It stands alongside the A12 and is a familiar sight to drivers who use the Blackwall Tunnel. Construction of the new Blackwall Tunnel and approach road led to its closure in 1981. The building subsequently fell into disrepair and was on the English Heritage Buildings' At Risk register.



We were initially contacted by the main contractor and asked to undertake a full specialist survey inspection in respect of timber decay, timber infestation and dampness. Our inspection revealed various and extensive outbreaks of true dry rot and areas of wet rot. These destructive fungal attacks were mainly due to long term rain water ingress owing to the lack of maintenance of this building.

Following careful opening-up works by the main contractor under our instructions, further inspections were carried out along with the architect (specialising in the regeneration of historic buildings). Once the full extent of the fungal decay had been determined we were able to provide effective and targeted eradication treatments, designed to minimise timber replacement and help preserve this historically important building. In this instance, the main contractor followed our specification for timber repairs and timber isolation and carried out full external refurbishment including roofing and rain water goods – thereby preventing further rainwater ingress.

Other necessary treatments carried out by us on this project included:

- Rising Damp treatments and specialist rendering
- Cementitious tanking (SIKA) to the basement earth retaining walls (in order to provide the required Grade 3 environment)

Pleased with our efficient and considerate approach to this project and successful treatment design we were invited directly by the architect to provide our services at the neighbouring property Bromley Hall.

Case Study: Bromley Hall, Gillender Street, E14.

Bromley Hall is a Grade II* Listed early Tudor building and is thought to be the oldest brick house in London it was built by Holy Trinity Priory in the 1490s. It became a haunt of Henry VIII after it was seized by the crown in 1531. It had suffered neglect and been placed on the English Heritage Buildings At Risk register.

Specific and targeted timber preservation treatments were undertaken following our specialist survey. Our preservation treatments made it possible to retain many of the historically important timbers within this property where both fungal decay and insect attack existed. Timbers were removed, preserved and replaced where possible and in-situ. Paste injection treatments were carried out to large sections of at risk timbers.

Timber preservation treatments were carried out using the most effective and environmentally friendly water-soluble borate based solutions available. Rising Damp treatments and specialist rendering were only carried out to the newer annex building.

A historic river entrance was discovered within the front room of Bromley Hall on removal of the flooring timbers. The Museum of London Archaeological Service carried out a detailed survey of this area.

The area flooded regularly after rainfall, but the client wanted to retain this feature and provide lighting under a section of glass floor. We provided a suitable solution by installing a specialised sump pump concealed beneath river stones to control the inflow of water. An annual service contract was provided for maintenance.

