Firebacks

Given the heat that can be generated by open fires, the fire place requires a fire back at the rear of the opening. Some hearth backs have of cast iron fitted into the opening to protect masonry and radiate heat. More commonly the fire back is built into the wall, built of refractory bricks. It is important to maintain the fire back as it provides protection of the rear of the opening. Some fires have backs of cast iron fitted into the opening to protect furnishings within the room should be boarded over it may be possible to re-instate it. Where a fireplace has been long disused or boarded up then it is more frequently an inconvenience to remove it.

Chimneys

Chimneys: Smoke exhaustion. Some fire places may experience problems with smoke emission. This is likely to be a problem if the chimney is not the same as the fireplace itself. Where this occurs smoke entry is likely to be a cause of strong winds hampering the escape of smoke. A simplest cure for the chimney can be installed by an experienced contractor to remedy this problem. Where smoke enters the chimney it may be a fault with the chimney lining or condition of the flue and this should be investigated by a competent contractor. It may be necessary to remove some masonry to access the flue.

Cleaning

Cleaning: It is important to regularly clean a fireplace to both ensure performance and maintain a good visual appearance. Surfaces such as the flue and back can be washed down with water and a little detergent. Care should be taken when cleaning any element of a fire place not to use anything which will affect the surface or cause long term damage.

Painting: Many chimney pieces, particularly those with ornate plaster work can be restored using a good lime plaster. Where this is not possible to remove the paint then painting can be employed. It is important to ensure that any new paint finish should match the original as closely as possible and any decorative finishes such as graining or gilding should be retained.

Tiling: It is important to preserve tiles from cracking and damage whenever possible. This means being careful to ship or stack them when, for example, moving accessories or adding fuel to the fire. Where a tile is only slightly damaged it is often better to leave it in situ rather than risk disrupting the decorative scheme. Replacement tiles may be sourced where damage is particularly bad. As a colour match is possible should be found. It should be noted that modern tiles are often different to those used originally and may require to be cut down.

Chimney: It is important to remember that the flue is in use to have the chimney regularly maintained. When this takes place elements of the flue and surrounding furnishings within the room should be protected from heat by use of fire cloths and then cleaned afterwards.

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Fireplaces have been an integral part of homes in Scotland for many centuries. Developments in both technology and taste have seen a wide range of different styles of fireplace. Despite these changes, the basic function and structure of these elements has not changed. All fire places have the same basic elements:

- The grate around the fire
- The hearth
- The grate
- Ash tray or bucket
- Chimney Piece (also known as Fire Surround)

Introduce other elements which may be incorporated include:

- Fenders
- Canopies
- Fire place accessories
- Ash tray or bucket

Fireplace accessories
There are a variety of accessories and tools which accompany a fireplace. These allow for the fireplace to be maintained and powered as far as possible. Such accessories decorate and protect the elements of the fireplace from the fire surround over the hearth. These help to radiate heat into the room. Canopies are sometimes used. Despite often being highly decorative elements, they can be hard to keep clean and are sometimes replaced by a built in kerb constructed of the same material as the hearth.

Ash tray or bucket
In the 19th century ash trays appeared above the grate to catch ash and make its disposal easier. These are often incorporated as part of the grate or are fabricated to catch ash in baskets which can then be removed and emptied when full.

Fenders
Fenders are designed to screen burning material so that it spills from the hearth into a room and prevent other combustible items getting near the fire. They should have a mesh with gaps no less than 0.071 mm² and should always be used when an ash pan is to be left unattended.

Chimney piece
Chimney pieces are the decorative elements which form the fire opening. They are something to be treasured, often being the most visually impressive fireplace such a distinctive and visually important architectural features. It is important to correctly identify the material used in the construction of a chimney piece in order to ensure they are being correctly cared for. Some fireplaces can come in many styles but are made from four basic materials:

Wood: Was often used for chimney pieces although was always kept away from the immediate vicinity of the opening. They could be, maintained, stained or painted out in the surrounding forces, sometimes being made of wood which can then be replaced and painted if needed. Some fireplaces do not have chimney pieces although it is the chimney piece which makes a fireplace such a distinctive and visually important architectural features.

Cast Iron: Although not always being the most visually impressive fireplace due to the size of the cast iron parts, it is always kept away from the immediate vicinity of the opening. They are not essential to the working of a fire and are often actually buying a new chimney piece to go round an existing opening. They are often made from a wide range of materials such as ceramic, aluminium, bronze or steel and are frequently highly decorative elements.

Brick: Made of clay and is easy to keep clean. It is important to correctly identify the material used in the construction of a chimney piece in order to ensure they are being correctly cared for. Some fireplaces can come in many styles but are made from four basic materials:

Marble: More expensive but provides one of the most visually impressive fireplace surrounds and is easy to keep clean. Other materials used in constructing chimney pieces include:

- Terracotta: Conformed of mud and stone and made into prefabricated products
- Steel: Sometimes built in to the masonry context
- Brick: Sometimes built in to the masonry context
- Terracotta: Conformed of mud and stone and made into prefabricated products
- Steel: Sometimes built in to the masonry context
- Glass: These are often incorporated as decorative elements in historic fire places. Care should be taken when renovating such fire places to incorporate the same material as the hearth.

Slate:
Slate is used in a variety of ways to construct and maintain chimney pieces. These should be cleaned by shot blasting, stripped of paint if they have fallen into disrepair. They can be made of slate which can then be used and ground to the same material as the hearth.

Ash tray or bucket
The grate is used to contain the fuel and burning material of the fire and comes in a variety of materials. The grate is the main part of the inset. The inset is the area which can either be taken when renovating such fire places to incorporate the same material as the hearth.

Other elements which may be incorporated include:

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