



MORTAR BEES

A Mortar Bee is a species of bee that has enlarged rear legs; the Mortar Bee uses these hind legs to remove mortar from joints of brickwork.

They prefer to work in the softer mortar mixes and can cause significant structural damage. Removing mortar from the joints of brickwork will enable moisture to enter the wall cavity and can cause some areas of collapse of brickwork when the damage is advanced.



Any brickwork with weak or soft mortar is susceptible to mortar bee attack and when signs of damage are located then the mortar bees are always considered to be active.

The colour of brickwork is often associated with mortar bee attack, as lighter bricks will often have a softer mortar with less cement content to match the colour of the bricks.

Blonde bricks and terracotta colored brickwork appear to have a higher occurrence of mortar bee attack than bricks with a darker finish.

Mortar Bee damage is not a common pest, very few incidents have been found from all the inspections Exopest have done. Treatment is not recommended and repairing the weak mortar is the best method of control.

To repair Mortar Bee damage it is recommended to point the mortar joints of the brickwork with a new mortar that may contain a higher percentage of cement, this will make the mortar too hard for the Mortar Bee to effectively remove with its hind legs.



These pictures illustrate the damage by Mortar Bees, the have excavated the mortar from the joints of the bricks.



It would appear the when the Mortar Bee attack is advanced then the natural erosion of mortar from the brick joints in the immediate area will also increase.

Mortar Bee damage should be repaired immediately, once a single brick is loose then adjoining bricks can easily loosen; when a large area of brickwork is loose the immediate structure may fail.