

## **The Environmental Case for Lime**

Most people know that lime is a traditional material that has been used for many years and is more widely being specified by conservationists and architects. This is because it is now widely recognised that hard cement mortars and gypsum plasters are not appropriate for a traditionally constructed building and that modern materials can in fact cause serious damage to the fabric of such a building. Some insurance companies have recently been known to reduce the sums claimed by householders where the damage has been compounded by the use of inappropriate materials.

It is not just traditional building repairs that benefit from the use of lime. New build and our environment can benefit. Traditional lime plasters are more porous and can absorb moisture from the air. When used with a breathable paint this can reduce the possibility of condensation in the home. This increased porosity also offers an improvement in acoustic insulation. Many millions of bricks are fired annually using a huge amount of energy. The vast majority of these bricks will be laid with cement mortars and are destined never be recycled apart from use as hard core. Salvage yards are able to supply us with reclaimed bricks because they were laid with lime mortars and can be cleaned off for reuse.

The energy used in the production of lime is also less than that for cement. Lime also sets by carbonation, reabsorbing most of the carbon dioxide released from the limestone as it is burnt. With greater moral and legal emphasis being placed on more environmentally friendly options in every aspect of life, lime could be a major contribution to reducing the adverse effects of our throw away, carbon producing society.