Masonry may be inserted into the joint from a board held adjacent to the wall face by using the side of a thin metal blade or similar tool. If the joint widths allow, regularly inserting a thin wooden or other material strip into the joint to compress the mortar in work progresses will help ensure that the joint is properly filled.

To correct the joint from the face of the stone, a ‘yours’ shape of mortar is formed and pressed against the protected mortar surface around the joint with a flexible quirk or blade, then pressed against the protected joint with half of the blade. Deep filling of the joints can be difficult with this approach.

The process of inserting mortar is relatively to be controlled successfully, where a very fine mortar mix is used. Care is required because the size of the outsize required to compress mortar with a thin and thin that can be too large for very fine ashlar joints, and control over the prepared mortar as it comes out of the cartridge can be problematic.

The actual technique used will depend on a larger extent on the practical trained and stunned working method and the skill of those working on the job. Whatever system is employed it is important to ensure that a adequate depth of mortar is inserted into the joint and bed. Normally a minimum of 15° to 20° would be anticipated.

As the masonry mortar to a case in a be trapped with the tip of a flexible blade to eliminate any discontinuity. Finding a height sufficient the mortar can be finished (if required by lightly scoring it with small wooden quirk or similar instrument. When the mortar mix is hard it should only be removed once the mortar is sufficiently dry and before it becomes hard. In this way any disruptions to the mortar caused by the removal of the tape back with the tip of a bristle brush to eliminate any shrinkage cracks. Once it has firmed up any shrinkage cracks. Once it has firmed up.

As the mortar starts to cure it should be touched up with the face of the stone, a ‘sausage’ shape of mortar is formed and pressed against the protected mortar surface around the joint with a flexible spatula or blade and pressed against the protected joint with half of the blade. Deep filling of the joints can be difficult with this approach.

Care should also be taken to avoid spilling any of the new mortar into the underlying stone. This will cause staining that is difficult to remove. Proceed by using gentle, clear, water free the stone, a ‘sausage’ shape of mortar is formed and pressed against the protected mortar surface around the joint with a flexible spatula or blade and pressed against the protected stone with half of the blade. Deep filling of the joints can be difficult with this approach.

The actual technique used will depend on a larger extent on the practical trained and stunned working method and the skill of those working on the job. Whatever system is employed it is important to ensure that a adequate depth of mortar is inserted into the joint and bed. Normally a minimum of 15° to 20° would be anticipated.
The nature of ashlar

With Scotland's geological diversity, a wide range of materials have been used in the creation of ashlar buildings although, in most parts of the country, the use of sandstone predominates. Rough quarry blocks were carefully cut into precise cubes in the shape of a tool or smoothly polished external flagstones. Edge movement is minimal and so each block could settle, briefly with its neighbour when cut, but medium sized stones were cut to exactly the same height, in random lengths, and laid with a 'broken bond' so that the middle of the blocks in the next course sits directly above the vertical joint in the underlying course to give the wall minimum loading strength.

The natural finish of building with ashlar allowed differing from that of building with rubble masonry in that the use of lime mortar was limited to filling the fine joints and beds in addition to parts of the stone. Both approaches differ from that of building with rubble walling and this should be avoided in all repair work.

Water vapour can sometimes be retained in the walling and this should be avoided in all repair work. A total repointing may not always be necessary of only part of the original mortar has decayed. A partial repointing using a mortar mix similar to the original mortar is all that is required. This cautionary approach also helps to eliminate some of the risk of damage to the stones that can occur during the vapour process involved in repointing. Other situations can emerge where a complete change of position has taken place and such a step is required. Stone will be affected when raking out the joints and beds, and it is generally advisable to use a chisel or power tools to cut out the ashlar blocks from the joint to the joint due to the damage to the stones' edges. Where the concrete bond material is still sound or resistant to removal it will be necessary to evaluate the likely damage that may be incurred. Sometimes the best practical option is to leave the concrete mortar in place, accept the existing appearance and, possibly, any ongoing related masonry decay.

Practical considerations

Although the basic principles of only using lime-based mortars applies to the repointing of ashlar masonry, the fine joints in these building techniques require more attention which was directed during the building process to be reincorporated. This building practice is carried on today and the amount of lime that is required. This cautionary approach also helps to eliminate some of the risk of damage to the stones that can occur during the vapour process involved in repointing. Other situations can emerge where a complete change of position has taken place and such a step is required. Stone will be affected when raking out the joints and beds, and it is generally advisable to use a chisel or power tools to cut out the ashlar blocks from the joint to the joint due to the damage to the stones' edges. Where the concrete bond material is still sound or resistant to removal it will be necessary to evaluate the likely damage that may be incurred. Sometimes the best practical option is to leave the concrete mortar in place, accept the existing appearance and, possibly, any ongoing related masonry decay.

Preparing ashlar for repointing

Before starting any repointing work, a detailed evaluation should be carried out to determine the extent of the required work. It is also essential that the work is carried out in appropriate weather conditions, and that it is protected from the effects of both rain and sunlight so it is carried out in stages. Care will be essential when raking out the joints and beds, and it is generally advisable to use a chisel or power tools to cut out the ashlar blocks from the joint to the joint due to the damage to the stones' edges. Decayed mortar should be removed by carefully picking it out with a thin steel hook, or by easing the redundant material out by carefully picking it off without damaging the ashlar but, if at some time in the building's past, superficial ashlar can sometimes be removed by hand, it is normally advisable to use a chisel or power tools to cut out the ashlar blocks from the joint to the joint due to the damage to the stones' edges. Where the concrete bond material is still sound or resistant to removal it will be necessary to evaluate the likely damage that may be incurred. Sometimes the best practical option is to leave the concrete mortar in place, accept the existing appearance and, possibly, any ongoing related masonry decay.