

London Leak Specialist

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Report type	Leak investigation and trace and access report
Client	Withheld
Property address	Withheld (Marylebone, NW1, City of Westminster)

Redacted sample report from a real job. Names, address and contact details have been removed and the photographs are watermarked.

1. Reason for attendance

We attended on behalf of the managing party of a purpose-built block in Marylebone, NW1 (City of Westminster), to investigate an ongoing escape of water. Water was passing into the flats below the top-floor flat (Flat A). The supply to Flat A had been isolated, yet water was still appearing. Two visits were carried out three days apart. Flats are labelled A to D in this redacted copy: A is the top-floor flat, B and C are affected flats below it, D is a further flat where access was not available.

2. Visit one: Flat A and Flat C

Most of the bathroom and kitchen fittings in Flat A had already been removed. The visible plumbing was pipework protruding from walls with isolation valves fitted. The supply to the flat had been off for several days. Substantial evidence of earlier water damage was found where both bathroom basins, the kitchen sink and the toilet had been installed, and the flooring in those areas was heavily damp.

Pressure test. The pressure reached only about 1 bar, probably because the supply was isolated and the system partly disconnected. It held with no noticeable drop. Because of the condition of the system, this test cannot conclusively rule out a leak elsewhere in the pipework or waste system.

Tracer dye test. Yellow tracer dye was introduced into the accessible waste pipework to help eliminate or confirm the waste system as a source. Occupants of the flats below were asked to watch for yellow-coloured water over 24 hours. A second dye of a different colour can be used if the result is inconclusive.

Assessment. Flat A was considered the most likely source of the water damage given the extent of the dampness, but the exact source and route could not be confirmed because the fittings had been removed before attendance.

3. Visit two: Flat C and Flat B

Water had continued to pass into the flats below despite the isolation of Flat A. In Flat C the boiler was located and the pipework examined. The pipes run beneath the concrete floor, not through the ceiling. The ceiling area where water was mainly coming through was opened and inspected. No pipework was found there; the only significant item in the accessible area was a steel beam.

In Flat B, directly above Flat C, a new bathroom has all its pipework about four inches above floor level. All accessible plumbing was inspected and no active leak was found. As no leak was found, it was considered possible that water is travelling through the main structural wall before entering the ceiling of Flat C. The

open-plan room below may allow water to spread over a wider area of ceiling. This is a working assessment only and is unconfirmed.

Flats A and D could not be accessed on the second visit, so the investigation could not be taken through to a confirmed source.

4. Cause

A confirmed source was not established. Isolating Flat A had not stopped the escape, so the leak cannot be confirmed as originating solely from that flat. A trace gas test in the flats where access was unavailable is required.

5. Repair

No permanent repair was undertaken. Repairing without confirming the failed pipework or entry point would risk addressing the wrong area. Once the source is located, the defective section or connection should be repaired and the system tested under normal operating conditions to confirm the escape has ceased.

6. Recommendations

- Arrange access to the flats not yet inspected so that all relevant plumbing and pipe routes can be examined.
- Carry out a trace gas test in those flats to locate the concealed source or route of the continuing escape of water.
- Place a waterproof sheet over the kitchen floor of the flat below before further access is made to the ceiling.
- Review the yellow tracer dye result after the 24-hour observation period and repeat with a different colour if inconclusive.
- After repair, monitor the affected ceilings and assess residual dampness once the structure has dried.

7. Conclusion

Water continues to affect the flat below despite the isolation of the top-floor flat. Inspection of the accessible plumbing in Flats B and C did not identify an active leak. The source remains unresolved. Access, trace gas testing and further inspection are required before the cause can be conclusively established.

Limitations: this report records the findings from accessible areas and tests carried out during the visits. Concealed pipework, intermittent leaks and defects in the building fabric cannot be entirely ruled out without further investigation.

Photographs



Photo 1. Ceiling opened where water was coming through in the flat below, with the boxed-in steel beam beside it.



Photo 2. Water staining on the ceiling of one of the affected flats.



Photo 3. Yellow tracer dye run into a shower tray waste during the waste pipe test.



Photo 4. Tracer dye being introduced at an open waste outlet.



Photo 5. Damp debris and an isolation valve where bathroom fittings had been removed.



Photo 6. Lagged pipework and valves in an accessible void.