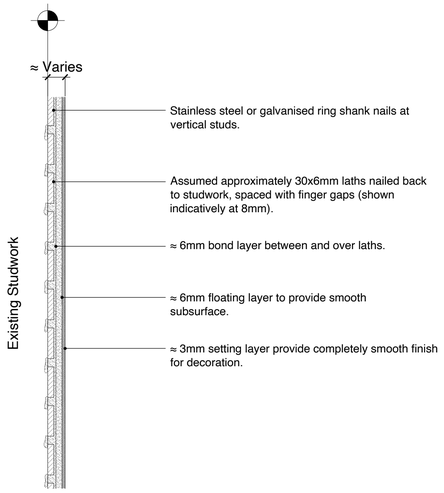


Penny Washer Method

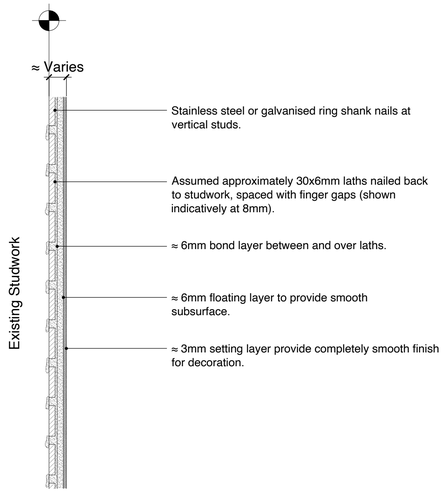
Used to stabilise cracked or blown lath and plaster by re-securing the plaster back to the timber laths.

This method is suitable where the plaster has blown from the laths but is not extensively collapsed. The surrounding plaster should be sound.

Carefully pre-drill small pilot holes either side of the crack line to avoid further damage. Insert screws fitted with penny washers at regular intervals (typically 150–200mm) along the crack and through the plaster into the timber laths behind. Tighten gently (avoid over-tightening) to pull the plaster back into contact with the laths without crushing it. The washers distribute the load and prevent the screw heads from pulling through the plaster.

Fill over washers and cracks using a compatible lime based filler & finish ready for decoration, sanding if needed. Redecorate using breathable paints.

W2-A - Existing Lathe & Plaster Wall Repair - Penny Washer



Typical Repair Method

Identify extent of failure (detached plaster vs. broken laths).

Gently remove only friable or fully detached plaster, retaining as much original material as possible. Clean debris and dust from laths.

Replace broken/missing laths with riven (hand-split) timber laths to match original spacing and size and fix with stainless or galvanised nails to joists.

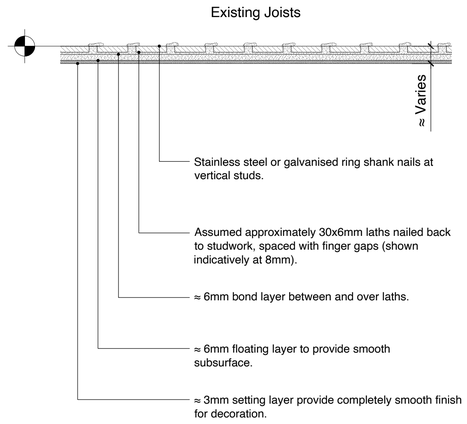
Where plaster has detached but is intact, reattach using the penny washer method.

Apply a new traditional lime plaster system (no gypsum) comprising a bond layer / scratch coat, float coat, and setting layer / finish coat.

Feather edges into existing seamlessly & match the texture and finish.

Keep the area humid (light misting if needed) to aid lime curing. Redecorate using breathable paints.

W2-B - Existing Lathe & Plaster Wall Repair - Typical Repair



Detail above shows typical lath & plaster ceiling construction.

Penny Washer Method

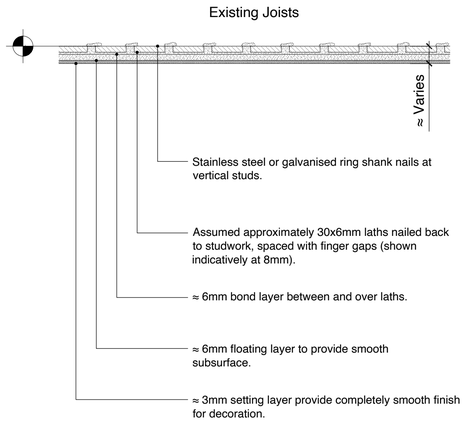
Used to stabilise cracked or sagging lath and plaster by re-securing the plaster back to the timber laths above.

This method is suitable where the plaster has detached from the laths but is not extensively collapsed. The surrounding plaster should be sound.

Carefully pre-drill small pilot holes either side of the crack line to avoid further damage. Insert screws fitted with penny washers at regular intervals (typically 150–200mm) along the crack and through the plaster into the timber laths behind. Tighten gently (avoid over-tightening) to pull the plaster back into contact with the laths without crushing it. The washers distribute the load and prevent the screw heads from pulling through the plaster.

Fill over washers and cracks using a compatible lime based filler & finish ready for decoration, sanding if needed. Redecorate using breathable paints.

C1-A - Existing Lathe & Plaster Ceiling Repair - Penny Washer Repair



Detail above shows typical lath & plaster ceiling construction.

Typical Repair Method

Identify extent of failure (detached plaster vs. broken laths) & carefully support any loose sections to prevent collapse.

Gently take down only friable or fully detached plaster, retaining as much original material as possible. Clean debris and dust from laths.

Replace broken/missing laths with riven (hand-split) timber laths to match original spacing and size and fix with stainless or galvanised nails to joists.

Where plaster has detached but is intact, reattach using the penny washer method.

Apply a new traditional lime plaster system (no gypsum) comprising a bond layer / scratch coat, float coat, and setting layer / finish coat.

Feather edges into existing seamlessly & match the texture and finish.

Keep the area humid (light misting if needed) to aid lime curing. Redecorate using breathable paints.

C1-B - Existing Lathe & Plaster Ceiling Repair - Typical Repair

Method Statement and Conservation Principles

The proposed works comprise the careful removal of modern plasterboard linings and associated modern finishes to expose, retain, and repair surviving historic lath and plaster construction.

The works include:

- Careful removal of non-historic plasterboard finishes.
- Protection and retention of surviving historic fabric.
- Inspection and recording of exposed lath and plaster.
- Stabilisation and repair of retained lath and plaster.
- Localised replacement of damaged laths where necessary.
- Reinstatement using compatible traditional lime plaster systems.
- Decoration and finishing to match adjacent existing historic finishes.

The intention of the works is to reverse inappropriate modern alterations and conserve the surviving historic fabric using minimum intervention principles.

Historic lath and plaster construction forms an important part of the building's historic fabric and contributes to:

- The evidential value of historic construction techniques.
- The breathability and moisture performance of the building.
- The visual and textural character of interior spaces.
- The authenticity and significance of the listed structure.

The modern plasterboard is understood to be a later intervention of limited heritage significance. All works shall therefore prioritise:

- Retention of surviving historic lath and plaster.
- Repair over replacement.
- Minimal disturbance to adjacent historic fabric.
- Use of compatible traditional materials.

Modern plasterboard linings and associated non-historic finishes shall be carefully removed by hand.

Works shall proceed incrementally and cautiously to avoid:

- Damage to surviving historic plaster.
- Damage to timber laths.
- Vibration-related cracking.
- Disturbance to adjacent historic finishes.

Removal methods shall include:

- Manual dismantling using hand tools.
- Careful extraction of screws, nails, and fixings.
- Avoidance of unnecessary use of power tools.
- Avoidance of percussive demolition methods.

Where plasterboard is found to be adhered directly to historic surfaces, separation shall be undertaken gradually to minimise loss of underlying fabric.

Any areas of concealed historic detailing, decorative schemes, or evidence of earlier fabric uncovered during the works shall be:

- Recorded photographically.
- Reported immediately to the Conservation Officer.

Where historic plaster remains substantially intact but locally detached, efforts shall be made to stabilise and retain the existing material.

Stabilisation methods may include:

- Gentle re-securing of loose laths.
- Consolidation of friable plaster.
- Localised plaster reattachment systems.
- Lime grouting behind detached areas where appropriate.

All stabilisation works shall be undertaken carefully to avoid excessive pressure or cracking.
Damaged or missing timber laths shall only be replaced where beyond practical repair.

Repairs to the lath and plaster shall be undertaken using compatible traditional lime plaster systems.

The repair methodology shall:

- Match the existing plaster build-up where identifiable.
- Use breathable lime-based materials.
- Replicate existing texture and finish.
- Be feathered carefully into adjacent retained historic plaster.

Typical repairs may include:

- Localised dubbing out.
- Reinforcement of plaster keys.
- Application of scratch, float, and finish coats.
- Fine surface repairs to cracking and edge losses.

Cement-based materials, gypsum-heavy repair systems, or impermeable compounds shall not be used unless specifically approved.

All works shall be undertaken in accordance with current health and safety legislation and site-specific risk assessments.

Particular attention shall be given to:

- Dust control and ventilation.
- Safe manual handling.
- Working at height where applicable.
- Potential concealed services.
- Safe handling of lime products.

Appropriate PPE shall be worn at all times. The works shall be undertaken by suitably skilled contractors experienced in traditional plaster conservation.
Regular inspections shall be undertaken by the Contract Administrator and/or Conservation Officer to ensure:

- Appropriate conservation standards.
- Compatibility of materials.
- Retention of historic fabric.
- Quality of workmanship.

DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE. THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL CONSULTANTS INFORMATION.

TAYLORHARE ARCHITECTS IS A LIMITED COMPANY REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES: NO. 10695684.

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REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
4A	30.04.2026	Condition Submission

TaylorHare Architects
01227 668 073
hello@taylorhare.com
taylorhare.com
The Cowshed
Overland Lane
Ash, CT3 2LE

PROJECT:
2506 BCSF
Barnham Court
Barnham, West Sussex

DRAWING TITLE:
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Cond. 11 - Heritage Plasterwork

SCALE: 1:5
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