

## Lessons Learnt – Builders Work Holes

### Observation:

Builders work holes were provided much larger than required for the supposedly co-ordinated services that are designed to be using the route. This results in excessive amounts of fire-stopping being used on the project – intumescent coated fire batt having been extensively used on this project.

### Issues arising:

The fire batt is a non-structural product so services cannot be fixed to it – e.g. motorised fire dampers. These dampers usually require mechanical fixing directly to the wall through which they pass. Bespoke solutions for fixing the dampers have to be sought and agreed since installation to the manufacturer’s tested specification is not possible.

Additionally, the thickness of the fire-stopping product is less than the wall into which it is installed (e.g. 140mm block wall infilled with 50mm fire batt). This becomes another issue for fire damper installations where dampers are installed flush to either side of the wall in advance of the fire stopping. The fire batt is then installed either level with one of the wall faces, or within the centre of the wall line itself. All of which can leave the damper sitting unprotected and away from the wall.

### Recommended actions:

Provide the correctly sized builders work holes as per the initial design stage – rather than the “bigger is better” attitude. Continue this into the construction phase. Where thinner products are used for fire stopping, ensure co-ordination exists between the service installers and the fire stoppers. E.g. Ensure the services and fire stopping is aligned on the same side of the wall line – or install for the full thickness of the wall.



Example of excessive Builders Work Holes.



Example of fire batt installed inside the wall line.