

JOB REFERENCE: Georgian/MH/MGM

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

OF

Three Storey Georgian Property in Devon



FOR

Mrs Georgian

Prepared by:

GEM Associates Limited

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for using our services once again and your kind instruction of XXXXX; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on XXXXXXXX.

As you may recall the Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

As we mentioned previously we are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. Again we would stress that the purchase of a house is usually one of the largest financial outlays made (particularly when you consider the interest you pay as well).

As always we recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas that you wish to discuss further and phone us.

We obviously expect you to read the entire report but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which refers to various sections in the report which we recommend you read first so that you get a general feel for the way the report is written.

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy to make a decision. Ultimately, the decision to purchase the house is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

REPORT FORMAT

To help you understand our Report we utilise various techniques and different styles and types of text, these are as follows:

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil has been used to highlight a specific area. The sketches are not 100% technically accurate; we certainly would not expect you to carry out work based upon the sketches alone.

ORIENTATION

Any reference to left or right is taken from the front of the property, including observations to the rear, which you may not be able to physically see from the front of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property.

Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a large three-storey period property that is semi-detached and has been altered and amended over the years, as we would expect.

There are gardens to the front and rear and the property sits on a sloping site. There is also a modern detached garage.

We believe that the property was originally built in the early 1800s. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1760 | George III becomes king |
| 1768 | Captain Cook sails for the Pacific on the Endeavour |
| 1783 | Britain recognised American Independence |
| 1787 | First fleet transporting convicts to Australia sets sail |
| 1793 – 1800 | The Grand Union Canal was built |
| 1819 | Factory work outlawed in England for children under nine years old. |
| 1823 | MacIntosh invents waterproof fabric. |
| 1825 | Railway transportation was born in England when Stephenson's 'Locomotion' ran from Darlington to Stockton, carrying 450 persons at 15 miles per hour (24km/h). |

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation
The house is secluded from the road
by the trees



Front Right Hand Side View
The trees seclude the front of the
property



Rear Right Hand Side View



Rear View



Garden View

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Kitchen
- Dining Room
- Living Room
- Breakfast Room
- Utility Room

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Lounge (or further bedroom)
- Two Bedrooms – one with an En Suite Shower Room
- Bathroom

Top Floor

The top floor accommodation consists of:

- Two Bedrooms

Outside Areas

There is off-road parking as well as road-side parking.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of). We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Ground Floor



Living Room
Front Right Hand Side



Kitchen
Rear Right Hand Side



Breakfast Room
Middle Rear



Cloak Room
Middle Rear

First Floor



Lounge
Front Left Hand Side



Bedroom
Front Right Hand Side



Bedroom
Rear Right Hand Side



En Suite
Rear Right Hand Side



Bathroom

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Top Floor



Front Bedroom



Rear Bedroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Chimneys: | Two chimneys – one brick and one rendered |
| Main Roof: | A pitched roof clad with slates |
| Gutters and Downpipes: | Mixture of cast iron and plastic |
| Soil and Vent Pipe: | Mixture of cast iron and plastic |
| Walls: | Painted render and vertical tiling |
| External Joinery: | Timber sliding sash single glazed windows and timber fascias and soffits and exposed rafter feet |

INTERNAL

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Ceilings: | Mixture of Lath and plaster and plasterboard, in some places we believe it to be tacked over (assumed) |
| Walls: | Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed) |
| Floors: | Ground Floor: A mixture of a suspended timber floor (assumed) and solid, assumed concrete First and Top Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed) |

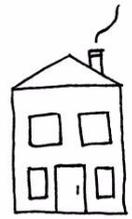
SERVICES

We believe the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed).

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report.

We have used the term ‘assumed’ as we have not opened up the structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Summaries are dangerous as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of fifty plus photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it. If we have not we will happily go back.

Generally we found the property in below average condition, but having met you and discussed the various issues with you we believe they fall within the remit of the type of property that you would like to own and we believe you are willing to carry out the work necessary. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

Survey reports often are full of only the faults and general 'doom and gloom', so we thought we would start with some positive comments on the property!

- The property has much of its original character remaining.
- The property also has good natural light.
- We feel that you will enjoy the benefits of the balcony and the general secluded nature of the property.
- Due to the age of the property the rooms are larger than you would typically find in a more modern property, in length, width and height

We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

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The Bad

Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

1) **High Level Work**

The central brick chimney has seen better days and we feel it requires some work in the next few years.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repoint within the next three years or when dampness starts to get into the property. At the time of our inspection this was minimal.



Whilst carrying out this work you also need to check the roof; we noted some light coming through in the left hand roof (all directions given from the front of the property as you face it from the main road), which would benefit from repair. You also need to take the opportunity to check the gutters and downpipes and rafter feet.

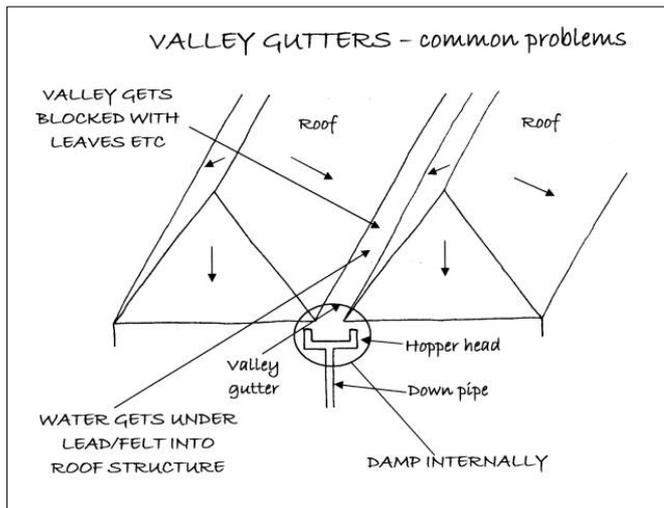
It should be remembered that this is a Listed property and as such it is always best to speak to the Local Authority about what you intend to do and to check whether you need permission or not.

ANTICIPATED COST: As the high level work is likely to require scaffolding we would estimate the cost to be in the region of £2,500 - £5,000.

Please see the Chimneys, Roof Coverings and Gutters and Downpipes Sections of this Report.

2) Hidden Valley Gutter

Between the main roof and the right hand roof extension there is a hidden valley gutter. This explains why we have the vertical tiling on the property, as the amount of water that has been collected in this area may sometimes be excessive and discharge down the side of the property.



Between the main roof on the right hand side of the photo and the left hand roof there is a hidden valley gutter.

ACTION REQUIRED: Inspect the hidden valley gutter to the rear of the property when the high level work is being carried out, we believe a larger gutter will be required; ideally it should be lead.

Please see the Roof Structure Section, Gutters and Downpipes Section and Walls Section of this Report.

3) Render and Paintwork

You have a lot of painted render and therefore you will have a lot of painting to do to this property and probable repair of any hollow or blown areas.



Rear view of the property. You can see that your paintwork requires painting.

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would suggest you purchase a tower scaffolding for carrying out some of the high level work to first floor level (making sure that the tower scaffolding is properly secured), however you will ultimately need to redecorate both the render and fascias and soffits and rafter feet at the top most level of this property; this we believe you will need to get professionals in to do.

The paintwork acts as a protective coat and any hairline cracks within the render need to be filled as quickly as possible. We would expect you to redecorate almost on a continuous cycle. We also noted moss to the render, which is always bound to be a problem where you are surrounded by trees.



Moss to the render

It should be remembered that this is a Listed property and as such it is always best to speak to the Local Authority about what you intend to do and to check whether you need permission or not.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would recommend that you paint an elevation at a time, initially making sure all the repairs to the render work are carried out. We would suggest that you budget in the region of £2,500 - £5,000 per elevation, assuming you will use your own tower scaffolding for part of the work.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

4) **Render and Detailing (and Dampness)**

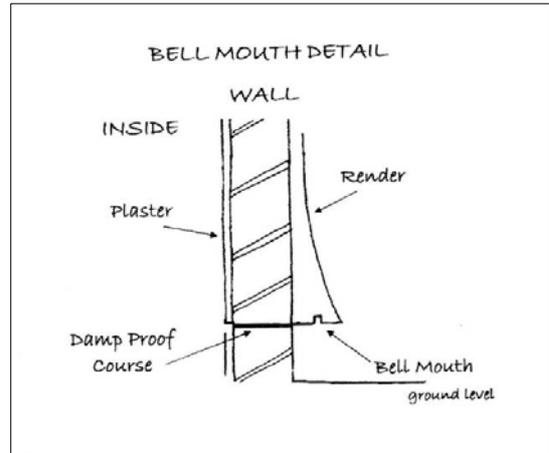
You can often establish the quality of the render by the detailing that is present. In this case the detailing is not very good.

We would recommend that the detailing to the base of the render has what is known as a bell-mouth detail. This will help stop the blotting paper effect where the render is drawing up rainwater into the property and making it damp.



Bell-Mouths Defined

A bell-mouth is a curve at the base of a wall which throws the water away from the structure therefore preventing dampness.



You should also look at providing a drip detail above the windows.



ACTION REQUIRED: Add a bell-mouth detail to the base of the render and add drip details above the windows.

Again, it should be remembered that this is a Listed property and as such it is always best to speak to the Local Authority about what you intend to do and to check whether you need permission or not.

ANTICIPATED COST: This is a skilled job and we would expect costs to be in the region of £3,000 - £5,000.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

5) Rot to Lintels

We believe that you may have timber lintels above the windows that may, due to the condition of the render, have had dampness getting into them and have started to rot. You need to therefore ensure that you check behind the render detailing at window level.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you drill into the render at window level to see if there is a metal or timber lintel. If you do find a timber lintel then you will need to expose part of the lintel, preferably to one corner, to check its condition.

ANTICIPATED COST: If new lintels are required then we would expect costs in the region of £750 - £1,500 for each lintel that needs replacing.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

6) Painted to Sell

We could see that areas of the external render have been painted to cover up dampness problems and dampness issues; we would term this as 'painted to sell'.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regard to the bell-mouth detail at low level.



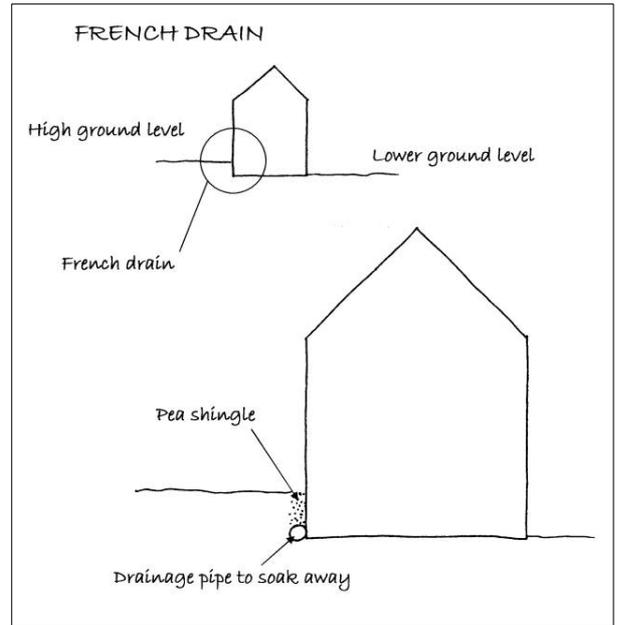
Please see our additional comments in the Walls Section of this Report.

7) Sloping Site, Rainwater and Dampness

As we discussed, the rainwater is trying to get from the top of the property to the bottom and in doing so this is causing dampness to get into the property. This is ranging everything from the damp area underneath the trees, which is probably added to by the lack of sunlight, to dampness coming against the front of the building.



Dampness in the garden



ACTION REQUIRED: We would suggest that you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see where the water really goes and then work with nature and help the water to get from the top of the site to the bottom. We would suggest you add a French gully to the front of the property and slates on edge to the bottom garage area (if you recall there is a yellowing patch to the paintwork where it looks like all the rainwater goes).



Yellow patch to garage wall.

ANTICIPATED COST: It really depends on what you intend to do. We would suggest in the region of £2,000 - £4,000; although savings can be made by carrying out this work yourself.

Please see the Dampness Section and Other Matters Section of this Report.

8) Trees

We would recommend that you instruct an arboriculturist to examine the trees (or get to know a good gardener who knows about trees) and sort out the delicate balance between the trees working with you to drain the water from the ground and working against you where the roots affect the building. If you recall there are roots within the drains.



ACTION REQUIRED: A Close Circuit TV Camera Report to be carried out on the drains.

Call an arboriculturist (not a tree surgeon, as they just cut down trees) or wise old man to advise you on the trees and kill the roots within the drains.



Roots in the drains

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 - £1,000.

Please see the Trees Section and the Main Drains Section of this Report.

9) Woodworm

As we would expect with a property of this age you do have woodworm. The question is whether the woodworm is active. From what we could see it is not active; however you can only really tell during the breeding season in the spring.



ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you ask the present owners whether they have had woodworm treatment carried out. If not then get a quotation from a BWPDA (British Wood Preserving and Damp Proofing Association) approved contractor. If the work in the roof is to be carried out properly then all the insulation has to be removed and spraying carried out; if the insulation is not removed then it is unlikely to be successful.

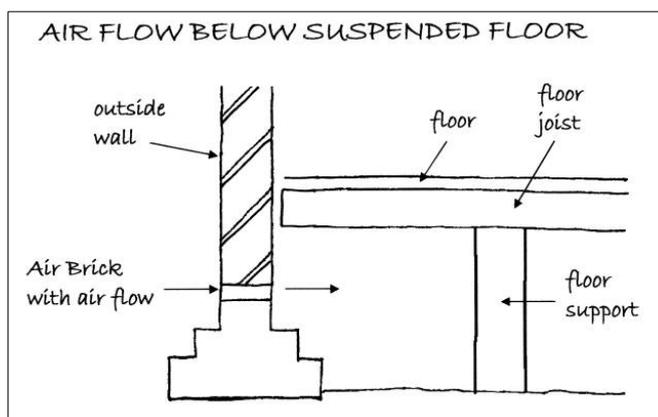
ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few thousand pounds. Quotations should be obtained.

Please see the Timber Defects Section of this Report.

10) Suspended Timber Floor and Airbricks

You need to have airbricks at the front of the property and airbricks at the rear of the suspended timber floor, which is the middle of the property, to reduce the level of dampness.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined



A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via air bricks within the walls.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add airbricks.

Please see the Airbricks Section and the Floors Section of this report.

The Ugly

We normally put here things that we feel will be difficult to resolve and will need serious consideration.

There are no items that we feel fall into this category, however there are a number of items in the 'Bad' Section that are over and above what we would normally expect. We do feel that this would put a lot of people off from purchasing the property however, having discussed this with you, we feel that this is part of the appeal of the property.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

We have not seen the electric fuse board; we assume it is in the garage. Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics and also an earth test (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you of the following:

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor carry out an inspection, test and report.

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of the property's overall character and style. Such defects are considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report.

This type of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair and a budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as anything Allen can turn his hand to. We would say to take care doing anything at high level and to know your limitations.

We would also recommend going on a SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) course about maintenance and repairs to older properties who run a selection of weekend courses which we thoroughly recommend.

Purchase Price

We have not been asked to comment upon the purchase price in this instance, we have however referred you to sources of general information on the housing market within the Information on the Property Market Section, which can be found in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

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Every Business Transaction has a Risk

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

Estimates of Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

If you obtain builders estimates that vary widely, we would advise the work is probably difficult or open to various interpretations and we would recommend a specification is prepared. It would probably be best to supervise the work if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are doing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

We keep thinking about the sheer enormity of redecorating and repairing the render work to the property. This really does have to be calculated into the cost of purchasing and only you can decide what it is 'worth' to you.

We have decided to bring this specifically to your attention; having given this due thought and consideration both roofs have common rafters that are thinner than we would normally expect. In addition to this both have dampness and woodworm and the main roof has had problems in the past, which is why it is propped. You do need to budget for possible repair and replacement of this roof in years to come. Please contact us to discuss this issue further.



Something that we did not discuss during the course of the survey was the hidden valley gutter; please see our comments in the Executive Summary, the Roof Structure Section and the Walls Section of the report.

As a general comment for any work required we would always recommend that you obtain at least three quotations for any work from a qualified, time served tradesperson or a competent registered building contractor prior to legal completion.

We would ask that you read the Report and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

Just a few more comments about the Report format before you read the actual main body of the Report.

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

We have assumed that the property is to be sold Freehold or Long leasehold, with no unusual or onerous clauses and that vacant possession will be available on completion. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that this is the case.

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). We as your employed Independent Chartered Surveyor represent your interests only.

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

To carry out your legal work you can use a solicitor or a legal advisor. We have used both terms within the report.

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Residential Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen and signed a copy of our terms of engagement please phone immediately.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS

We believe the property is Grade II Listed (your Legal Advisor should confirm this and make their own enquiries) and as such it will require various permissions to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials for the age, type and style of property.



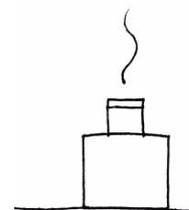
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EXTERNAL



CHIMNEY STACKS

Chimney Stacks

Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.

This property has two chimneys, which are located one to the left and one to the right hand side of the main roof.

Chimney One - Located to the Middle

This chimney is brick finished with a metal flashing, we believe it to be lead, with three chimney pots. Where we could see deterioration the chimney needs repair / repointing. Unfortunately we were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon it.



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Chimney Two – Located to the Right Hand Side

This is a large chimney with a painted render finish and a metal flashing that we believe to be lead. There are three chimney pots. From ground level the chimney looks to be in a reasonable state of repair. Again, unfortunately, we were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunching, so we are unable to comment upon it.



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and check the condition of the chimney when carrying out high level repairs to other areas.

Flaunchings Defined

A low, wide cement mortar fillet surrounding the flue terminal on top of the chimneystack to throw off rainwater.

Flashings Defined

Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

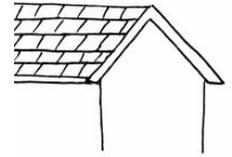
Render Defined

A sand and cement external coating applied in two or three coats or layers.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks from the parts we could see. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

Please also see Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.

The underlayer's function is to minimise wind and water damage. Dependent upon the age of your property this may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider this roof in three areas; the Left Hand Main Roof, the Right Hand Side Roof and the Low Level Lead Roof and Balcony Roof to the front of the property that cannot be seen in this photo.



Left Hand Main Roof

The left hand side roof is pitched and clad with quarried tiles. The slates sit fairly true and are generally in average condition considering the property's age, type and style.

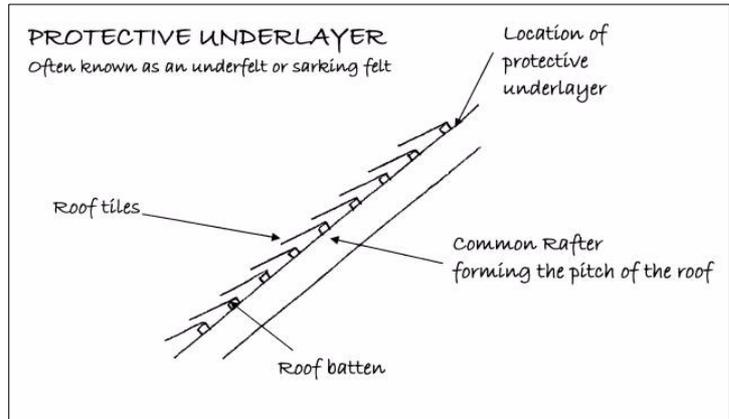
We believe this roof to have been re-roofed post war, probably around the 1960s; this is based upon the protective underlayer we could see.



ACTION REQUIRED: As with most roofs of this age this roof will need some general day-to-day maintenance. We could see some slipped and missing slates and we could also see that some parts of the ridge need re-bedding. This is all part of the general maintenance that is required on this age of property.

Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, although it is damaged in a few places but this is not unusual considering its age.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer. The purple items in the photo are egg boxes which have been used, we assume, for additional insulation; we would however recommend removing them as they can cause condensation.

Right Hand Side Roof

This roof is also pitched and clad in quarried tiles as previously described. We did note that there is a 'new' rolled metal ridge, when we say 'new' we mean in the past 5-20 years, it is difficult to say, however please read on about the low level lead roof which we think may have been done at the same time, in which case we can be more accurate because we could view that roof much more closely.



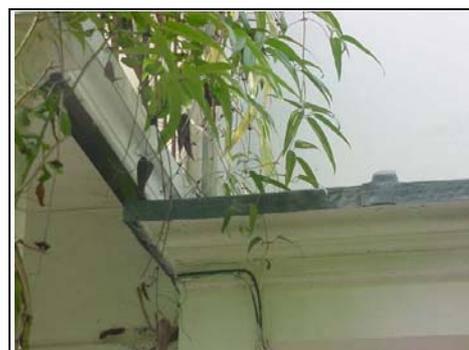
Low Level Lead Roof and Balcony Roof

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.

Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

Lead Roof to Front

To the front of the property there is a balcony with a small flat roofed area which is clad in lead. The lead looked relatively 'new', we would estimate within the last five years; this may have been done at the same time as the roof lead to the right hand side roof.



We invariably find the problem with modern leadwork is the quality of workmanship and the thinner materials that tend to be used in years gone by, although these do usually meet the appropriate codes of practice.

ACTION REQUIRED: Time will tell with regard to this lead roof. It is a relatively small area in the scheme of things; you should in particular watch the flashing, which is where it beds into the render work.

Balcony Roof

As you can see from the photos below some work is required to the balcony. The leak you can see in the corner may be a leak that you will never get rid of as you can tend to chase such leaks around. Having had a balcony myself I am well aware that sometimes you just have to accept that there will be a minor amount of leaks to it.



Balcony



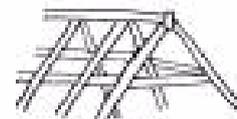
If you look closely you can see a damp patch in the corner and you can also see rusting to the cast iron supports.

Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and/or ground level.

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately 60 percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see; however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.

We will consider the roof in two areas; the Left Hand Main Roof and the Right Hand Side Roof.

Left Hand Main Roof

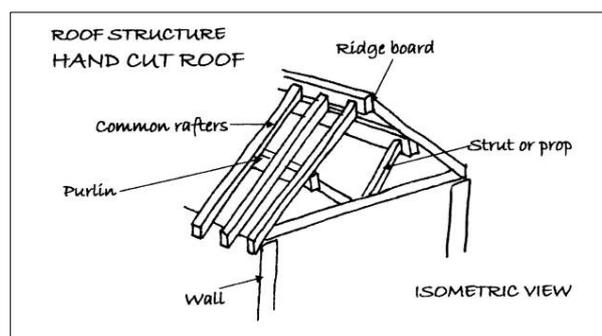
Roof Access

The left hand roof is accessed via the loft hatch located in the rear bedroom. There is no loft ladder or floorboards, but it does have an electric light. We recommend that a loft ladder and secured floorboards are added as this will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The roof perimeter has been viewed by torchlight which has limited our viewing slightly.



Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has, what is known as, a cut timber roof, which is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see with the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) being slightly thinner than we normally see and there is also woodworm present. Please see the Executive Summary for our further comments.



We would also add that quite unusually there are props in the roof at the side. If you look at the adjoining photo you can see props to the right hand side wall. This type of addition would have been added due to dipping in the main roof as a 'belt and braces' measure. We think the main issue here is the thinner common rafters which will be very difficult to replace without completely re-roofing the property.



Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

- Serious active woodworm
- Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- Structurally significant dry rot
- Structurally significant wet rot



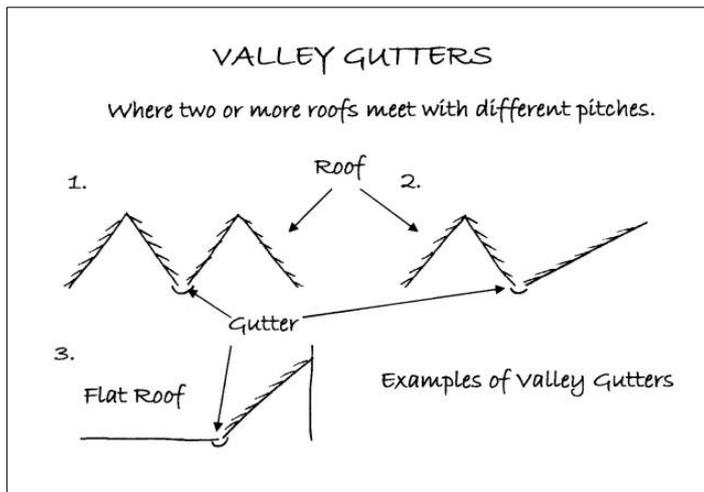
Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the pink bagged insulation and some stored items. As mentioned above we found the roof in what we would term as below average condition with dampness and woodworm. Sorry to repeat ourselves but the woodworm is an issue even when taking into consideration the roof structure's age; we could see flight holes and the timber was generally soft from the woodworm.

Please see our further comments in the Executive Summary and in the Timber Defects Section.

Valley Gutter

It was only on looking at the property for the second time and following discussions with a colleague that it became clear that there is a hidden valley gutter to the property between the left hand main roof and the right hand roof.

Valley gutters are renowned for causing problems which is why dampness is getting into the base of the timbers.



Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Fire Walls

The property has a timber dividing wall from the adjoining property; this is typical of the sort of wall that has been added many years after.



Here you can see the timber fire wall to the left hand side; you can also see the dampness getting into the timbers and some more props.

Ventilation

We did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation and generally remove dampness in the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case there was an insufficient quantity to comment.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Right Hand Roof

Roof Access

The right hand side roof is accessed above the cupboard and has a similar arrangement to the left hand roof, i.e. no ladder or secured floor boards. The area would benefit from good electric lighting as this will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

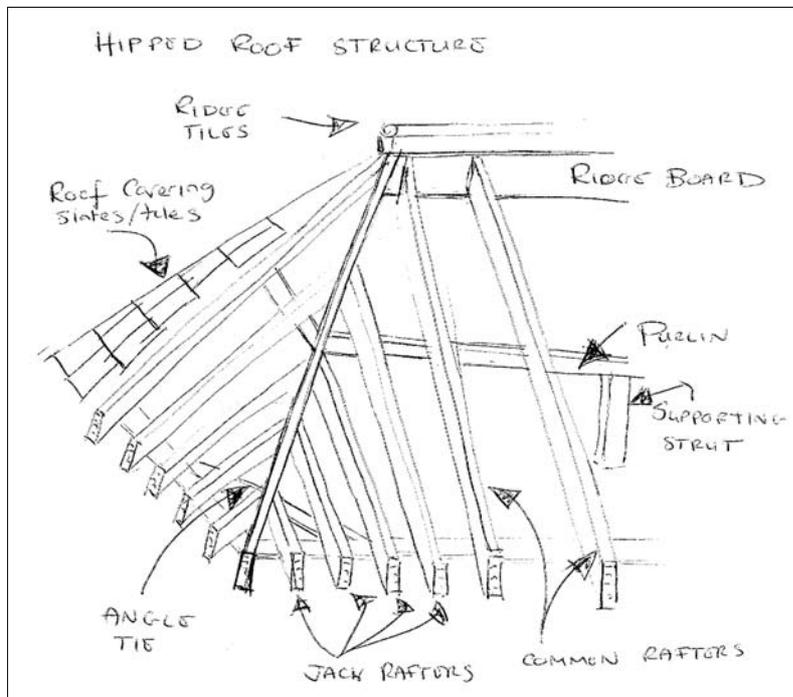


This is a very large space and if you put down secured flooring and a loft ladder it will make very useful storage space. We must emphasise that were it to be converted into rooms the difficulty would be the access staircase.

The roof perimeter has been viewed by torchlight which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

The roof structure is a cut timber roof as the left hand main roof is, please see the previous sketch. However, this roof does have a hipped section which is what we are looking at in the sketch and photo below. As in the previous roof we found the common rafters to be thinner than we would expect.



Looking towards the hip

Roof Timbers

Again, we have inspected the roof structure for:

- Serious active woodworm
- Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- Structurally significant dry rot
- Structurally significant wet rot



Side View

Again, our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof and the insulation, this roof was remarkable free of stored items. Again, we would classify the roof as being in below average condition; we found dampness and woodworm. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Water Tanks

The water tanks are insulated and, from what we could see, they looked to be formed in plastic. We therefore assume they are relatively new (in surveying terms, in this instance, that is the last 30 years). Care has to be taken with roofs and water tanks to allow some warm air so that they don't freeze.

We would always recommend that water tanks be drained down and cleared of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks). As you are cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!

Ventilation

Again, we did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation and reduce dampness in the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

Again, we could not identify the age of the electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof due to the amount of insulation.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Finally, we would ask you to note that this is a general inspection of the roofs, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES

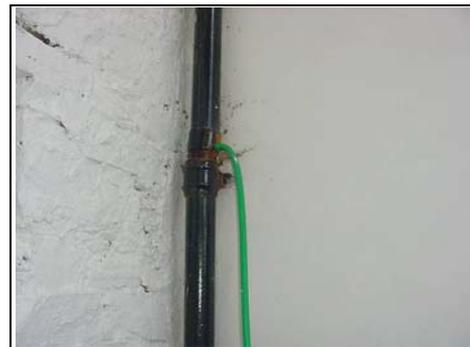


The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has a mixture of the original cast iron gutters and downpipes and the more modern plastic gutters and downpipes. What we found was generally in slightly below average condition, all things considered, and we could see areas where the gutters and downpipes are rusting and damaged.



Rusting cast iron downpipe

ACTION REQUIRED: Next time it rains hard you need to watch the gutters and downpipes for leaks, make a note and repair them. This process will need to be repeated many times.

You may wish to consider replacing all in one material. Cast iron is initially the more expensive to replace, plastic being the cheapest; cast iron does last longer. Aluminium is a good alternative offering strength and resisting corrosion.

We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Hidden Valley Gutter

There is a hidden valley gutter which is between the main roof and the right hand roof. Please see our comments on the hidden valley gutter in the Roof Structure Section and the Walls Section where we explain why a larger gutter will be needed to the rear of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: You will need to inspect this area; ideally it should have a lead gutter.

Soil and Vent Pipes

We could see a two plastic soil and vent pipes. Generally the waste pipes and soil stack appear to be satisfactory where a surface inspection is possible, although for the most part they run in ducts and cannot be inspected.

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

WALLS



External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

Render

The walls to this property are finished in a painted cement render. Cement is far from ideal on an older property as it does not allow the property to live and breathe as would an older style render that has an element of lime mortar. Unfortunately whoever carried out the rendering work, which has been done in the past 20 – 30 years, was wrongly advised when they used this type of render.



Hammer test to render

We have carried out a tap test to the render at low level (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer) to try to establish if there are any hollow areas. We have found the render to be average for this age of property. No doubt you will have to carry out render repairs over the years and will come to expect it.

We often find that render at high level is in a much worse condition than that at low level as the lower level render is easier to repair and it is more visible in the day-to-day use of the house.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to keep the render and paintwork in good condition and check the condition of the render at high level. We have suggested earlier in the report that you purchase your own tower scaffolding and you should also look at carrying out repairs to the building on an elevation by elevation each year as a constant repair process.

Render Defined

A sand and cement external coating applied in two or three coats or layers.

Hairline Cracking

We did note that there are hair line cracks to the render, some of which have been repaired. All cracks need sealing as soon as possible to stop dampness

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getting in the property. This is because the water can get in through the hairline cracks and cause blistering to the render.

Render Detailing

A way of telling the quality of the render, we have found over the years, is by the quality of detailing above the windows and to the base of the property.

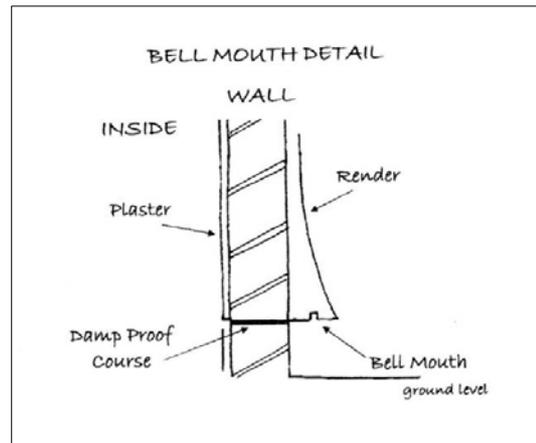
Detailing to Windows

Unfortunately we did not note any drips to the windows.

Detailing to the Base of the Wall

The render to the base of the wall in this instance goes down to the ground. Unfortunately this will help dampness get into the structure.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary – a bell-mouth needs to be added.



Painted to Sell

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

What is Underneath the Render?

It is very difficult to tell what is underneath the render. In this case the only areas where we could see the material behind the render is within the roofs and here we found brickwork. We must admit, given that locally properties are built in stonework, we were expecting to find stonework.

Vertical Tiling

At high level, where the main roof meets the right hand roof, there is a hidden valley gutter (please see our comments on this elsewhere in this report); this means that water from the right hand roof is collected and then carried to the rear of the property, in fact to the gutter directly above the vertical tiling that you can see in this photo. This, we assume, overflows and has done for many years and rather than dealing with the 'cause' of the problem, which is to add a larger hopper head gutter, as is often the case the 'effect' of the problem has been dealt with, which no doubt was the water running down the render, this has been dealt with by adding vertical tiling.

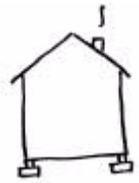


ACTION REQUIRED: We believe you will need to add a larger gutter to the rear of the property.

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by painted render, vertical tiling and plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete lintels, rubbed brick lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the painted render, vertical tiling and plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the painted render, vertical tiling and plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

FOUNDATIONS



The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre deep foundations.

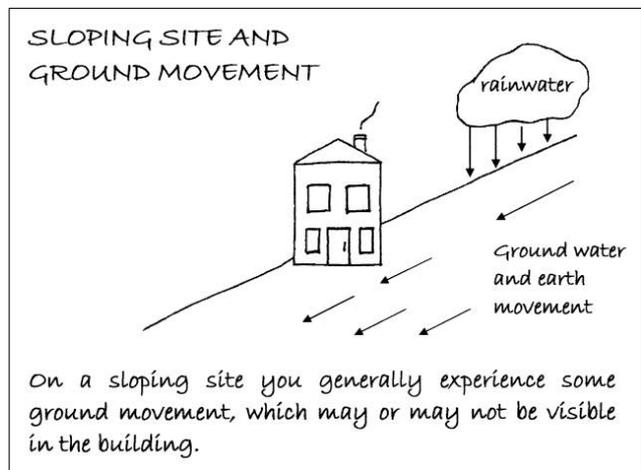
Foundations

Typically, with a property of this period, we would expect to find a small stepped foundation up to approximately half a metre deep.

Unfortunately the maps that we have available to us do not indicate the sub-soil in the area.

Sloping Site

Any property on a sloping site is more susceptible than one on a flat site; it is simply the laws of gravity. Foundations normally allow for such occurrences, particularly in newer properties, although there can still be some minor movement. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



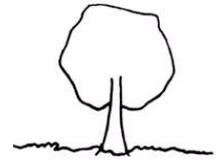
Building Insurance Policy

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



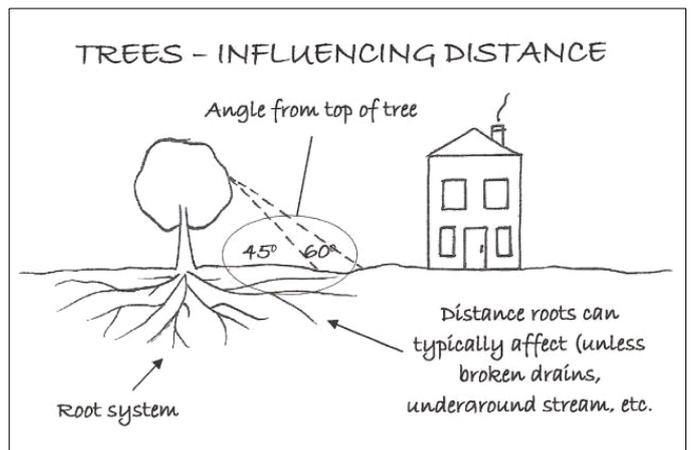
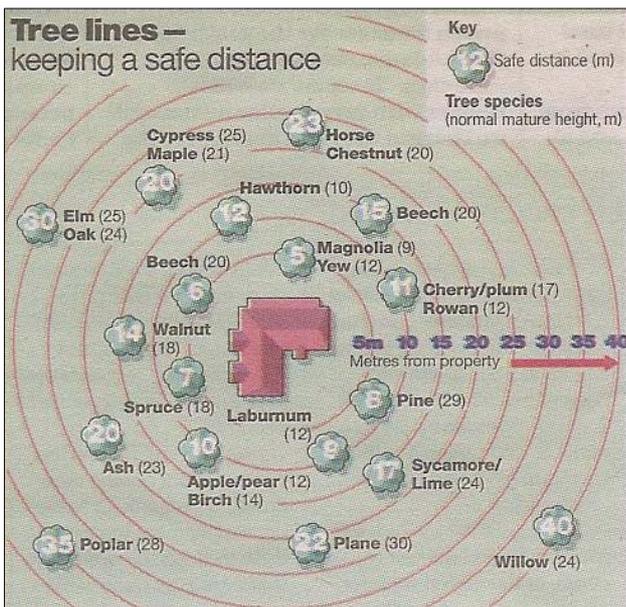
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. There are a number of these in the vicinity of the building, what we term within influencing distance; we could see roots in the drains and we believe that these trees may / will affect the property if not maintained regularly.



You advised of a Tree Preservation Order; these are subject to statutory limitations regarding lopping, pruning or removal.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to obtain advice from an arboriculturist (not a tree surgeon) or a good local gardener who understands the garden as a whole and how it drains etc. As discussed there is a lot of water transferring from the front of this garden to the rear of the garden. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Influencing Distance Defined

This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property. It is not quite as simple as our sketch; it depends on the tree, its maturity, the soil type etc., etc.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.



DAMP PROOF COURSE

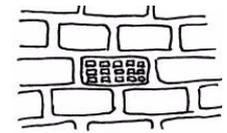
The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.

In properties of this age it is unlikely that a damp proof course would have been built in originally. However, often damp proof courses are added, as is the case with this property. We would comment that we found dampness internally.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

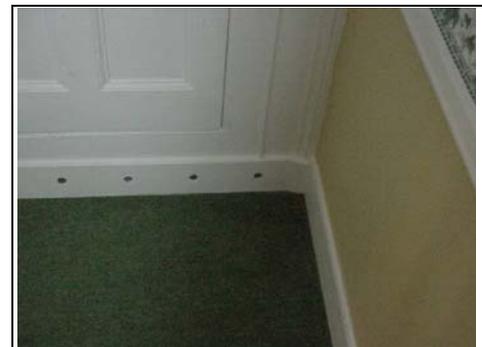
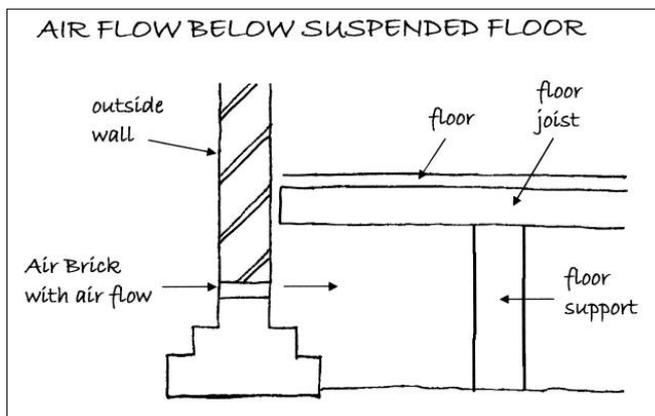
Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

AIRBRICKS



In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of airbricks. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances of the property.

We expected to find airbricks around the property due to the suspended timber floor to the front of the property. We would recommend adding airbricks (subject to what the Conservation Officer says). We did note to the rear of the suspended timber floor, which is the front part of the property, that there were air vents, which you can see in the photo below. These need to be supplemented with air vents to the front of the property so that there is a through flow of air.

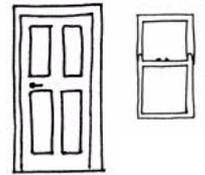


Air vents at the bottom of the cupboard at the base of the stairs.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via air bricks within the walls.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions based upon our visual inspection of the outside of the property and our general knowledge of this age, type and style of construction. We have not opened up the floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.



EXTERNAL JOINERY

The external joinery part of this section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards, windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

Fascias and Soffits

The fascia and soffit detail includes exposed rafter feet. We generally find that due to the awkwardness of these they do not get painted / stained as often as they should and you may find rot if they are closely examined.

ACTION REQUIRED: Paint/ Stain in the next three years.



Rafter feet

Windows and Doors

The property has a mixture of painted timber sliding sash single glazed windows, the majority of which are original or very old. We would term the windows generally as 'saveable', but some are in need of repair and redecoration. Bearing in mind that we could only inspect the ground level windows properly we would expect more repairs at the higher level windows.



Knife test showing minor wet rot

ACTION REQUIRED: Repaint and cut and splice new timber as necessary.

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

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EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

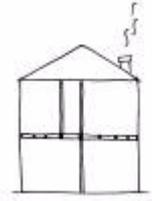
The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

Overall the external decorations are in average to good condition and we would expect some redecoration to be required within the next few years. Redecoration is almost going to be on a constant basis and we would comment that redecoration of the render when it is required will be either fairly expensive or take up several of your weekends and you should not underestimate redecorating render. We would recommend that you carry out repair and redecoration on an annual basis elevation by elevation, i.e. the front elevation one year, the side elevation the next and the rear elevation the year after, and then you start again with the front elevation. This will be almost a continuous process.

Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint, its exposure to the elements and the materials properties. Where painting takes place outside this maintenance cycle repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL

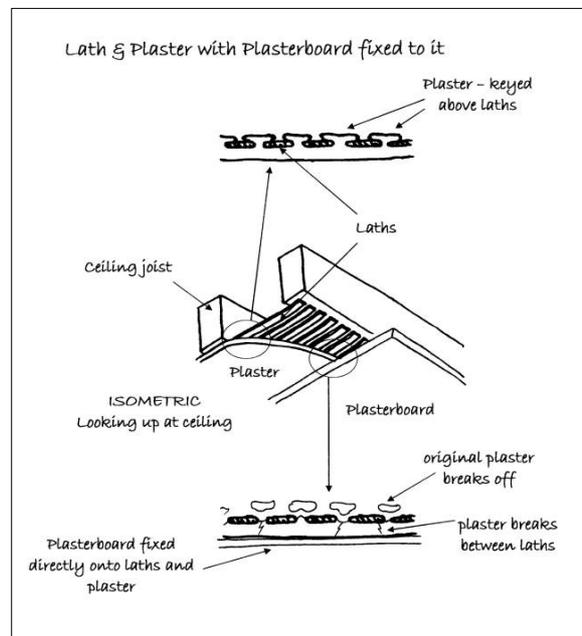


CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions. The concept of internal finishes is relatively modern. Partitioning developed originally to separate the livestock from the human occupants. Finishes have developed from this very functional beginning to their decorative nature of today.

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are originally lath and plaster, but in some areas have had plasterboard tacked over them. This type of work is normally carried out where the ceilings are in poor condition, as removing lath and plaster is very messy, time consuming and expensive, as it is labour intensive.



Lath and Plaster Defined

Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.

Plasterboard Defined

The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard, which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

Internal Walls and Partitions

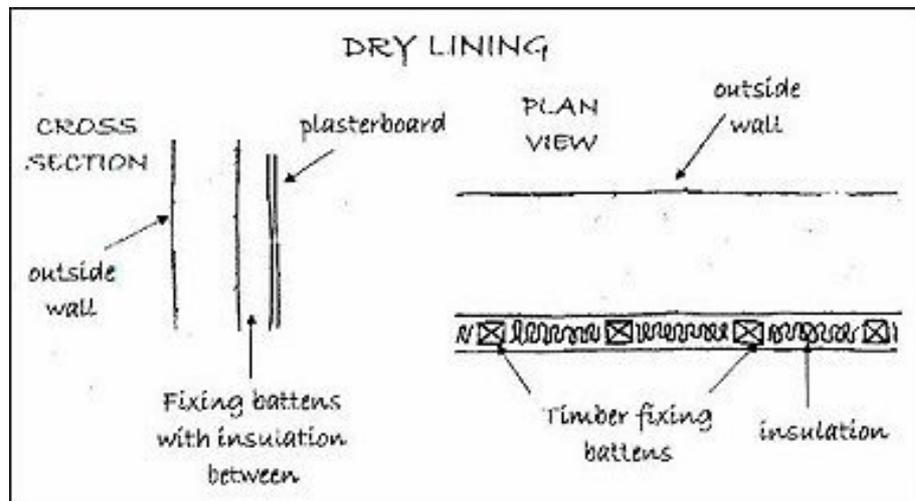
We have carried out a tap test to the internal walls (this is not rocket science, it is literally tapping the walls and listening for the sound made) and found them to be a mixture of solid walls and hollow/studwork walls.

Generally it is a reasonable assumption that the solid walls are likely to be made from brickwork or possibly stonework (although we didn't see any evidence of stonework within the roof space) and will be the structural walls, with the studwork walls being purely to divide the rooms.

Perimeter Walls

False walling, commonly known as dry lining, has been used predominantly to the front and sides of the property. This is often used in older properties to hide / prevent dampness coming through. From our personal experience we have found that dampness can often be hidden behind these walls causing deterioration.

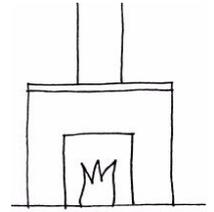
ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally the dry lining should be opened up and checked for defects.



Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



With the advent of central heating fireplaces tend to be more a feature than an essential function in most properties.

The chimney breasts are located on the right and left hand sides (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness, subject to the Local Authority Conservation Officer's approval.

Finally, it is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstruction prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

FLOORS



Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

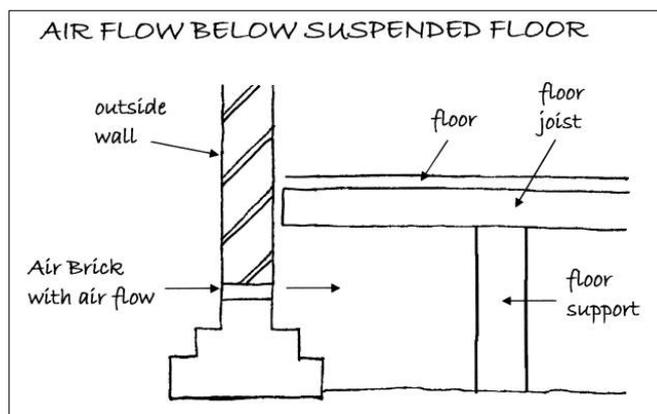
Based on our knowledge of this age of construction we believe that the ground floor construction is predominantly a suspended timber floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot.

The remainder of the floor, kitchen onwards, is solid under foot and assumed to be concrete.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and in the Airbricks Section.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via air bricks within the walls.



First and Second Floors

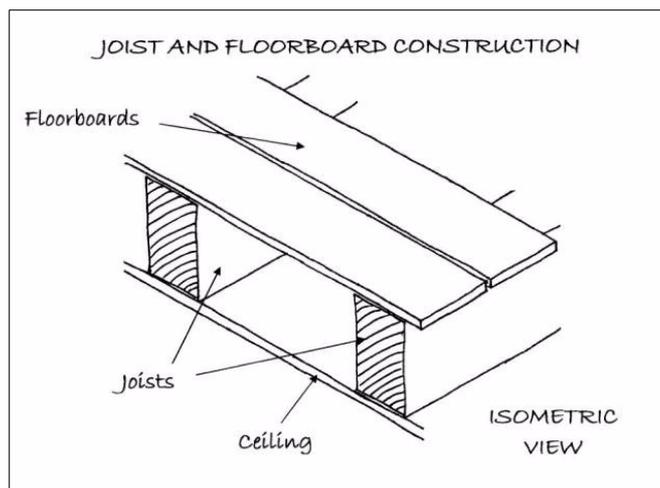
We have assumed that the first floor and second floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property.

ACTION REQUIRED: As a general comment there may be woodworm within the floor structure, if you recall we have only seen a small part of the actual flooring within the dining room.



Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

These are usually at first floor level consisting of a joist supported from the external walls, either built in or, in more modern times, sitting upon joist hangers, sometimes taking additional support from internal walls, with floorboards fixed down upon it.



Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets and floor coverings etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

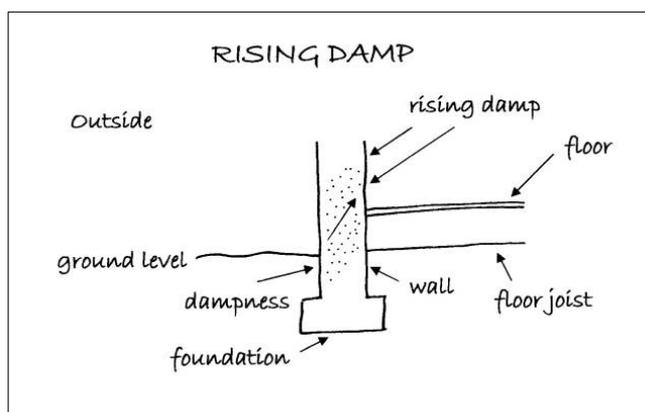
DAMPNESS



In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

Rising Damp

Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above.



We have carried out tests with an electronic damp meter to a random selection of areas and we found rising damp throughout the property.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

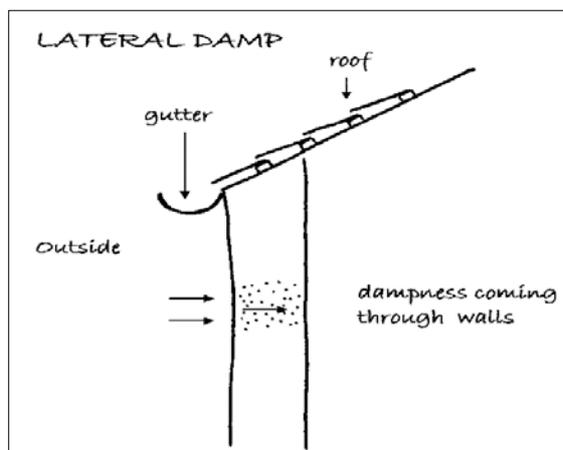


Checking for dampness with our electronic damp meter

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls. Our readings were in line with what we would expect for this age of property, i.e. minor dampness. No evidence of any significant penetrating / lateral dampness was detected.



Condensation

This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.

At the time of the survey we could see no obvious signs of condensation, however there is a small shower room to the bedroom which may promote condensation. Condensation depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

Dampness – General Comments

Please read our comments in the Executive Summary carefully to understand the causes of dampness, particularly the Render and Render Detailing section, the Render and Paintwork section, and the Sloping Site, Rainwater and Dampness section.

Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

INTERNAL JOINERY



This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.

Doors

The property has traditional painted panel doors and, all things considered, they are in good condition and fit acceptably.



Staircase

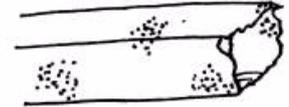
We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in reasonable condition, although it has suffered from some general day-to-day marks. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



This section considers dry rot, wet rot and woodworm. Wet and Dry rot are species of fungi, both need moisture to develop and both can be very expensive to correct. We would also add that in our experience they are also often wrongly diagnosed.

Dry Rot

*Dry rot is also sometimes known by its Latin name *Serpula lacrymans*. Dry rot requires constant dampness together with a warmish atmosphere and can lead to extensive decay in timber.*

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot, however behind the dry lining / false walls and the suspended timber flooring there is a possibility of having dry rot.

Wet Rot

*Wet rot, also known by its Latin name *Contiophora puteana*, is far more common than dry rot. Wet rot darkens and softens the wood and is most commonly seen in window and doorframes, where it can relatively easily be remedied. Where wet rot affects the structural timbers in a property, which are those in the roof and the floor areas, it is more serious.*

Generally no evidence was found of any significant wet rot, with the exception of the rafters where we found some darker / soft areas caused by the hidden valley gutter which we believe is already causing wet rot, also the general dampness within the roof, which we believe is caused by minor roof leaks and condensation, which is why we have recommended that the roof be ventilated.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that the hidden valley gutter is inspected and the roof needs venting.

Woodworm



Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part of the overall character of the property.

Recent research has shown that many woodworm chemicals do not actually work and it should be remembered that the chemicals are poisons. Also, unless great care is taken, the people applying the treatment can cause significant damage. The woodworm can only

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really be seen in action during the breeding season, which runs from April to July. We have therefore tried to take a pragmatic view on this matter.

Within the property we found areas of woodworm, we consider this to be an acceptable level of woodworm for this age of property. We do not believe it is active although it is not possible to confirm this without seeing the woodworm during the spring breeding season.

ACTION REQUIRED: To be on the safe side we would recommend that a BWPDA approved contractor, offering an insurance backed guarantee, is asked to quote for the treatment of the timbers during the next spring and to specifically advise as to whether he feels the woodworm is 'active'. There is no point in having this work carried out if the woodworm is not active.

The treatment, should you need to have it done, should consist of removing all the insulation within the roof and spraying all the timbers. It is simply no good if the insulation is not removed as you would be missing most of the timbers.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Finally, when you move into the property, floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are removed together with stored goods. Any signs that are found should be treated to prevent it spreading. However, you need to be aware that many damp and woodworm treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

We would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The decoration is average, with minor marks as you would expect in a house that has been lived in.

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place, as it very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, hallways will need tending to more often than a spare bedroom.

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically using insulation not only in the roof but also in the walls, floors and windows and more recently considerable work has been carried out on how efficient boilers are within properties. Care has to be taken that properties are not insulated disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.

Roof Insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not to current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. We would not be overly concerned about this as we typically find in roofs between 100mm – 150mm of insulation. In this instance you have approximately 100mm.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid and will have a relatively poor thermal efficiency. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in solid wall construction without major alterations, which will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space.

Some of the walls have been dry lined; this is the older style dry lining when insulation is not used, however this does, by the mere fact that there is an air gap, add some insulation and warmth.

Windows

The windows are single glazed and sliding sash, so the thermal properties will be poor.

Services

Service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

Summary

Overall, provided our assumptions correct and considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties.

Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

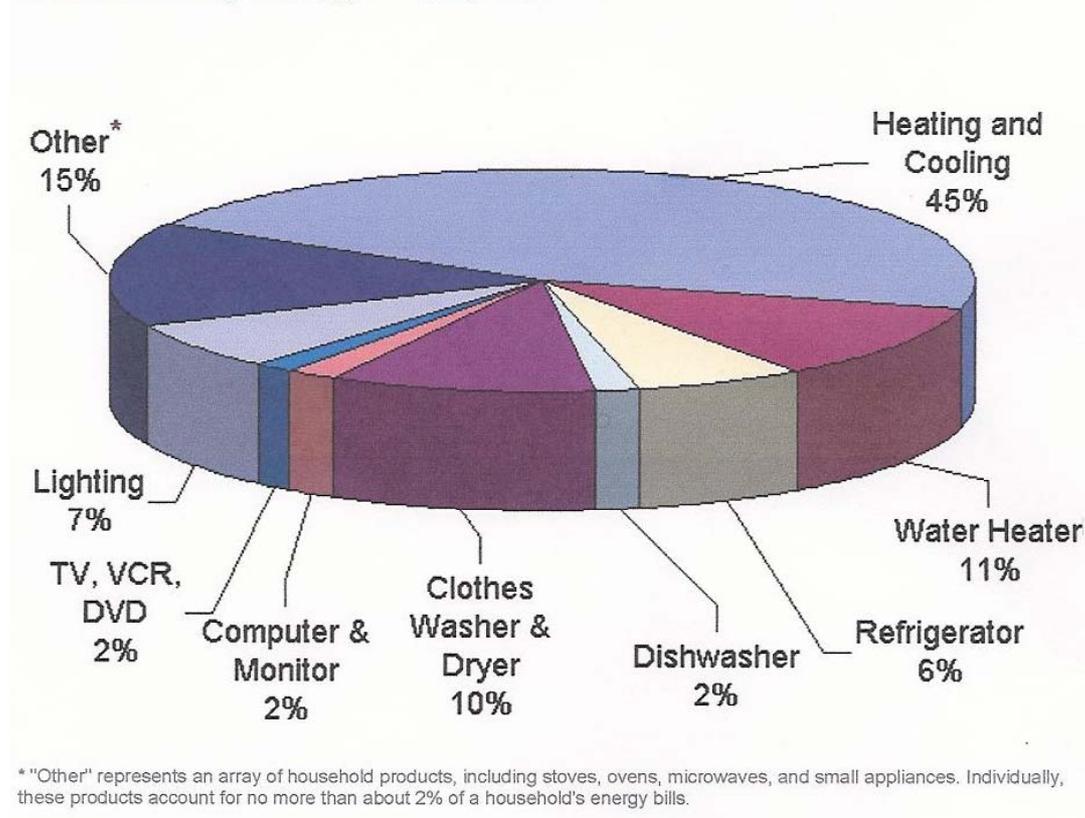
HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

or www.ecocentre.org.uk for an alternative technological view.

Finally, we would advise that an energy rating is likely to be required for future house sales.

What does my energy bill pay for?



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OTHER MATTERS



In this section we put any other matters that do not fit under our usual headings.

Security System

We did not note a security system in the property. It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. We suggest you contact a member of NACOSS (National Approval Council for Security Services), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

We have recently been involved with installing wireless micro security cameras which do seem to give a good security solution along with an alarm system.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

Some smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed.

We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on, providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year. We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

We would always recommend staying with the existing insurance company, and then if there are any problems you should not have the difficulty of negotiating with two insurance companies passing the blame between each other.

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. This was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time. We are not asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

SERVICES

This survey does not include any specialist reports on the electricity supply and circuits, heating or drainage, as they were not requested. The comments that follow are based upon a visual inspection carried out as part of the overall Building Survey.

Services and specialist installations have been visually inspected. It is impossible to examine every detail of these installations without partially dismantling the structure. Tests have not been applied. Conclusive tests can only be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors. The vendor/seller should be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

ELECTRICITY



It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19th century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations is important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommends that inspections and testing are undertaken at least every 10 years (we recommend every five years) and on change of occupancy. All electrical installation works undertaken after 1st January 2005 should be identified by an Electrical Installation Certificate.

Fuse Board

We have not been able to see the electric fuses and consumer units. We assume it is in the garage (if you recall you also thought you had seen it in the garage which you have been into).

Earth Test

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle and this proved satisfactory.



ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an IEE report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor.

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

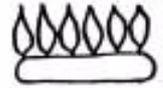
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GAS



There is very little we can check for in a gas installation, we do inspect to make sure there is one and that it has a consumer unit and that the boilers are vented. Ideally you should have a service inspection carried out by an independent CORGI registered plumber.

The gas meter cupboard is located on the right hand side of the property. All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e. a member of CORGI (the Council of Registered Gas Installers); works to gas appliances etc. by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

ACTION REQUIRED: As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and made good, as necessary, by a CORGI registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

PLUMBING AND HEATING



In this section we do our best from a visual inspection to look at how the water is supplied to the property, how the supply is distributed around the property, how it is used to heat the property and how it is discharged from the property.

Water Supply

The controlling stopcock was not located. It is important that its presence be established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owner.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage tests we checked the pressure, literally by putting a finger over a tap, and the pressure seemed typical of what we find. The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones, have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

Hot Water Cylinder

The hot water cylinder is relatively new (in this case we mean in the past 30 years) as it is factory lagged and located in the bathroom.

Plumbing

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper pipework. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in ducts and floors.

Heating

The boiler was located in the ground floor breakfast room; it is a Potterton Kingfisher, which is a commonly found make, but dated. This boiler is coming to the end of its natural life.

Typically we are finding that the floor mounted boilers are lasting 25 to 30 years (assuming they are maintained regularly), the modern combination boilers (or 'combi' boilers, as they are commonly known) are lasting 10-20 years and the jury is still out on the new condensing boilers.

We noted that there are a fair number of internal radiators. The radiators would normally be positioned under the window, which helps circulation of the warm air. These radiators may not warm the property to the heat that you desire.

Internal radiators are generally used by plumbers to reduce costs (less pipe work) and save time (less pipe work). Sometimes dampness (what's known as cold bridging) occurs; we have personally had this problem and ended up moving the radiators to the traditional location under the window.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no issues. We would however recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Ten Minute Heating Test

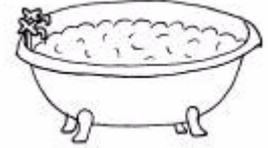
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present.

ACTION REQUIRED: Have an approved tradesman check the system.

Finally, it should be noted that the supply pipe from the Water Company stopcock to the internal stop tap is the responsibility of the property owner.

We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

BATHROOM



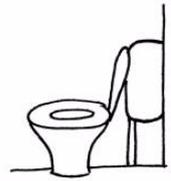
In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.

The first floor bathroom suite looked in average condition as did the ground floor cloakroom.

The en suite is rather small and looks in below average condition, it consists of a W.C., basin and shower, although from our discussions you do intend to alter this area considerably.

Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of your DIY on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

MAIN DRAINS



The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.

It is assumed that the property has the benefit of mains drainage and that the foul drains discharge into a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the bathroom and kitchen. No build up or back up was noted.

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

For your information, inspection chambers / manholes are required to be provided in the current Building Regulations at each change of direction or where drainage runs join the main run.

We have identified three inspection chambers / manholes.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One Located to the Front Right Hand Side

We lifted this manhole cover and found tree roots in the manhole, the source of these needs to be identified and advice taken.

ACTION REQUIRED: A Close Circuit Television Camera Report to be carried out on the drains.



Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two Located to the Rear Right Hand Side

We duly lifted the man hole/ inspection chamber cover and found the drain to be clear, we noted it was finished in brick



Inspection Chamber / Manhole Three to the Rear

We found this manhole to be shallow; these are typically added at a later date and are certainly not considered good practice. Unfortunately there is usually very little you can do to improve them.



We have only undertaken a visual inspection of the property's foul drains by lifting covers and running water from the taps within the house.

Alterations / Repairs to Drains

To the rear patio area we could see signs indicating that the drains have been dug up in the past.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to specifically ask if there have been any issues with the drains.

Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.

Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

Finally, rain/surface water drains have not been tested and their condition or effectiveness is not known. Similarly, the adequacy of soak-aways has not been established although you are advised that they tend to silt up and become less effective with time.

Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING / GARAGE



Parking

There is off-road parking available; this was plentiful at the time of our inspection.

Garage

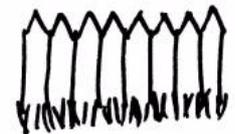
Dampness was found to the garage wall. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Unfortunately we did not have access to the internal of the garage.

ACTION REQUIRED: You advised us that you have seen inside the garage and were happy with this area.



EXTERNAL AREAS



Gardens

There are gardens to the front, side and rear. You do need to get expert advice with regard to the trees and you do need to find a good tradesman for repairs to the wall. At the moment the wall has been repaired very badly with a cement mortar smothering it, for want of a better term, in many areas. This cement mortar will gradually fall out and should be replaced with a lime mortar. You do have a good example of a wall well kept and restored just at the top of the road.



Poorly repaired garden wall with Roman tiles to the top



Rotting timber lintel to garden wall



Well restored wall at top of the road

Boundaries: The left hand boundary (all directions given as you face the property) is usually the responsibility of the subject property.

Finally, whilst we note the boundaries, these may not be the legal boundaries. Your Legal Advisor should make further enquiries on this point and advise you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

We knocked on the door but there was no answer; we believe the property is empty.

Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked on the door but no one answered.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this should be forwarded to your Legal Advisor and the following points should be checked by him/her:

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Central heating installation.
 - v) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vi) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion, by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please read: www.1stAssociated.co.uk/leaderboard.asp

- o) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

When you booked this survey we asked you if you required us to carry out a verbal check on the status of the property with the Local Authority regarding whether it is a Listed Building, in a Conservation area and any history that is available over the phone with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. In this instance you have not requested that we carry out this work.

Finally, your Solicitor should carry out Local Authority enquiries and any additional enquiries he/she feels necessary, advising us if they feel that we can have further input.

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Finally, an extract from the book “Sold”!

“When you receive your full structural survey (now known as a Building Survey) or House Buyers Report, do remember that you have requested a list of the property’s faults so it is unlikely to make cheerful reading. Every property has its faults but what you are looking for are the serious ones. If your Report does reveal a serious problem that you had not anticipated when making your offer, the first thing to do is to decide whether you want to take on the repairs if an adjustment is made to the price. If you do, then get quotes for the work as quickly as possible and present your case in a fair manner. Most people are reasonable under such circumstances and will compromise but inevitably there are those who are sufficiently confident of their position to say take it or leave it. In a very active market, prices may have moved up sufficiently to cover the extra expenditure in theory and the vendor will not hasten to point this out but remember that he has probably got a vendor pressing him to proceed quickly and starting with a new purchaser will cause him delay”

It is our policy not to offer a conclusion to ensure that the Building Survey is read in full and the comments are taken in context.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed (or indeed any that have not been discussed!) then please do not hesitate to contact us on **0800 298 5424**.

For and on Behalf of

GEM Associates Limited
Independent Chartered Surveyors
Hoo View House
44a Stanley Street
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK41 7RW

This Report is dated: 14th August 2007

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components
*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings
*By Malcolm Hollis 4th edition published by Royal Institution of
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS

Our limitations are as the agreed Terms and Conditions of Engagement.

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated XXXXXX and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

ENGLISH LAW

We would remind you that this report should not be published or reproduced in any way without the surveyor's expressed permission and is governed by English Law and any dispute arising there from shall be adjudicated upon only by the English Courts.

SOLE USE

This report is for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisors. Any other persons rely on the Report at their own risk.

ONLY HUMAN!

Although we are pointing out the obvious, our Surveyors obviously can't see through walls, floors, heavy furniture, fixed kitchen units etc. they have therefore made their best assumptions in these areas.

As this is a one off inspection, we cannot guarantee that there are no other defects than those mentioned in the report and also that defects can subsequently develop.

WEATHER

It was a bright, sunny and pleasant day at the time of the survey (which made a change from the constant rain we have had this summer). The weather did not hamper the survey.

We would add that some defects only become apparent upon physical occupation or are only present as a result of the extremes of weather (which are becoming a more frequent occurrence). As you may be aware 2006 was the warmest year in Britain since records began, we believe, in the 1700s; with July 2006 being the hottest July on record in Britain. 2005 was the third driest year on record in Britain with 2003 being the driest. The year 2000 was the wettest year on record and August 2004 was the wettest August on record in Britain. This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted that we are not local surveyors to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc.

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

The property was occupied at the time of our survey, which meant that there were various difficulties when carrying out the survey such as stored items within cupboards, the loft space and obviously day-to-day household goods throughout the property. We have, however, done our best to work around these.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as we were not able to speak to the owner or use our question and answer sheet with them. We were unable to inspect under the floor boards and we were also unable to see the hidden valley gutter.

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

Here is our quick guide to the Regulations, but please take further advice from a qualified and experienced electrician.

From 1st January 2005, people carrying out electrical work in homes and gardens in England and Wales must follow new rules in the building regulations. All significant electrical work carried out in the home will have to be undertaken by a registered installer or be approved and certified by the local authority's building control department. Failure to do so will be a legal offence and could result in a fine. Non-certified work could also put your household insurance policy at risk.

If you can't provide evidence that any electrical installation work complies with the new regulations, you could have problems when it comes to selling the property.

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - British Gas or NICEIC Electrical Contractor.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

Homeowners will still be able to do some minor electrical jobs themselves. To help you, we've put together this brief list of dos and don'ts.

Work You Cannot do Yourself

- Complete new or rewiring jobs.
- Fuse box changes.
- Adding lighting points to an existing circuit in a 'special location' like the kitchen, bathroom or garden.
- Installing electrical earth connections to pipework and metalwork.
- Adding a new circuit.

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

We used to include within our reports articles on the property market that we thought would be of interest and informative to you, however we were concerned that in some cases these did not offer the latest information. We have therefore decided to recommend various websites to you, however it is important to realise the vested interest the parties may have and the limits to the information.

www.landreg.org.uk

This records the ownership of interests in registered land in England and Wales and issues a residential property price report quarterly, which is free of charge. The Land Registry is a Government body and records all transactions as far as we are aware, although critics of it would argue that the information is often many months out of date.

www.rics.org.uk

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors offer quarterly reports via their members. Although this has been criticised as being subjective and also limited, historically their predictions have been found to be reasonably accurate.

www.halifax.co.uk and www.nationwide.co.uk

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. Information from these surveys is often carried in the national press. It should be remembered that the surveys only relate to mortgaged properties, of which it is generally considered represents only 75% of the market. It should also be remembered that the national coverage of the two companies differs and that they may be offering various incentives on different mortgages, which may taint the quality of information offered. That said they do try to adjust for this, the success or otherwise of this is hard to establish.

GEM Associates Limited
Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

www.hometrack.co.uk

From what we can see this is an internet based company who say they offer independent property research (in fact they say they are the only independent company), although they also advise that they are part of a property related group that has bought and sold over 60 million pounds worth of residential property, which indicates that they may have a vested interest. They do also comment that they have carried out their own independent surveys and they have at least two Hometrack recommended estate agents in each postcode area. We would refer you to the 'About us' section within their website to understand better where their information is coming from. We would comment that we have been pleasantly surprised with the quality of information provided by the company.

Motleyfool.co.uk

We also like the Motley Fool website which is a general financial site and although it is selling financial services and other services they do tend to give a very readable view of the housing market.

<http://www.nethouseprices.com/>

This website offers information on land registry recorded property sales, by postcode or address.

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