

JOB REFERENCE: RBSM2/MH/MB

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Hertfordshire



Marketing by:
www.1stAssociated.co.uk
0800 298 5424

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES, PARAPET WALLS
ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS
ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT SPACE
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES AND SOIL AND VENT PIPES
EXTERNAL WALLS
FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS
EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES
CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES
FLOORS
DAMPNESS
INTERNAL JOINERY
TIMBER DEFECTS
INTERNAL DECORATIONS
THERMAL EFFICIENCY
OTHER MATTERS

SERVICES

ELECTRICITY
GAS
PLUMBING AND HEATING
BATHROOMS
MAIN DRAINS

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING
EXTERNAL AREAS
POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property.

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.

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

We recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas which 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 property is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

REPORT FORMAT

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

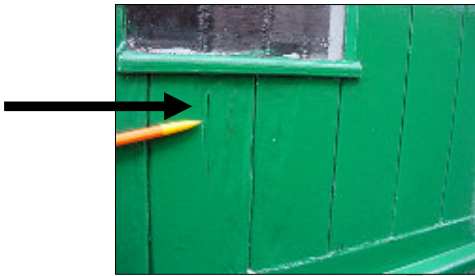
GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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, pen or arrow 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.

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey mid terraced property which has been altered over the years including the conversion of the garage into a room (front left hand side) and a conservatory added across the entire rear of the property.

The front garden has been given over to a brick paved parking area, to the rear there is a reasonable sized garden with patio area.

We believe that the property was built in the 1970's and is commonly known as cross wall construction. Cross wall construction differs from traditional construction in that it is only the walls that run from the front to the rear which offer support, the remainder walls are effectively cladding. If the 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:

1970	Decimalisation
Early 1970s	British Property Boom
1972	Terrorist attack at the Olympic Games in Munich
1973	Britain enters the European Economic Community
1976	The first commercial Concorde flight took off
1977	Elvis Presley found dead
1979-1991	The Thatcher Years
1980	John Lennon Shot Dead
1982	Falklands Conflict between Britain and Argentina

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



Rear garden



View of property front left



Street view from right

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Garage conversion front left
- 2) Through lounge right
- 3) Kitchen rear left
- 4) Conservatory rear

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Main bedroom front left
- 2) Single bedroom front right
- 3) Double bedroom rear left
- 4) Bathroom rear right

Outside Areas

The front garden has been given over to a brick paved parking area, to the rear there is a reasonable sized garden with patio area.

Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

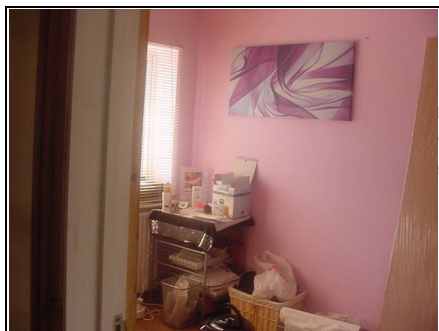
Ground Floor



Lounge looking towards entrance



Lounge looking towards conservatory



Garage conversion



Kitchen



Conservatory middle view



Conservatory left view

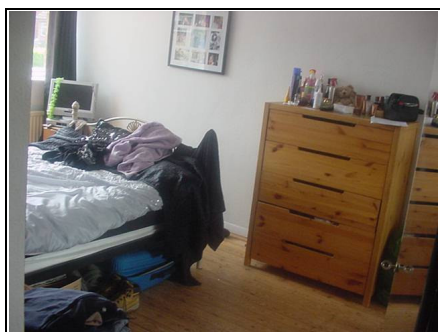
Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

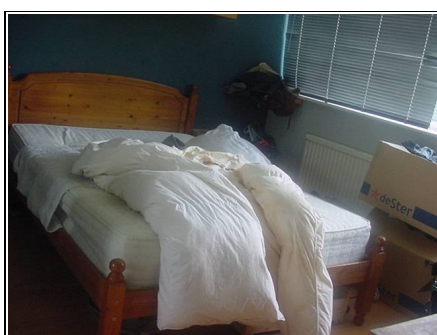
First Floor



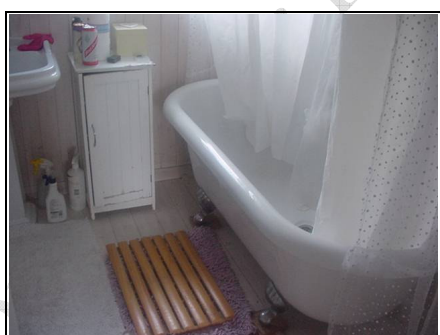
Main bedroom front left



Single bedroom front right



Double bedroom rear left



Bathroom



Landing

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with concrete tile
Conservatory:	Polycarbonate plastic
Main Roof Structure:	Cut timber roof
Gutters, Downpipes & Flue:	Asbestos, to be confirmed by asbestos survey
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Asbestos, to be confirmed by asbestos survey
Walls:	Stretcher Bond Brickwork (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Asbestos and timber, to be confirmed by asbestos survey
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed windows with and without trickle vents

Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard/proprietary board (assumed)
Walls:	Mixture of solid and studwork with dry lining to garage conversion (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Solid assumed concrete
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards with joist hangers (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). There is a Glow worm wall mounted boiler within the roof and a 1980's/1990's fuse board in the garage conversion on the right hand wall.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

10



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal 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 300 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.

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.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

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!

1.0) The property has been extended and amended to give extra space with the conservatory providing additional light to the rear of the property.

2.0) There is off road parking in an area where we believe there will be problems with parking.



Conservatory gives additional light to rear of property

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

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

1.0) Cross wall construction

We will firstly explain that this is a cross wall construction building, not a traditional built building and as such although it looks as if it is traditionally built it will have different characteristics to a typical house. This type of construction was used during the 1960's, mainly the 1970's and some of the 1980's and was a way of building more economically where the walls running from front to back were the structural walls only (as opposed to all four walls).



Cross walls

Cross wall construction defined

The side walls take the weight with the front and rear walls being non-supporting.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

2.0) Cracking

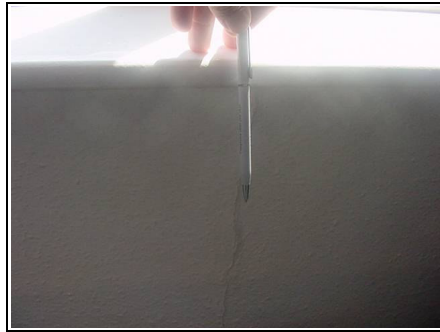
To the front wall we noted cracking in both the front right and front left hand bedrooms. As this is a cross wall construction effectively the front and rear walls shouldn't take any weight and as such the cracks to the walls shouldn't be considered a problem.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424



Crack in front left bedroom

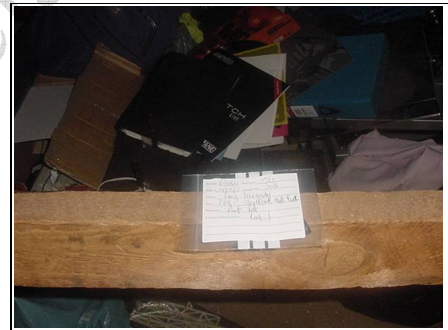


Crack in front right bedroom

It may relate to the lack of lintels below or amendments for example to where the garage once was.

3.0) Asbestos

At the time the survey was carried out an asbestos report was also being carried out. We could see that there was what looks to be asbestos gutters, downpipes, water tank, flues, fascias and soffits, (although it is not possible to be 100% certain from a visual check). It is the condition these are in and whether they need removal that the asbestos company should be able to advise you of. The asbestos testing company took samples which they advised they would be analysing within their labs.



Example of sample taken for asbestos



Asbestos gutters



Asbestos downpipe to rear



Asbestos flue and water tank in roof space

Our insurance company require us to advise we are not asbestos specialists.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please advise results of asbestos tests.

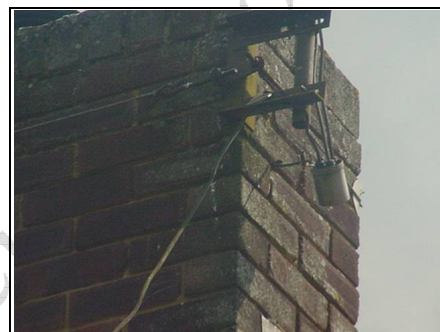
Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

4.0) Chimney

The chimney is weathered and in need of redecoration.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend repointing in the summer of 2013, by 2014 at the latest, otherwise dampness will start to get in.

Please see the Chimney Stacks Section of this Report.



Chimney needs repointing

5.0) Rear conservatory

We can see that the right hand side of the rear conservatory (all directions given as you face the front of the property) has part of the flashing missing. Although it has some of the flashing remaining, work is required to renew this flashing to stop water getting in. Rain may also get into the joints and other similar weak areas.



Rear left hand side of conservatory



Flashing missing to rear right hand side of conservatory



Close up of flashing coming away

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

As an aside we would comment that generally we believe that the conservatory roof is too shallow a pitch to work without a clean down occasionally. Given the shallowness of the pitch wind driven rain may well get into it.



Moss to polycarbonate roof over conservatory



Leaking gutter to conservatory

ACTION REQUIRED: Renew flashings to right hand side and check all flashings. You should also carefully clear the polycarbonate plastic roof to the conservatory of moss and the gutters and downpipes at the same time.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds or possibly partly DIY job; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

6.0) Lintels missing?

In this era and type of property we sometimes come across there being no lintels over the windows. We noted that some of the windows have a different brick pattern than we would expect, for example in the photo you can see a row of headers (the ends of the bricks) which indicates to us there may be a lintel in this area.



Window without a lintel

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to be aware that there aren't lintels over some of the windows and watch out for deflection. They have obviously stood the test of time to some extent (depending upon how old the windows are). Your legal advisor to check and confirm when the windows were put in and if they are subject to a guarantee and if the window company recommended the lintels being added (they would normally draw this to your attention).

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

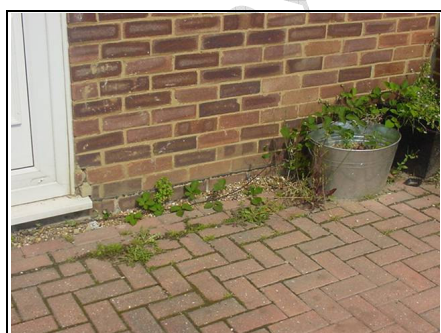
7.0) Garage conversion

The garage conversion may not meet current Building Regulations requirements for energy efficiency, etc.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor needs to check and confirm if the garage was legally changed to a habitable room via planning permission and building regulations or it is in fact still a garage with a window!

8.0) Damp proof course

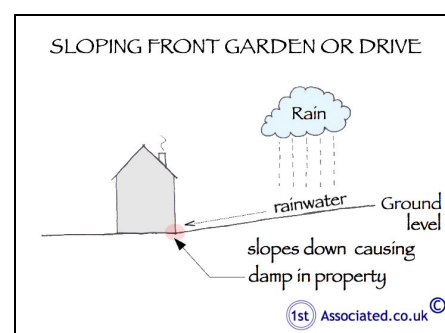
The damp proof course is too low because brick paves have been put on ground level rather than reducing it. There are less than two bricks between the ground and damp proof course.



Damp proof course too low due to brick paves



Damp proof course



9.0) Decking to rear

The decking to the rear comes right up to the property and as such can cause dampness by capillary action to the concrete floor.

We would also advise that it was hiding a manhole to the rear which we couldn't get at.

We have found over the years that decking can be a home for vermin and can also get slippery over time.



Ideally there should be a gap between decking and building

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a gap between the decking and the house which may be easier said than done. We would also recommend ensuring that you can lift the panel directly above the drain. Watch out for vermin and for the decking getting slippery.

10.0) Marks on walls, radiators and conservatory plastic

There are marks on the walls, radiators and the conservatory plastic over and above what we would expect to find.

ACTION REQUIRED: The house needs a good clean, preparation and redecoration. There is a lot of woodchip paper in the house which can be fairly difficult to remove.



Marked radiator needs redecoration

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

10.1) Painted to sell

Although this may be a strange thing to say after the last comment, it does look to have been recently painted in some areas which could be hiding latent defects.

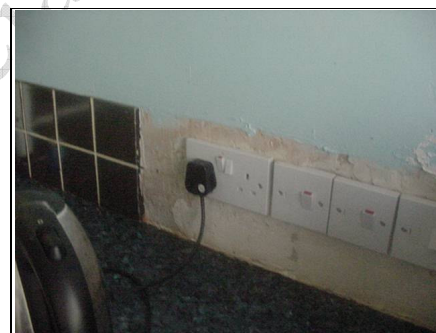


The paint was literally sitting outside the back door

11.0) Unfinished kitchen

Within the kitchen there was unfinished tiling. There were many electric points which we were unsure what they were for.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to ask the current owner what the electric points are for.



Unfinished tiling to kitchen

12.0) Condensation

We noted condensation within the rear right hand bathroom.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend an extract fan with humidity controlled thermostat is added to the bathroom and the kitchen.



Condensation and paint flaking – needs extract fan

Independent Chartered Surveyors

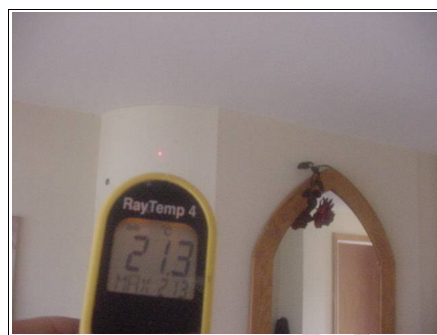
Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £150 - £250; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

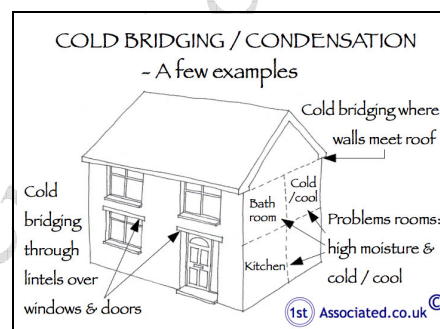


Condensation

13.0) Cold bridging

This age of property is susceptible to cold bridging.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend venting of the roof and humidity controlled extract fans to the kitchen and bathrooms (see earlier comment about condensation in bathroom).



Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

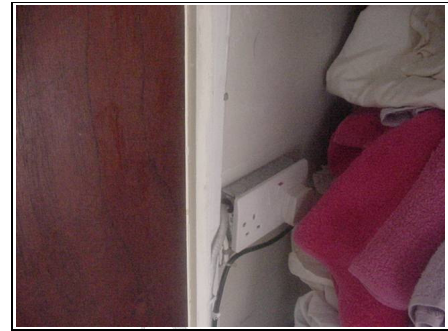
14.0) Services

14.1) Electrics

We noted DIY electrics within the airing cupboard.

ACTION REQUIRED: The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent whenever a house changes occupants. We would recommend the same in this instance as there seems to be a lack of socket points and possibly some DIY electrics.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds for the test and then recommendations; please obtain quotations.



DIY electrics in airing cupboard



More electric points needed

The Ugly

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this section providing you are happy with the characteristics of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

This type of property is relatively modern (i.e., less than one hundred years old) but nevertheless still requires ongoing maintenance and repair. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services. We also need to advise you of the following:

Electrics

The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

Although the boiler looked relatively new the only way to test and confirm that this age of boiler is working efficiently is to have it tested and serviced by an approved heating engineer prior to committing to purchase the property and then have a regular maintenance contract in place.

Drainage

Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report. Please note we could not lift the manhole to the rear.

ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES: We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating to turn the property into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

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.

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 Building 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 and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 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 usually be best to have work supervised 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 would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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 in full and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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 Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

24

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



Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

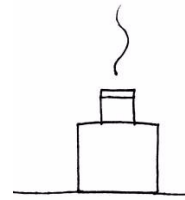
www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

25

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES AND PARAPET WALLS



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.

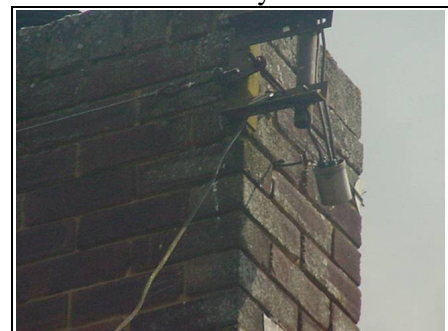
There is one chimney to this property located to the front which sits on the Party Wall (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One – located to the front right hand side

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and two chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in slightly below average condition as it looks weathered considering its age, type and style.



Chimney one



Chimney needs repointing

Independent Chartered Surveyors

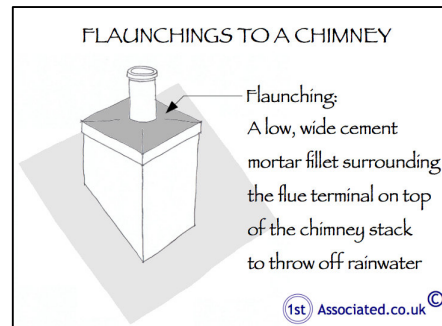
—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Unfortunately we were unable to see the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend repointing in the summer of 2013, by 2014 at the latest otherwise dampness will start to get in. Periodically inspect the chimney.



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.

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flues

Flues offer ventilation to things like boilers and soil and vent pipes and usually come through the roof covering, which can often also be a weak area.

The property has a plastic/metal flue visible at roof level to the front of the property for the glow worm boiler with a lead flashing.



Front flue for glow worm boiler

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

There is an asbestos flue to the rear of the property.



Asbestos flue to rear



Old asbestos flue within roof space to rear of property

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and of course your asbestos report.

Parapet Walls

Parapet walls are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.

In this case there is a thin (one brick width) parapet wall to the rear of the property built from brick with a coping stone. We can comment that it is not the strongest and as you can see next door has a two brick wide pier which is more common. We assume it is not possible to re-build in this case because next doors extension is in the way. Where two extensions are built close together such as this, there should be a party wall agreement.



Thin rear parapet wall

ACTION REQUIRED: Obtain party wall notice and be aware that the party wall will deteriorate.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Finally, we were only able to see approximately sixty percent of the parapet wall, therefore we have made our best assumptions based upon what we could see. A closer inspection may reveal more.

Party Wall

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimney. We would refer you to the conservatories being built close together which should have had a party wall notice. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, require agreement under the Party Wall Act. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks, flues and parapet walls from the parts we would see above roof level. 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.

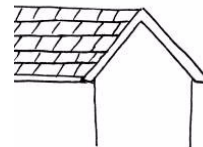
Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in three areas, the main roof, the polycarbonate plastic conservatory roof and the entrance porch flat roof.

Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and clad with concrete roman tiles and, from ground level, this looks in average condition with minor moss considering the roofs age type and style. Often the ridges weather on this type of roof; the ridge tiles look in average condition at present.



Roman tiles



Rear roof



Close up of roof tiles and ridge tiles

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

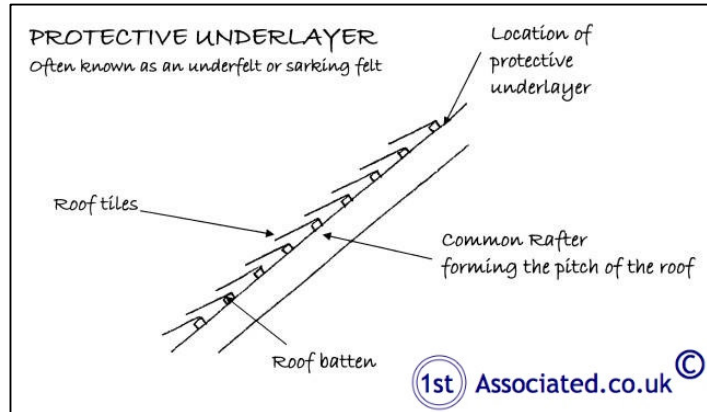
Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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, with damage in some areas which is what we typically find.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Conservatory roof (to the rear)

The conservatory has a polycarbonate plastic roof, this is a reinforced plastic roof that is relatively common on the cheaper end of the market conservatories. This has a very shallow pitch; we much prefer good pitches on roofs to get any rainwater away. Due to this, moss sits on the roof. There is also a danger of wind driven rain getting in.



Plastic roof over conservatory



Flashing missing to conservatory

ACTION REQUIRED: Clear the roof and the gutters, check the joints and re-check the flashing. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary particularly about the flashings.

Entrance porch roof

The entrance porch to the front has a flat felt roof. It is in poor condition, we can see the timber underneath.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add felt to this area. Obviously as it is not inside it is not imperative but it would stop further damage to the structure.



Entrance porch roof

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

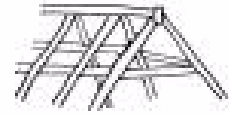
All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Shallow pitched and flat roofs have been inspected from ground floor level and/or upper floor windows.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately ninety percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder. 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.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

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.

Main Roof

Roof Access

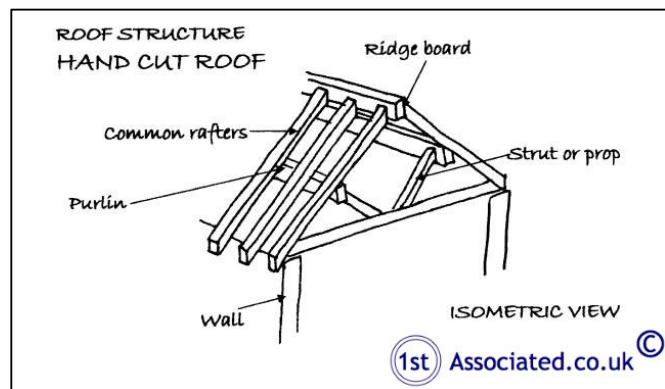
The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There was a loft ladder and electric light with some floorboards; it would benefit from more areas being boarded over and secured to make the loft safer and easier to use. It would also benefit from the loft being cleared.

The loft (perimeter) has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

Whilst our view was limited we would comment that this property has what is known as a cut timber roof. This 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.

We were slightly surprised by the roof construction as we were expecting an early pre-fabricated truss.



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



Roof space left



Roof space right

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be 100 per cent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked.

Fire Walls

The property has two brick firewalls which are located one to the left hand side and one to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewalls are also Party Walls.



Firewall

Fire Walls Defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

Water Tanks

There is an asbestos water tank within the roof space which your asbestos company may recommend is removed. We would recommend, if it is staying, that you always drain down and clear of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks). As you are often cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!

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

Ventilation

We didn't notice any ventilation in the roof space. We would recommend this is added.

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 insufficient quantity of wiring to comment.

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 roof, 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. Our inspection of the roof was limited due to the amount of stored items.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

36

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES

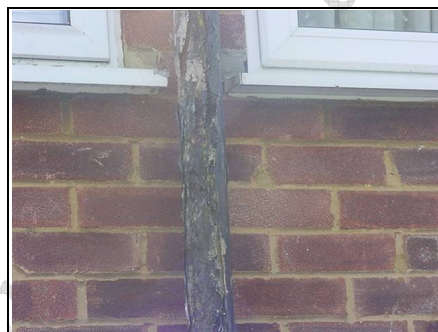


The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

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 asbestos gutters and downpipes which didn't look in the best condition. We are sure your asbestos company will comment upon these and whether they need removal or not.



Asbestos downpipe to rear

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to asbestos. If the asbestos company doesn't recommend to remove them we would always recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints. We would also 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 particularly the gutters to the conservatory roof which will have a lot of moss in them.



Leaking gutter to conservatory

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipe is internal / hidden and may be asbestos.

ACTION REQUIRED: This may be asbestos so you do need to ensure that the asbestos company check this. This may involve opening up which may go beyond what they were asked to do.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

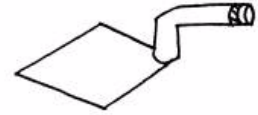
—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

38

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.

We believe that the property was built in the 1970's and is commonly known as cross wall construction with stretcher bond brickwork.

Cross wall construction

We believe this property to be what is known as cross wall construction, which was very common in the 1970's and was also used before and after this.

Cross wall construction defined

The side walls take the weight with the front and rear walls being non-supporting.



Cross walls

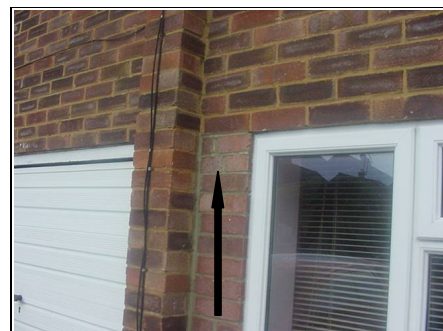
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Brickwork

The property is built in a brick in a Stretcher bond brickwork.



Stretcher bond brickwork



Brickwork infilled to where garage once was

Independent Chartered Surveyors

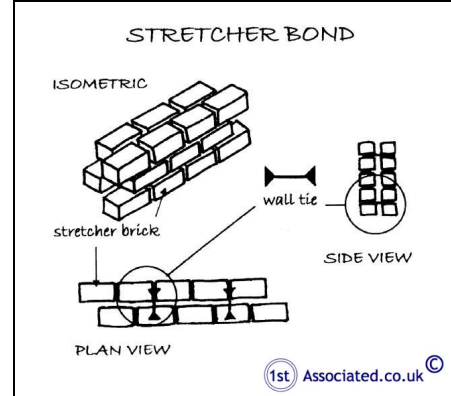
Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

39

The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property, you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher". This pattern would repeat throughout.



Cavity Walls

Cavity walls were first used in Victorian times. It originates from solid walls not always being waterproof against driving rain and not providing a good degree of heat insulation. The design of cavity walls makes them relatively unstable and they depend upon the wall ties.

Wall Ties

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. We would typically see horizontal cracking where there are problems. In this case we have not noted any cracking however wall tie failure is a progressive problem. We would add as there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties. As such we cannot be hundred per cent certain with regard to this problem unless we open up the structure. From what we can see externally it appears not to have any problems.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Lintels

It is likely that there are no lintels in some places.

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



Window without lintel

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 brickwork / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels, metal lintels or no lintel at all! They can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / plasterwork 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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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

We would expect to find a concrete foundation typically known as a 'strip concrete' foundation going down to a meter or slightly deeper dependent upon the age of the property.

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.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection - the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

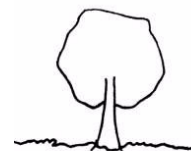
Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

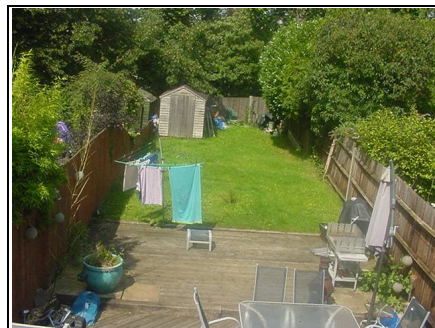
43

TREES

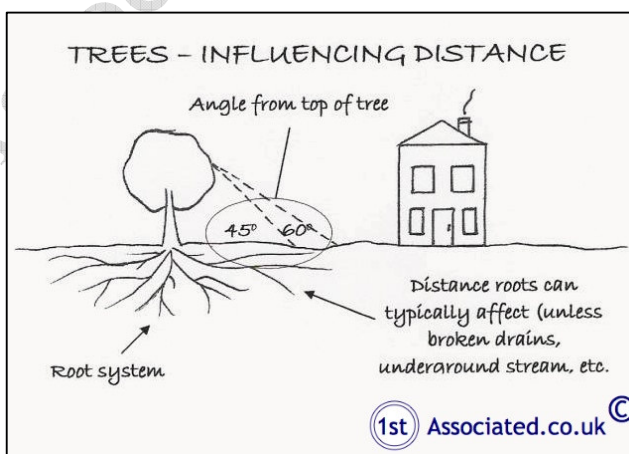
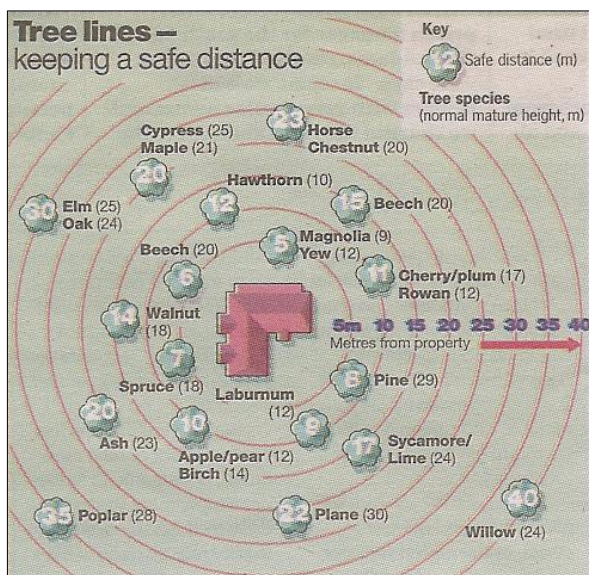


Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There are trees and bushes that surround the property although not within your garden. Some insurance companies are requiring additional insurance if there is a tree within 5 metres of the property, other companies are 10 or 15 metres so it does depend upon your insurance as to whether you will have a premium with regard to the trees. We cannot see any that we believe are physically affecting the building based upon the height and type of trees in the area.



Trees nearby



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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

45

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.

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, the damp proof course is too low because brick paves have been put on ground level rather than reducing it. There are less than two bricks between the ground and damp proof course.

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

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

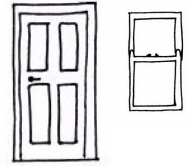
——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

46

FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and 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

Some of the fascias and soffits look to be asbestos and some look to be timber. The asbestos company should have taken samples to check and confirm. The timber needs redecorating (if they are timber).

ACTION REQUIRED: Repaint timber. Make sure gutters and downpipes are watertight before carrying out any work on fascias and soffits.



Rear timber fascia flaking

Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows, which are from the cheaper end of the market, we couldn't see trickle vents on the majority of them.

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass



Garage room has double glazing without trickle vents

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution.

Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years.

Trickle Vents Defined

Trickle vents allow a trickle of air through, therefore stopping/reducing the likelihood of condensation occurring within the property.

Entrance porch

The entrance porch is in need of redecoration and as mentioned the roof would be best re-felted.



Bare timber to entrance porch



Entrance porch in need of redecoration

ACTION REQUIRED: Redecorate.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

This very much depends upon the asbestos report as to what elements are staying. If they are recommending replacement of fascias and gutters and downpipes then new plastic would eliminate the need to redecorate these in the near future.

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

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 likely to be plasterboard or there may be some proprietary boarding as this was fairly common in this era of property as this was to some extent an experimental stage with construction materials.

Plasterboard Defined

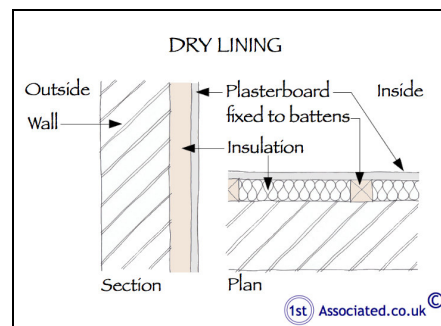
The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

Internal Walls, Partitions and Perimeter walls

These are, we believe a mixture of solid and studwork with dry lining to garage. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess. We would add that where the garage has been converted it may not meet current Building Regulations requirements for energy efficiency, etc.



Is this an original design or has a wall been removed?



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

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.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

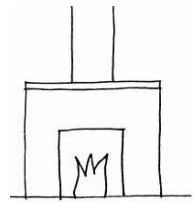
—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

51

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 to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey the chimney was not in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.



Fireplace

It has what looks to be LED lights which are an unusual feature. We couldn't find the switch to turn these on.



LED lights around chimney

Within the roof we noted the chimney breast was rendered which we were slightly surprised about as this practice tends to have ended in the 1960's.



Rendered chimney breast within roof

Finally, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden particularly when plastered over.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained.

It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

FLOORS



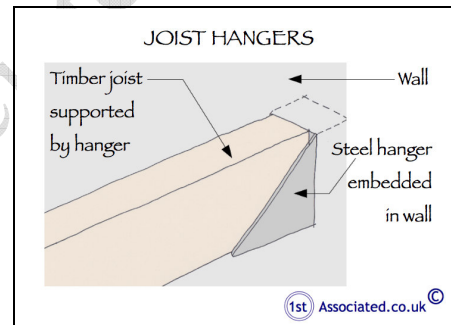
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

The floors felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete. However, we have not opened up the floors or lifted the floor coverings.

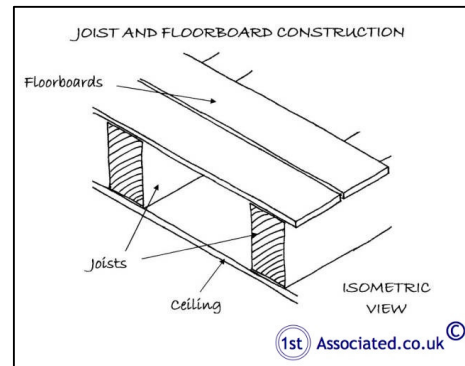
First Floor

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



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, 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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

54

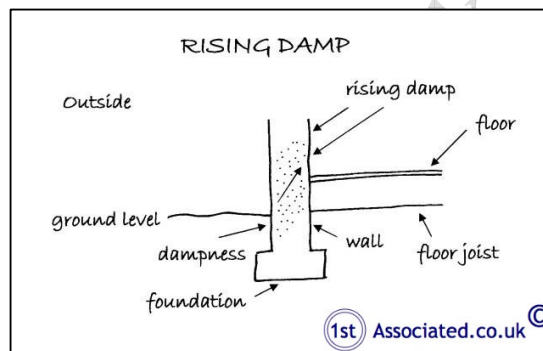


DAMPNESS

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. There is a strong argument that true rising damp very rarely is found.



A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found no rising damp. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.

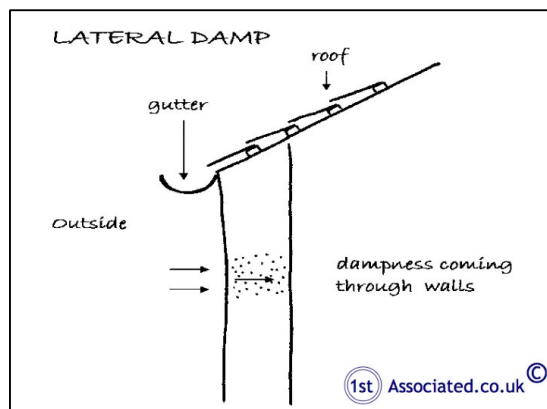


Testing for rising damp

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.

We used a damp meter on the external walls. We have not found dampness.





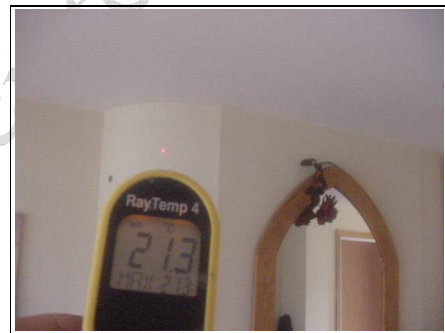
Dry lined wall

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were signs of condensation to the bathroom.

However, it 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, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.



Condensation

Extract fans in kitchens and bathrooms

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans with humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens and bathrooms which are moisture generating areas.

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.

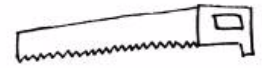
Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

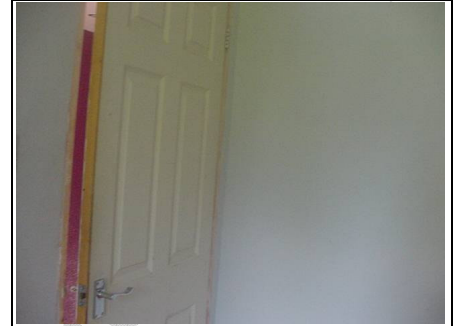
INTERNAL JOINERY



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 hollow core doors / pressed doors.



Pressed door

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

We found the kitchen units in average condition however there were areas of the kitchen which were unfinished such as the tiling. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

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.

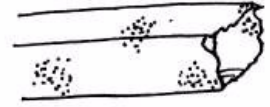
Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.*

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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.*

Again, we have not visually seen any wet rot during the course of our inspection although there was flaking to the fascia board to the rear. If it is timber it is likely to have rot although we suspect it is asbestos.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see your asbestos survey.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm.

Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

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.

Internal decorations are in below average condition with marks to the walls and radiators and a poor standard of painting, for example to the top of the stairs the walls and skirtings have been painted. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste and standard.



Standard of painting at top of landing

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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.

HIPs

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are required before a sale completes.

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this instance there was approximately 200mm.



Older style shingle insulation

Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction. In this age of property they were often built without insulation which has been added at a later date. We have found when we have been involved with alterations that the front and rear walls have next to no insulation in them, the side walls are insulated by the adjoining buildings.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Adviser to check and confirm if there is insulation within the walls and advise us by return before the legal completion of the purchase to comment further, as often where insulation has been added at a later date it can cause damage to the wall ties.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Windows

The windows are double glazed and therefore will have reasonable thermal properties.

Services

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

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see.

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 Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay
HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs*

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency.

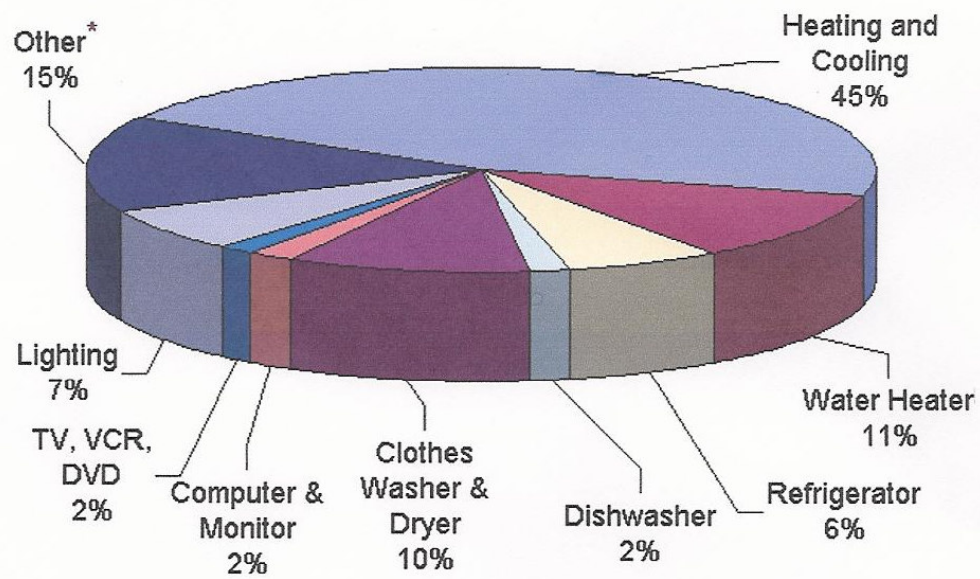
Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

What does my energy bill pay for?



* "Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

OTHER MATTERS



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

Security

No security system was noted. 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.

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 would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

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.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Asbestos

As you are no doubt aware there is asbestos in the property as you are having an asbestos survey carried out. Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned in 1999, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time in imported materials.

Our insurance company requires us to advise that we are not asbestos surveyors.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

65

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the garage conversion on the right hand wall. The fuse board looked 1980's/1990's and better are now available.



Fuse Board

Earth Test

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



Earth test

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried out by a

NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.

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.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

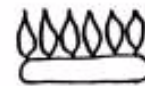
—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

68

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 Gas Safe registered plumber.

We are advised that the property has mains gas. The consumer unit is located within the garage conversion.



Gas meter in the garage conversion

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of Gas Safe; 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 Gas Safe registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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 is 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 owners to show you where it is.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage test we checked the pressure literally by putting a finger over the tap and this seemed average. 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

There is a factory insulated hot water cylinder. This cylinder will therefore have a good thermal efficiency, although not as good as the more modern hot water cylinders.



Hot water cylinder

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the roof it is a Glow Worm wall mounted boiler.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless 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.



Glow worm boiler in roof

Ten Minute Heating Test

There was no owner / occupier at the property and therefore we do not turn the heating on in case there is a problem with it.

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.

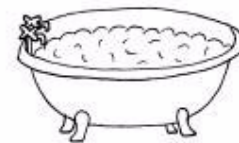
Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

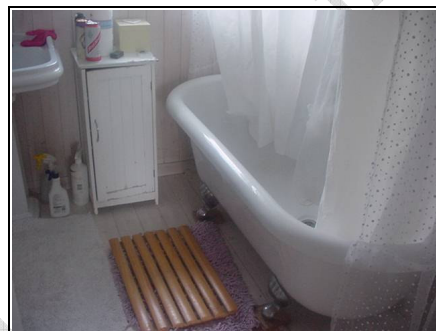
BATHROOM



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

Bathroom

The property has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition although it did look slightly DIY, for example the pieces of wood wedged underneath the bath unit.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that a humidity controlled extract fan is added.

Bath wedged on pieces of different height timber

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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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 foul drains from the property 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 one inspection chamber / manhole.

Manholes Defined

Access areas which usually fit a man (or woman) into them and are put in where the drains change direction.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One located to the rear of the property

We were unable to lift this manhole as it was covered by the decking.



Manhole covered by decking,
you can just about see the
screw fixings.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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. It is difficult to advise what the drains are on this property, we feel they are more likely to be shared or combined drains.

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

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. If you wish us to do a specific report on the other buildings then you need to instruct us for this separately. We are offering here a brief overview.

PARKING



At the end of the cul-de-sac there were many cars parked therefore there may be potential problems with parking. There is a brick drive to the front of the garden. The old garage has been converted into a room.



Brick drive to front of property

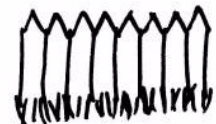


Dropped kerb to driveway



Old garage converted to room

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

The front garden is paved and has been given over to parking (see photos above).

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Rear Garden

The rear garden is grassed with a decked patio area. To the rear of the garden there is a gate. We have looked over the gate and it drops away to a road. The gate looks to be used for tipping grass cuttings, etc. You need to confirm whose land this is.



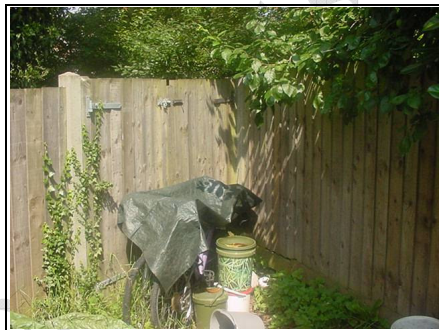
Rear Garden



Garden



Patio area



Gate from garden doesn't lead anywhere



View over gate to rear

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

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

We knocked but no-one answered.

Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked but no-one answered.

Right of way

We were surprised by the number of people using the right of way that runs across the front of the property.



Popular right of way



Footpath to side

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this report 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) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
 - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - v) Roof and similar renewals.
 - vi) Central heating installation.
 - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - viii) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - ix) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - x) 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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

- 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 see our article link on the www.1stAssociated.co.uk Home Page.

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

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**.

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

80

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 published by Royal Institution of
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

Copyright: 1stAssociated.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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 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.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

WEATHER

It was a warm summer's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

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 due to the amount of stored items in the roof. We haven't opened up the first floor or the dry lined walls. We did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers and we didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property although we have had a talk on the phone since.



Inspection limited due to amount of stored items

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

BUILDING INSURANCE

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. Asbestos Information
4. Condensation and Cold Bridging Article

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

85

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.

www.hometrack.co.uk

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

www.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.

www.rightmove.co.uk

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

www.zoopla.co.uk

This is a very good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Asbestos Information

Products containing asbestos have, until recent years, been widely used in domestic construction and the mere presence of asbestos does not, in itself, necessarily constitute a health hazard. Removing undamaged material may release more dust than leaving it in place and it is only when asbestos materials are in a damaged or friable condition, or during installation, modification, removal or demolition, that there is likely to be a significant health risk.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fibre used as a binder to provide rigidity for other materials such as cement. It is also fire resistant and was therefore added to a variety of products to strengthen them and to provide heat insulation and fire resistance.

Asbestos comes in several different types, some of which are more dangerous than others. However, all types of asbestos are considered dangerous if the fibres are inhaled, as they can cause lung cancers. The risk of cancer increases with the number of fibres inhaled. The symptoms of these diseases do not usually appear until about 20 to 30 years after the first exposure to asbestos.



Most people exposed to small amounts of asbestos, as we all are in our daily lives, do not develop these health problems. However, if disturbed, asbestos containing material may release asbestos fibres, which can be inhaled into the lungs.

Asbestos material that would crumble easily if handled, or that has been sawed, scraped, or sanded into a powder, is more likely to create a health hazard. Fibre release is therefore most likely if, for example, asbestos containing material is drilled into or sanded - inadvertently releasing the fibres into the atmosphere.

How is the law going to change?

The law change largely concerns properties in commercial use. This does not mean owner-occupied homes but the law does cover common areas in flats and homes under housing association control. These more explicit laws regarding asbestos replace those which have been in force for some time.

The main change is the requirement for an inspection for the presence of asbestos or asbestos containing materials (ACM's) in all commercial properties. This is required so that any asbestos that is present can have its condition monitored. The inspection will also prevent work being carried out unknowingly on an ACM.

What should be done about asbestos in the home?

If you think asbestos may be in your home, don't panic! Usually the best thing is to leave asbestos material that is in good condition alone.

Generally, material in good condition will not release asbestos fibres. There is no danger unless fibres are released and inhaled into the lungs.

Check material regularly if you suspect it may contain asbestos. Don't touch it, but look for signs of wear or damage such as tears, abrasions, or water damage. Damaged material may release asbestos fibres. This is particularly true if you often disturb it by hitting, rubbing, or handling it, or if it is exposed to extreme vibration or air flow.

Condensation and Cold Bridging

What is Cold Bridging?

What is cold bridging and how does it work?

Cold bridging is a term and a problem we feel will become much more common in years to come. We are finding more and more examples of Cold Bridging. This happens in certain types of property and to some extent it could be argued that it is a characteristic of that type of property and quite a complex issue to resolve. Unfortunately it means condensation is more likely.



Post war / 1950's property that cold bridging can be a problem in.

Cold Bridging

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure or fabric of the building allowing coldness to pass through. When warm moist air is present in the property and it passes through the colder elements of the structure we have what is known as Cold Bridging. This is often caused by a combination of issues. It can occur from things such as having a shower or a bath, cooking or clothes washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. It could, in commercial properties, be a large gathering of people breathing (this can cause a lot of humidity) in a building that has stood cold and empty for some time such as a church, village hall, sports centre or a crèche. These human atmospheres create a climate which can result in condensation on the cold elements of the structure and fabric if the room is not ventilated properly.

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

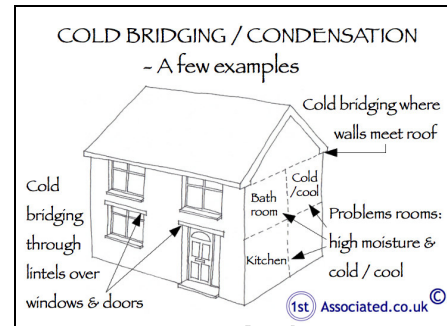
0800 298 5424

90

Certain types of buildings are more susceptible to Condensation and Cold Bridging

Here is our sketch on Cold Bridging

This is a good indication of the typical things that cause Cold Bridging in a house and how extraction from humidity generating areas such as the kitchen and the bathroom can reduce problems. You do need to look at how you live in the house.



Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors

Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors. Not only can it be an original characteristic of the building it can be encouraged by all types of extension and alterations.

Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure which you can do very little to change without great expense. If you buy a 1960's property for example, with concrete lintels that cause cold bridging, this is a characteristic of the property and it is very difficult to change. However not only could it be a characteristic of the building it could also be caused by alterations that you make to the building.



1960's properties built with concrete lintels that can cause Cold Bridging

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

To give you some examples of Cold Bridging

As mentioned above typically Cold Bridging can be caused by lintels and also by beams (which effectively are big lintels). These were very commonly used in 1960's and 1970's buildings and can lead to condensation over doors and windows. We mentioned a 1960's building but here are some examples of concrete lintels that were commonly used in the 1970's and which today have caused cold bridging over the door and which in turn has led to condensation and deterioration of the paintwork.



A rear door to a 1970's building.
Can you tell where the cold bridging would be in this photo?

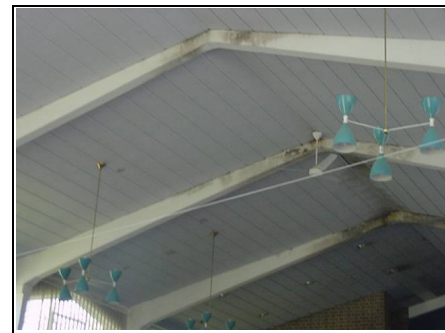


A close up view showing there is a concrete lintel over the door and window. This is where the cold bridging occurs causing condensation inside.

Cold Bridging can also occur on metal lintels. We note that some modern metal lintels now have insulation in them which we assume is to reduce cold bridging.

Commercial properties suffer from Cold Bridging too

Commercial buildings are often built using structural frames. These frames are usually constructed of concrete or metal or sometimes both. The structural frame forms the skeleton of the building as you can see in the adjoining photo. Sometimes the structural frames, particularly, the concrete ones can suffer from Cold Bridging which causes blackening of the concrete frame.



Cold Bridging in a commercial property with a concrete frame.

This can look like the roof has leaked and can lead to wrongly diagnosing a problem as being a roof leak. This can result in great time and expense being wasted repairing a roof that was not leaking and indeed in some cases has led to a

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

new roof being fitted which has costs tens of thousands of pounds. This happened because it wasn't understood what the problem was.

When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in

1. Georgian and Regency properties
2. Victorian and Edwardian properties
3. Pre-war properties
4. War years construction properties
5. Post war construction properties up to the 1980's.
6. Commercial properties that use structural frames particularly concrete frames.



Georgian style properties can suffer from cold bridging and condensation. However in our experience it is more likely to be the new extensions or alterations that are added to them

We find that cold bridging and condensation occur most commonly where a property has a relatively high heating level, a good level of insulation and where it has many occupants.



Post war 1960's properties with plastic double glazing without trickle vents that have been added can cause condensation.

Problems with 1970/1980 era properties relating to Cold Bridging

Let us take a look at the 1970's/1980's era of property to give an example of the problems we have come across with this era.



Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

1970's property with cold bridging to the roof beams and the lintels

 1st Associated.co.uk ©

The 1970's is an era where we had just begun to think about insulating due to the oil crisis and where we added insulation into our structures

For example with;

1. cavity wall insulation or
2. double glazed windows.

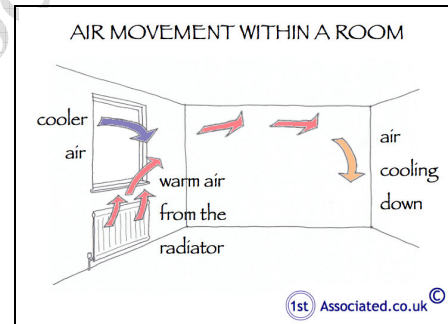


1980's property, cold bridging was found in the lintels

This meant they were warmer which has meant the significance of a lintel, over a door or window, being colder and allowing the transfer of coldness becomes much more important. This results in condensation that we commonly see above windows in this age and era of property.

How to solve Cold Bridging

The difficulty is resolving cold bridging. Normally, where condensation is involved, if you get the balance of warm and coolness of the air, ventilation and movement you can reduce considerably the chances of condensation. Airing the room by opening the windows, which seems to have gone out of fashion, can help considerably.



Where do we most commonly find Cold Bridging?

Our thoughts on this have very much changed as we used to say that cold bridging was typically found in properties from the 1960's/1970's. However we are increasingly finding it in a broader range of properties, particularly Victorian properties, where people are trying to live to modern standards of heating and insulation without understanding that the properties need to breathe as well. We have also found cold bridging in properties where extensions have been carried out and where the extension has been built to a different standard to the original property.



Victorian properties that have been extended and altered over the years with new thermal properties that can cause Cold Bridging because of the mix of old and new standards

Independent Chartered Surveyors

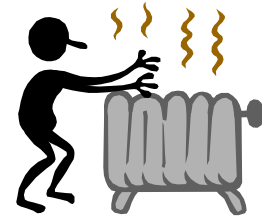
Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Is your life style a factor in Cold Bridging?

This is often a contentious and difficult question, particularly where the occupier is a tenant and there is a disagreement between the landlord and the occupier as to why there is mould in the property. In our experience the major factor is the size of the family living in a property. This is especially the case with large families with young children and where in turn there is a lot of washing of clothes being done. This is particularly the case in the winter months, with the wet washed clothes being dried on radiators. Also general hygiene washing and not to mention cooking to feed everyone all lead toward a more humid atmosphere.



This is generally known as the lifestyle of occupants and can be a major factor particularly where there are legal cases as to the problems within a property.

Expert witness case, what is an expert witness?

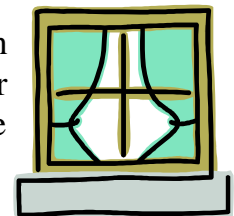
This is where you employ someone who is a specialist within a field, such as us as Chartered Building Surveyors, who comment on problems of condensation within the property. We have been involved in several court cases as expert witnesses where landlords are being taken to court over the condensation that is occurring in their property. The expert witness case looks at how this condensation is occurring and if it relates, for example, to the occupiers' lifestyle or whether it relates to the way the building was constructed and where there are, for example, cold bridging elements. When discussions of this nature take place in court they can be very expensive.



Older style London converted flats with property problems such as Condensation and Cold Bridging

Is Cold Bridging and Condensation a design problem or a lifestyle problem?

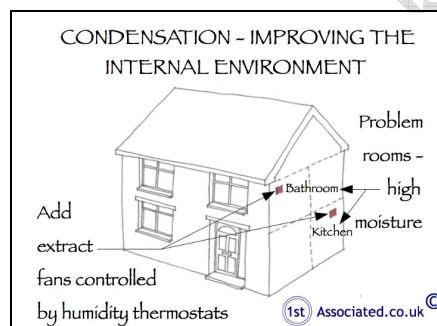
This really is a difficult question to answer. We have been involved in a number of cases as expert witnesses or advocates and the answer can vary. We would comment that there are factors that can be changed and factors that can't be changed. For example, the occupiers lifestyle can in most cases be amended. This may involve



the occupier having an understanding of the problems they are causing. For example, drying lots of washing on a radiator inside may be causing excessive moisture in the atmosphere. Equally not opening the windows and closing or sealing up vents can be a problem.

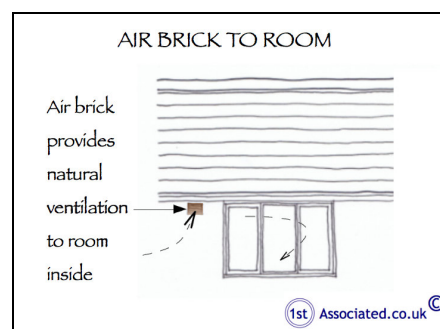
Design of the Building

Sometimes it really is down to the design of the property. Where there are cold elements in it, such as a concrete structural frame or concrete lintels, when these are in contact with moist air condensation occurs. Sometimes this is impossible to stop but often it is possible to reduce it by having a better circulation of air with a better heat and coolness balance and the removal of any moist air.



Things to remember about an air brick

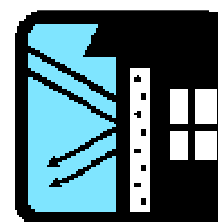
If you are thinking about adding an air brick then you need to be aware that airbricks don't actually allow that much air through. Although externally a nine by three air brick has a lot of gaps, as these gaps taper, it is generally considered that only about one inch square of air regularly passes through the grills.



Air brick may not ventilate room enough

What's happening in brand new housing?

It could be argued that we still do not know what is happening in brand new houses that are highly insulated. We have been involved in one legal case where a modern heat exchange system was being used where it was simply not possible to have a shower in the property without causing condensation, even with the windows open and taking other measures. Our concern is what is happening to this condensation? It was not visible on the surface so is it visible as interstitial condensation? We still think there will be problems to be found in modern properties.



Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

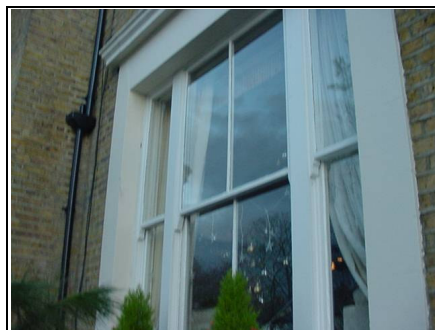
www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

As Chartered Surveyors we like to see things that have been in use for some time work before we would recommend them.

In the winter we have condensation problems but in the summer we don't

The different seasons mean that the building reacts differently. Anyone who has lived in an old property will know that windows and doors particularly sliding sash windows will swell during the winter months.



Sliding sash windows can swell in the winter months

There can be similar issues with a property where, regardless of your lifestyle, during some of the different seasons, for example the winter or a wet spring, taking a shower can relate in condensation even with extract fans running (although this is far less likely).

It also depends on what the humidity level is outside as this can be greater than inside. The moisture/humidity will then seek out colder rooms such as spare bedrooms and the corners of cupboards. When you open these at a later date you will be surprised to find black mould.

Extensions and Cold Bridging

Increasingly we are coming across problems where properties have been extended and it has not been planned or thought through properly. We have come across dormer roofs that simply have no insulation so any heat in the property is going straight out of the dormer roof. We have also come across property problems where an extension has resulted in colder areas within the property and which although not problem areas, as such, our clients have found them not nice areas to be in. It is not a great outcome if you have just spent tens of thousands of pounds on a new extension that you are not happy with.

