RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. IP33

FOR

Mr M

Prepared by:

GEM Associates Limited

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

CONTENTS

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.

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey mid terraced property situated in a residential area with different property types. The front of the property sits directly onto the road and the rear has a small garden. As discussed you have a two storey shed at the end of the garden that is in the adjoining neighbours property.

We believe that the property was built in the 1900's at the end of the Victorian era. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)
1899-1902	Boer War between Britain and Boers in Southern Africa
1901	Queen Victoria Died
1903	First flight by Wright Brothers

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Front view

Rear view

Next doors overlooking outbuilding

Paved garden through rear window

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Front reception room (access directly from the outside can be cold in the winter).
- Rear reception room
- Kitchen (with access to the bathroom)
- Bathroom

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Front bedroom
- Rear bedroom

Outside Areas

Parking down the road is on a first come first served permit basis. We normally find that ultimately people want houses with own parking due to problems with parking. There are double yellow lines immediately outside the property.

Just to remind you of the substantial shed that adjoins your rear garden.

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

Front reception room

Rear reception room

Kitchen

Bathroom

First Floor

Rear bedroom

Front Bedroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	Two roofs the main roof is slate the rear single storey roof is also in slate
Gutters and Downpipes:	Mixture of plastic and aluminium
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Walls:	Brick Flemish bond (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber soffits
Windows and Doors:	Timber double glazed windows, cheaper end of the market

Internal

Ceilings:		Lath and plaster or plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:		Mainly solid (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor:	Suspended timber floor to the first room then concrete to the second room kitchen and bathroom (assumed)
	First Floor:	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed)

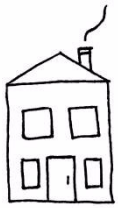
Services

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

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

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

Generally we found the property to be in average condition considering the property's age, type and style with a few exceptions. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

- The property also has some of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property.

- Older properties typically have more space than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms.

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

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) Rainwater gets in

Leaking aluminium downpipes

We noted to the rear of the property that you have some aluminium downpipes, these are rusting, although it is literally on you neighbours property it will affect yours as well. It may be worth having a 'cup of tea' discussion with your next door neighbours to get it replaced.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

2) Condensation

Condensation dampness getting in roof

Due to the way that the property is built the kitchen and bathroom will be prone to condensation, in fact you can see areas where condensation has occurred in the past. In addition to this you also have condensation problems in the main roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the roof in the kitchen is vented – by putting side vents in the wall, it would be best to do this in conjunction with your neighbour also venting their roof which is part of the same roof. We would also recommend adding of an extract fan next to the light switch within the bathroom, ideally 150mm in diameter with a humidity thermostat control. We also recommend that the roof is vented.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1000 - £3000;quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

3) Windows

The windows are timber with a thin double glazing, they are from the cheaper end of the market.

Thin double glazing

ACTION REQUIRED: You may wish to look at replacing these with a modern double glazed window which has a combination of thermal properties and sound insulation, particularly important for the front windows which are adjacent to the road.

ANTICIPATED COST: It really does depend upon the quality of double glazing as discussed you mentioned that you knew someone that could help you with this; quotations required.

Please see the Windows Section of this Report.

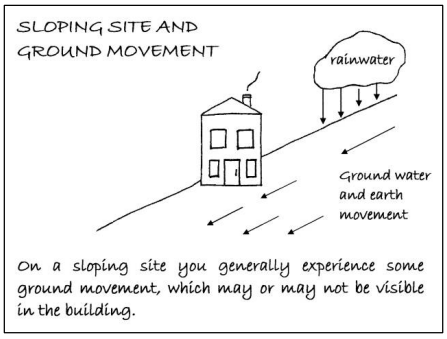
4) Add running gulley

To the rear of the property we believe that whenever it rains it discharges to the rear of the property which can cause dampness.

Slope needing a running gulley

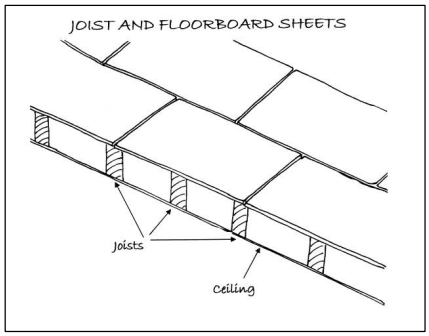
ACTION REQUIRED: Next time it rains you need to stand outside the property and check how bad this is, if it is bad add a running gulley.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds or it may be a DIY job; quotations required. You appreciate the sketch does over emphasize the slope!

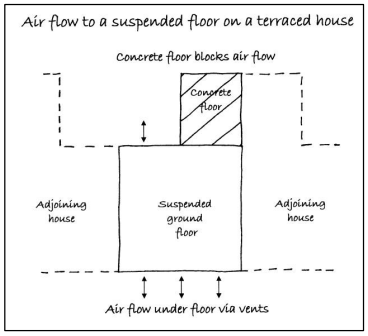


Please see the Garden Section of this Report.

5) Dampness problems with the floor/walls



There is some dampness in the property as we would expect in this age of property. We believe this has affected the joists in the first floor bedrooms, if you recall we showed you they both had above average deflection. We believe that the ground floor will be affected in the same way plus there is no through ventilation anymore as the rear floor is concrete.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the floor is opened up to check its condition - both the ground floor to the front of the property and the first floor looking for woodworm etc.

ANTICIPATED COST: You may require vent to be added at ground floor level to allow through flow of air within the front room against the skirting and at first floor level you may require timbers adding such as herringbone strutting to make the floor more rigid; quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

6) Signs of old woodworm

Signs of woodworm in front bedroom floor

In addition to the damp problems as mentioned there are signs of old woodworm which we would suspect is within the floor when it is opened up.

ACTION REQUIRED: We suggest both the ground floor and first floor are opened up and checked for active woodworm. We would be more than happy to return to comment further.

ANTICIPATED COST: It is very difficult to say without seeing the floor opened up; quotations required.

Please see the Timber Defects Section of this Report.

7) Services

Back Boiler

Back boiler in front reception room

The property has an old style back boiler these are not as efficient as modern boilers however we find that due to being less technical they tend to be easier to repair by plumbers however the jury is still out as to how efficient the modern boiler really is when you take into consideration they need to be run at specific temperatures and maintained regularly.

ACTION REQUIRED: We do feel you need to budget for a new boiler which we would suggest is relocated from the front room to either the kitchen or as the kitchen is small the roof space. A combination boiler would mean that in turn you would be able to remove the hot water cylinder. You need confirmation and assurance that the heating is working or you need to budget if it is not and allow the sum of £3500 for a new boiler and heating system and due to having micro-bored pipes we would recommend that these are replaced as well.

Micro-bored Pipework

Micro-bored pipework

Our major concern is the heating system has micro-bored pipes, these tend to block. We did not have the benefit of turning the heat on in this case (we do not turn it on unless there is an owner present) to ensure one, that the heating is working and two, we would suggest you need to add normal pipes before the winter of 2010.

Pressure change on taps.

We noted that there was a pressure change with the taps when they were all running care therefore needs to be taken when the shower and using the kitchen as the same time!

Overflow pipes are overflowing.

The overflow pipes are overflowing which is likely to be minor however we can see from the staining to the roof it has been going on a long, long time. This needs to be resolved as quickly as possible. It is likely to be a ball valve problem as discussed.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

Staining to roof from overflow pipes

The Ugly

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

There are more defects than we would normally expect from a property of this age and if the property was rented out previously we would ask for copies of the NICEIC electrical certificate and the Gas Safe certificate.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you of the following:

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

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of the property's overall character and

style. Such defects are considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report.

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecoration to make the house 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 Costs

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

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

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

With the items noted we would expect a discount on the purchase price to reflect these and you have an element of unknown risk as well with regard to the floor condition and also how long the boiler will last.

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

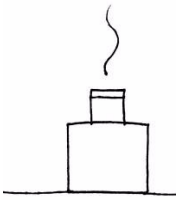
OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEYSTACKS, FLUES AND PARTY WALLS,



Chimneystacks

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.

Chimney One – left hand side

This property has one chimney, which is located on the left hand side.

This chimney is brick finished with no chimney pots with lead flashings. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition. Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunchings we therefore cannot comment upon them.

Left hand chimney

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

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

Party Walls

We believe the chimney sits on the Party wall, we would need to check the Deeds to confirm this however if it does sit on the Party wall then it falls under the Party Wall Act. If you require to do any work in relation to this please see some information about the Party Wall Act.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall etc Act 1996

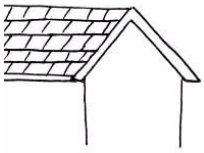
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimneystacks, 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 chimneystacks, parapet walls and flues, from the parts we could see. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

Please also see the Chimneybreasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in two areas; the high level Main roof and the Low level roofs.

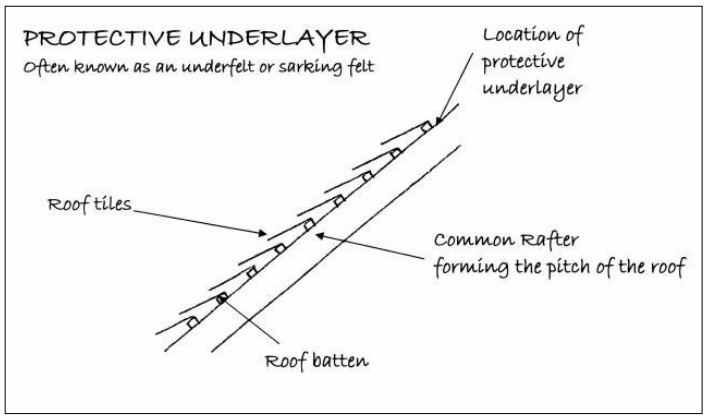
Main Roof

Main roof

The roof is pitched and clad with quarried slate. The slates sit fairly true and are generally in average condition considering the property's age, type and style. We can see no lead tingles which is an indication that the old fixings are rusting and that the roof is starting to deteriorate. Given the hessian in the roof it was probably re-roofed in the 1960s.

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, its damaged in a few more places than we normally find.

This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the hessian base Bitumen membrane

Low Level Roofs

Rear Roof

The rear roof is tiled in slates as the main roof previously described. Where it meets the main building we are pleased to see it has a lead flashing.

Low level roof

Generally we would comment it is in reasonable condition, obviously the water that has been landing on it from the overflow for a long time is not ideal and has caused some deterioration.

Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera.

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

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

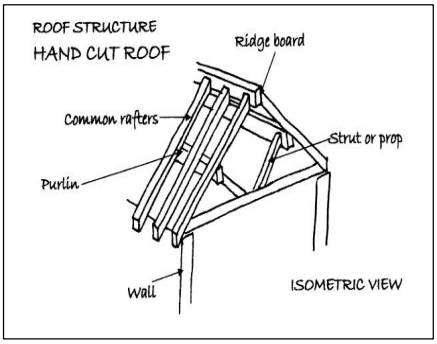
Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via two loft hatches located one at the top of the stairs and one within the kitchen. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has, what is known as, a cut timber roof, which is 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.



In the photo you can see some darker areas in the timbers this is where condensation staining is occurring it could equally be minor leaks coming in from wind driven rain through the roof. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary

General view of roof structure

Roof Timbers

We found the roof timbers generally in average condition considering their age with some staining due to condensation and possibly wind driven rain. We have inspected the roof structure for:

Roof timbers

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

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation, in this case we noted some dampness in the roof and some condensation.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation.

Fire Walls

Both firewalls are formed in brick.

Fire Walls Defined

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

Water Tanks

The water tank is heavily insulated, far more insulation than we have seen for a long time, this may be a problem in the winter months which may lead to it freezing over as there is no heat from the house getting to it. We recommend draining down the tank and cleaning it

Heavily insulated water tank

particularly important if you clean your teeth with the water!

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

Ventilation

Please see our previous comments where ventilation is required.

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 due to the mass of insulation it was not possible to see many electric cables we therefore cannot 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.

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

We noted a mixture of aluminium and plastic, gutters and down pipes. Aluminium of this age can cracked and rusting, and presently needs some work. The aluminium is corroded to the rear of the property and probably requires replacement.

Guttering to front

ACTION REQUIRED: The guttering and down pipes, needs reviewing and rationalising. We would always recommend that the rear guttering is repaired or replaced. We always recommend that gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: A few hundred pounds, you do need to have a chat with your neighbour as this is a shared responsibility; quotations required.

Soil and Vent Pipe

The property we believe has an internal air inlet soil and vent pipe, we cannot see one on externally on the property.

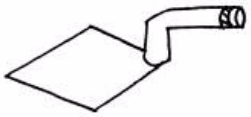
Adding showers etc

We had a chat about showers and washbasins, the airing cupboard to the rear bedroom does offer an opportunity to add something in this area, you can with modern pumps and waste systems and water systems in plastic get water

supplies and drainage to and from nearly anywhere. We are more than happy to talk this through with you further if you so wish.

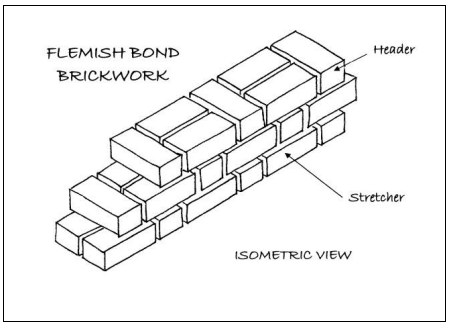
Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods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

WALLS



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

Brickwork



The property is brick built in a red brick originally in a lime mortar in that it is known as Flemish bond brickwork, which has been repointed in a cement mortar.
The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.

Brickwork

The solid external walls may be liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon their condition and their exposure to the weather. External faces should be kept in good condition.

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately,

without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case there is some deterioration occurring where the cement mortar has allowed the wearing away of the brick.

It is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

Deterioration being cause to the bricks by the cement mortar.

Ad hoc repointing.

The brickwork needs ad hoc repointing in a suitable mortar to the front of the property as you can see the pen is literally going into the joint without help to alleviate dampness in these areas.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repoint in a like for like mortar.

Repointing needed to front brickwork

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/plaster we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, rubbed brick lintels, or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

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

FOUNDATIONS

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

Foundations

Typically, with a property of this period, we would expect to find a shallow foundation from just below ground level, up to approximately half a metre deep.

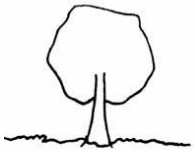
Building Insurance Policy

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

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

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

TREES



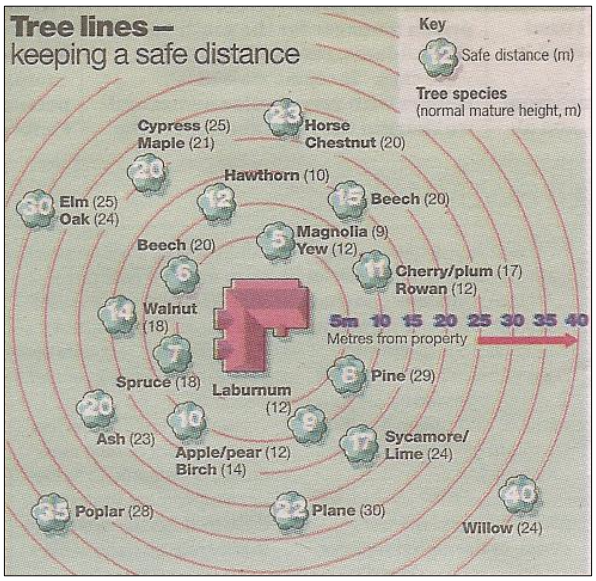
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

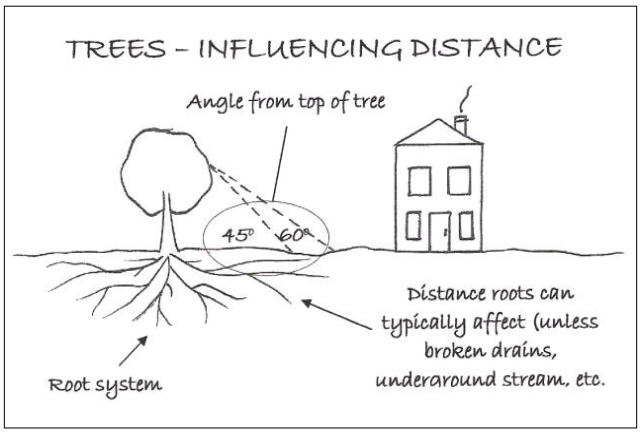
There are no trees and vegetation within your garden that are within influencing distance of the main house.

Shed to the end of your garden.

We feel it is worth having a chat with the neighbour who has the shed as it is not in very good condition with deterioration caused over the years by ivy etc and you may wish to discuss how best this is repaired and what the future use they have for this building.

Influencing Distance Defined: This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property.





Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE

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

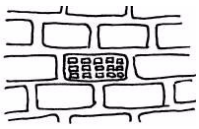
All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, in properties of this age it is unlikely that a damp proof course would have been built in originally. However, often damp proof courses are added as with this property.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would comment that we found dampness internally. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

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

AIRBRICKS



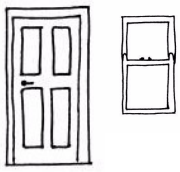
In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of airbricks. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances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

Air bricks are visible to the property. The air bricks allow an air flow through the wall (assuming they are kept clear), we can only assume that there have been problems with condensation in the property which is why the airbricks have been added.

Airbrick at front of property

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

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

You have a painted timber fascia and soffit board to the rear of the property you can see it is in need of redecoration - it is just about saveable.

Fascia showing signs of age

Windows and Doors

The property timber double glazed windows with without draft seals and trickle vents. However the windows are also positioned very forward and almost flush with the property which we would not recommend.

Generally we consider the windows saveable, far better are now available.

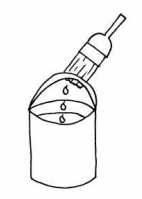
Double glazed window

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail (particularly these early thin double glazing units) as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution. In this case they are in average condition.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you review the windows particularly to the front as modern windows have better noise insulation.

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the fascias and soffits and windows and doors. 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 fascias and soffits and windows and doors. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

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.

There are various elements that require external re-decoration particularly the fascias and soffits, it will depend on what future the windows have these may need replacing.

ACTION REQUIRED: The sooner redecoration to the timber areas is carried the better, ideally before the winter of 2010.

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 Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors section.

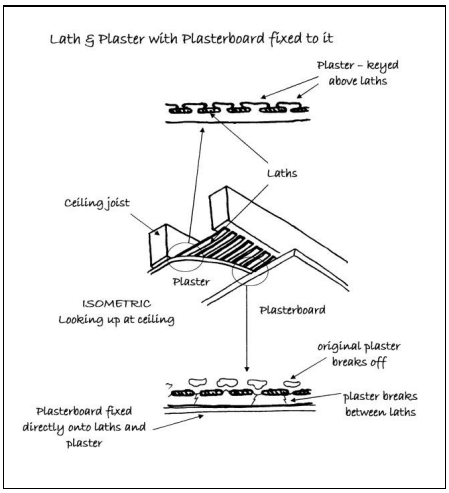
INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are originally lath and plaster, but in some areas have had plasterboard tacked over them or replaced. This type of work is normally carried out where the ceilings are in poor condition, as removing lath and plaster is very messy, time consuming and expensive as it is labour intensive. It is simply not able to tell without opening up.



Lath and Plaster Defined

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

Plasterboard Defined

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

Internal Walls and Partitions

We have carried out a tap test on the internal walls (this is not rocket science, it is literally tapping the walls and listening for the sound made) and found the

majority to be solid when tapped, which, for this age of property, indicates that internal construction is likely to be brickwork. We much prefer this type of construction as it minimises noise transfer between rooms.

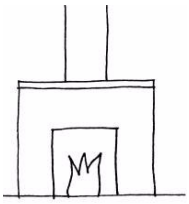
Perimeter Walls

The perimeter walls are probably finished in a lime plaster; As we have not opened up the walls we cannot express an exact opinion as to how long the walls are likely to last. Even with destruction testing, i.e. opening up of the walls, it is very difficult to say; an educated guess would indicate five to ten years.

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.

CHIMNEYBREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimneybreasts are located on the left hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

Chimney cracks

The chimney breast internally within the roof has a stepped crack in it therefore if you do want to use the fires as proper wall fires you need to get the linings checked and tested as you otherwise may put smoke into the roof and/or worse still cause a fire within the roof.

Cracks to the chimney

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.

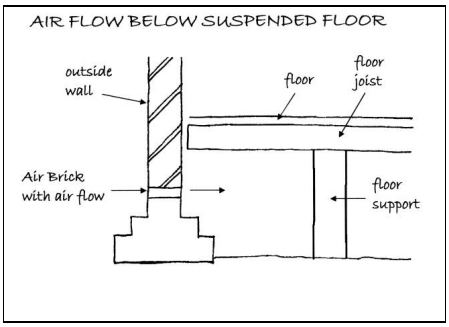
Finally, it is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstruction prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

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

FLOORS

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

Ground Floor



Based on our knowledge of this age of construction we believe that the ground floor construction is to the front a suspended timber floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it (see the sketch) to reduce, deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; Therefore at present the airflow does not flow from one end to the other, please see our comments in these sections.

The rear areas of the floor, are solid under foot and assumed to be concrete.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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

ACTION REQUIRED: The ground floor needs opening up to check its condition and possibly extra vent needs to be added. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

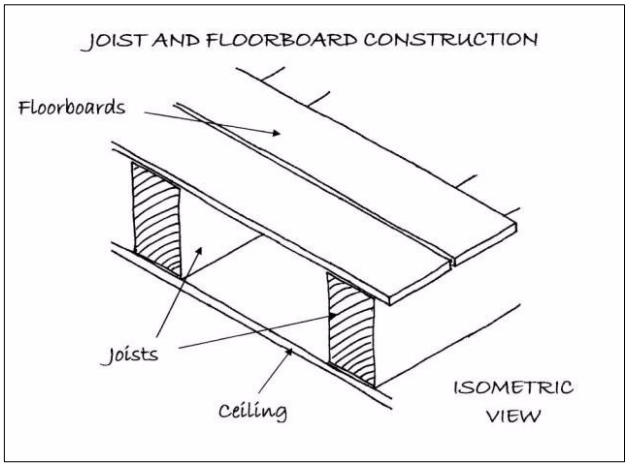
First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property. The floor is likely to have embedded timbers.

We believe the joists run from the front to the back of the property as we explained to you and from experience of jumping up and down on the floor there is deflection in the floor.

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 and exposed floorboards etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

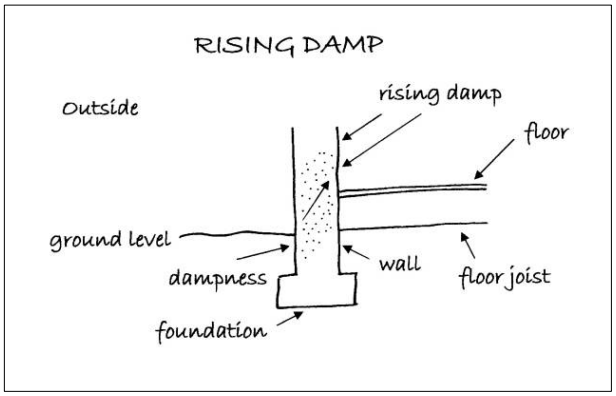
DAMPNESS

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

Rising Damp

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

There is now much debate over whether true rising damp does exist after research over a 10 year period.

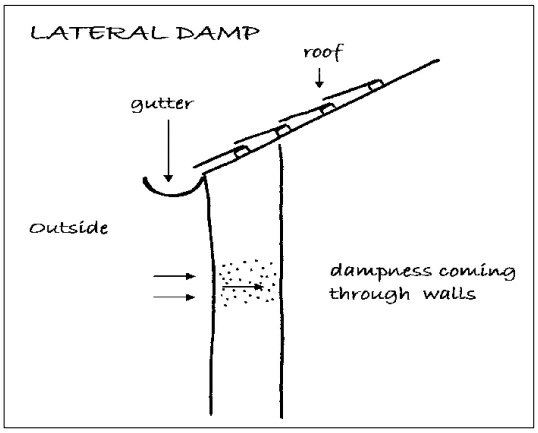


We carried out tests with an electronic damp meter and found average dampness considering the condition of the property.

Testing for dampness

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you carry out the other items recommended earlier such as add ad hoc repointing and venting of the floor and this will help to reduce the dampness and then review together with living in the property.

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.

A visual inspection was carried and tests were taken with an electronic conductivity meter at selected points to walls. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected considering the properties age type and style.

Condensation

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

Condensation is likely due to the type of windows and lack of ventilation in the moisture generating areas of the Kitchen and Bathroom.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend an extract fan is added controlled with a humidity thermostat. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

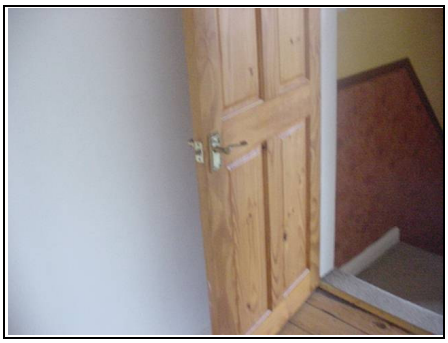
Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

INTERNAL JOINERY

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

Doors

The property has stripped wood panel doors. They are generally in reasonable condition, although they don't fit perfectly.



Internal door

Staircase

We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor if this situation should occur. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.

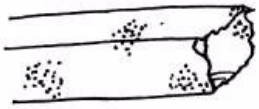
Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked dated, although it has suffered from some general day-to-day marks. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances. It is not to the standard of the rest of the property.

Dated kitchen

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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors Section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please remember we have not opened up the floors

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.

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant wet rot. We would add that it is likely wet rot is under the floor due to the dampness found.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please read our comments on the possible over cladding of the fascias and soffits

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.

We noted signs of old woodworm activity to front first floor bedroom but from our visual inspection no signs of current activity, we would add it is hard to be a 100% as properties have many areas hidden from view even when floors are opened up and roofs cleared. (We have not opened up the floor).

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain you need to open up the floor.

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 paint (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The decoration is average, but dated with minor marks as you would expect in a home that's been lived in.

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

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY

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

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are now required up to 28 days of putting your property on the open market.

Roof Insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not too current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. In this instance you have approximately 250mm.

Walls

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

Windows

The windows have older style thin double glazing. The thermal properties are reasonable.

Services

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

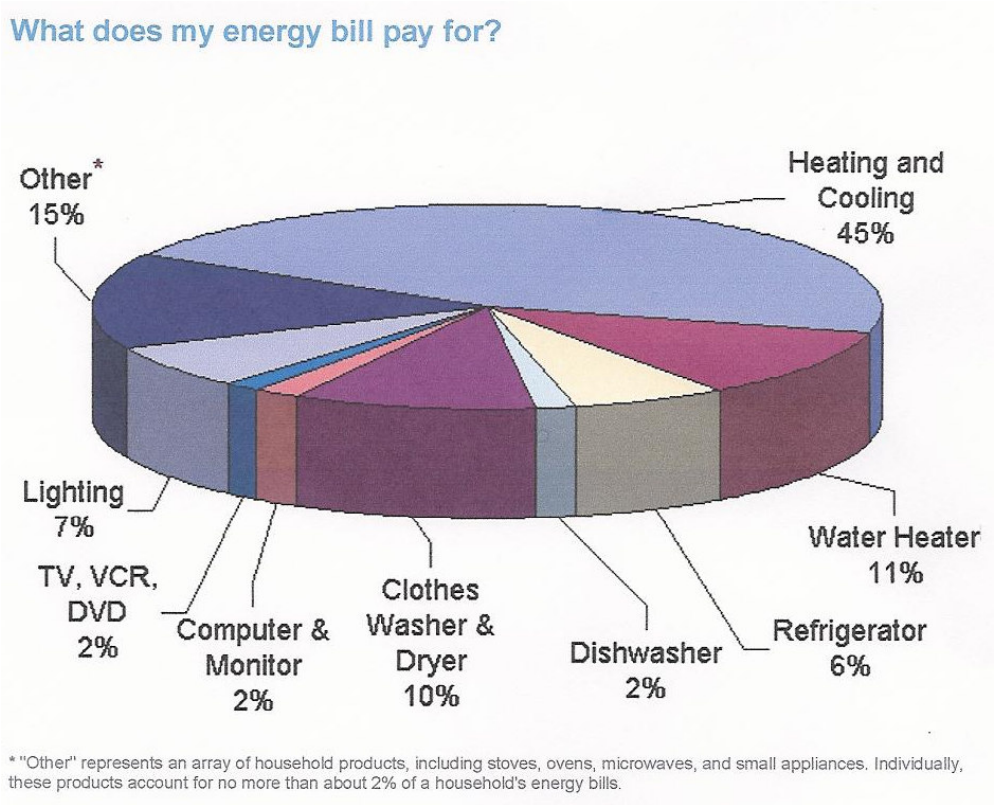
Summary

Compared with what we typically see this property is in average condition.

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

> *HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid*
>
> *or alternatively www.cat.org.uk*
>
> *or www.ecocentre.org.uk for an alternative technological view.*

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



OTHER MATTERS

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

Security System

We did not note a security system within the house. 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

One battery operated smoke detector was noted to the top of the stairs and this was not working. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally),which is charged when the light is switched on (providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year). We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We also like the radio activated fire/smoke alarms. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

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

Asbestos

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

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

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY

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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located under the Lounge. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1970s and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.

ACTION REQUIRED: NICEIC approved contractor to carry out an IEE

(Institute of Electrical engineers) inspection test and all recommendations to be actioned. A new fuse board is recommended.

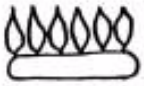
Earth Test

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

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.

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 a Gas Safe registered heating engineer.

The gas meter cupboard is located in Front Reception room

ACTION REQUIRED: As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and repaired or replaced, as necessary, by a Gas Safe registered contractor. There after the installation should be serviced annually.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a Gas Safe registered heating engineer; works to any gas appliance by an unregistered person 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.

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

In this age of property the water supply may be via a lead pipe you need to check with the Water Board.

Water Pressure

When the taps where run to check the pressure, literally by putting a finger over the tap, the pressure varied depending what other taps where being used.

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!).

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

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

Hot Water Cylinder

The hot water cylinder is dated (in this case we would estimate over 30 years). In our experience, in this age of hot water cylinder defects can start to occur and, unfortunately, hot water cylinders rarely give any proper warning before they leak/bust!

Hot water cylinder

Please note our comments with regard to the overflow pipes and the water damage it is making to the slate roof to the rear.

Plumbing

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

Heating

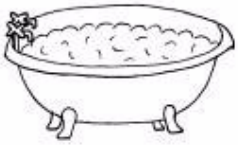
We believe the property has a back boiler, which is located behind the fire place in the chimney. We do not know the manufacturer. It is essential a service history is obtained as this will help establish the condition of the boiler.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** We would normally carry out a test on the central heating known as our Ten Minute Heating Test. However as no one was present we have not switched the heating on in this instance. You need confirmation and assurance that the heating is working or you need to budget if it is not.

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

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

BATHROOM



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

The bathroom suite, looks in average condition, however it is small, and therefore could be prone to condensation.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that adding of an extract fan.

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

MAIN DRAINS

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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chambers / manholes to the rear of the property.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole to rear of property

We duly lift the man hole/ inspection chamber cover and found the drain to be free flowing, from what we could see it was finished in concrete is a relatively shallow.

Rear drain

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

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 however it is likely to be a shared drain which means during peak rain periods and the nine o'clock rush to work there maybe problems backing up.

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

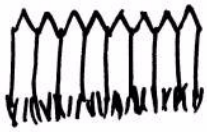
Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING

Parking is further up the road on a first come first served permit basis, however there does not look to be enough. There is no parking (double yellow lines) directly outside the house which can be good or can be bad.

EXTERNAL AREAS

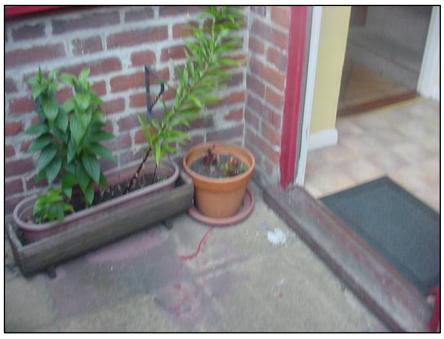


Front Garden

No front garden as the property sits directly onto the road.

Rear Garden

Small paved garden to the rear



The paving runs towards the house, we have recommended a running gulley.

Here you can see the side to the brickwork which have been damaged over the years with water or rainwater from an overflowing waste pipe, you will soon discover which when it next rains.

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

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

Knocked on door – no response

Right Hand Neighbours

Knocked on door – no response

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) Double glazing or replacement windows.
   iv) Roof and similar renewals.
   v) Central heating installation.
   vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
   vii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.

d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.

e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.

f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.

g) Adjoining roads and services.

h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.

i) General development proposals in the locality.

j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases,

mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.

m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.

n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please 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.**

For and on Behalf of
GEM Associates Limited
Independent Chartered Surveyors

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

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was warm and sunny at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

Our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from relatively mid range. A few interesting facts in Britain over the years have been:

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
2009	Third wettest August since 1956
2010	Heaviest snowfall in March since 1991
	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years
References	BBC News www.bbc.co.uk

This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.
.

NOT LOCAL

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

EMPTY PROPERTY

The property was empty at the time of our survey, we were therefore not able to carry out our usual question and answer session or have our questionnaire filled out.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to not having the benefit of opening up the ground floor and the first floor and turning the heating on. Also we have been unable to speak to the present owners and going through a question and answer session.

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.

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

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

http://www.nethouseprices.com/

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

www.globrix.com

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