

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Monmouthshire



1600's extended
two storey property



Copyright

CO.UK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES
ROOF COVERINGS, UNDERLAYERS AND ROOF LIGHTS
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
OIL
PLUMBING AND HEATING
BATHROOMS
MAIN DRAINS

OUTSIDE AREAS

OUTBUILDINGS / PARKING
EXTERNAL AREAS

POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET
FRENCH DRAIN ARTICLE

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 large two storey property consisting of several different properties joined together. In addition to this there have been modifications and alterations over the years. There are surrounding gardens and a number of acres that the property is being sold with (not inspected). There are three outbuildings; we have had a brief inspection of these areas.

The current owners advised that the property is being split into separate sections as we believe the owner previous to them did.

We are advised that the property is 1600's; we believe that the majority of this property is more likely to be 1700/1800/1900's.

We have been unable to find the building in the register of listed buildings on BritishListedBuildings.co.uk; your legal advisor needs to check and confirm. If listed it is much more onerous on any repair requirements.

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:

1603	Elizabeth I dies in Richmond Palace
1666	The Great Fire of London
1681	Oil powered street lights are put up in London
1783	Britain recognised American Independence
1750	The start of the Industrial Revolution
1793 – 1800	The Grand Union Canal was built

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view left hand side



Front view right hand side



Left hand side elevation



Right hand side elevation



Left hand gable

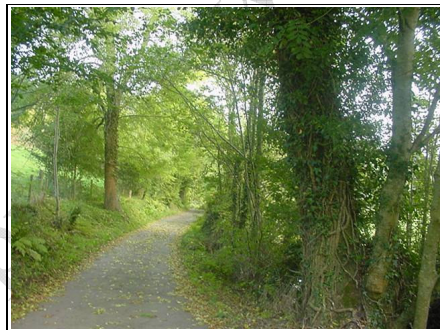


Right hand gable

1600's extended two storey property

1600's extended two storey property

EXTERNAL



ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

These need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Kitchen/breakfast room
- 2) Pantry off the kitchen
- 3) Utility/services room adjacent to the kitchen
- 4) Bedroom adjacent to kitchen with jack and jill bathroom
- 5) Central Lounge with feature fireplace
- 6) Three bedrooms (right hand side)
- 7) En- suite shower room and toilet (rear right hand side)
- 8) Second utility/services room adjacent to the shower room (right hand side)

First floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Bedroom to the kitchen end (left hand side)
- 2) Master bedroom with dressing area
- 3) Two bedrooms to the right hand end
- 4) Bathroom
- 5) Study (central section)

Outside Areas

There are surrounding gardens and a number of acres of land and three outbuildings all sitting on a steep sloping site.

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.

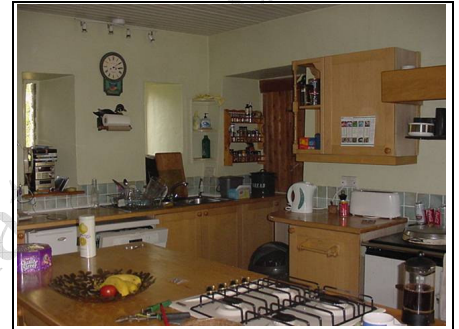
Ground Floor (left hand side)



Kitchen/breakfast room



Kitchen/breakfast room



Kitchen/breakfast room



Pantry adjacent to kitchen



Utility/services room nr kitchen



Bedroom at kitchen end



Adjacent jack and jill bathroom

Ground Floor (central and right hand side)



Central Lounge



Feature chimney to central lounge



Front Bedroom



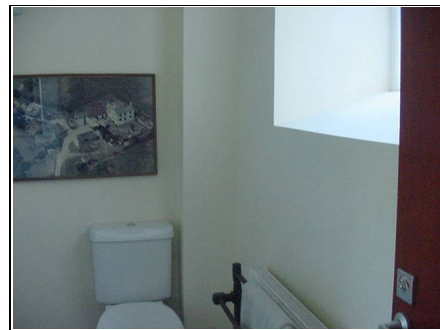
Middle bedroom



Rear Bedroom



Utility room at right hand end

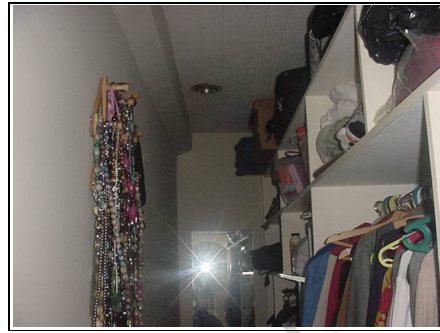


En-suite shower room

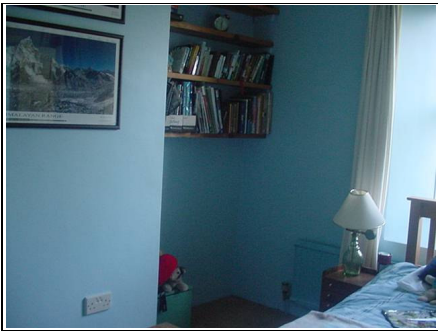
First Floor



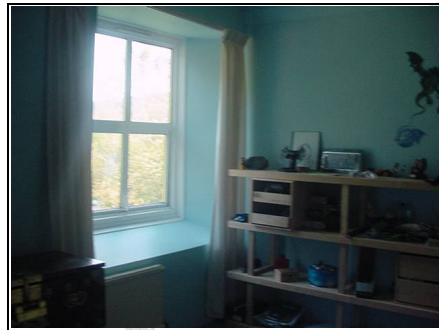
Master bedroom



Dressing area



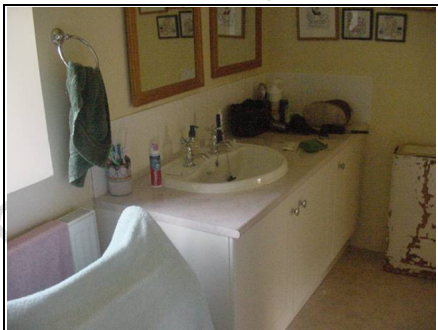
Bedroom



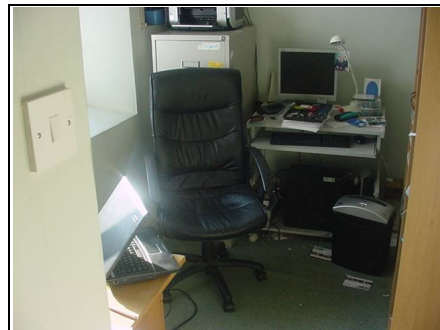
Bedroom



Bedroom



Bathroom



Study

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Two chimneys, three flues and various adapted and altered chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched and clad with various types of slates and clay tiles
Gutters and Downpipes:	Predominantly plastic, possibly some cast iron remaining
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic, much of it runs internally
Wall Finish:	Random and coursed stone walling with a lime wash and/or painted finish
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Windows: Double glazed plastic and some single and double glazed timber Doors: timber and double glazed

Internal

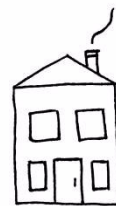
Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	A mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Solid (assumed), stepped as on sloping site First Floor: Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed)

Services

We are advised that the property has a mains water supply, electricity, oil heating and wood burners together with a septic tank (assumed). There are two oil boilers, a Gant and a Worcester model and two fuse boards located in the services/utility room (all to be checked and confirmed by your legal advisor).

We have been unable to find the building in the register of listed buildings on BritishListedBuildings.co.uk; your legal advisor needs to check and confirm.

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 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 500 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 Ugly' and 'The Bad', 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!

- 1.0 The sheer size of the property and the surrounding grounds.
- 2.0 The property has good natural light albeit that the windows aren't appropriate for this age of property.
- 3.0 It has stood the test of time in this environment albeit that it may not meet modern standards. You need to ensure that you are happy to live with in some cases below modern standards and the general characteristics of this property.

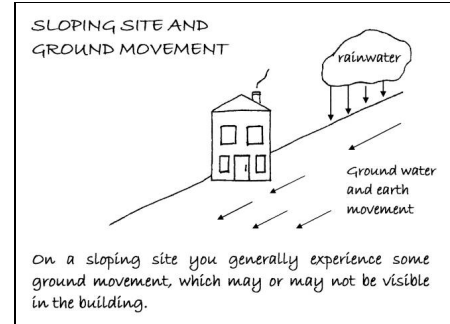
We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

The Ugly

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

1.0 Lots of water

The property sits on a sloping site and as such the rainwater wants to get from the top to the bottom of the valley and the building is in the way. We therefore would expect some dampness in the property.



There is a gulley running around the property which doesn't seem to be sufficient to stop the rainwater from getting in which is why we are getting damp meter readings, it has not been well maintained and hasn't been kept clear and there are some weak areas such as the rear door and the rear shower room areas. Equally we appreciate this system has been in place for many years and the present owners would consider it satisfactory although in our experience mortgage companies would not.



Gulley behind shower room area



Gulley to the drain



Drain

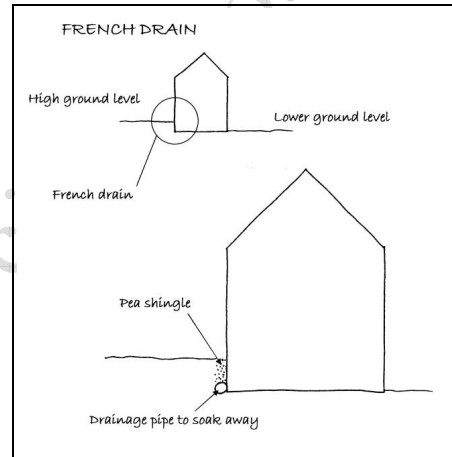
ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a clearing of the gulley to ensure that it runs towards the drain. In an ideal world we would recommend the removal of the existing drain, the adding of a French drain and this drain lowering and being better directed to the drain outlet with falls away from the property. In its current state it will allow water into the property.

We are particularly concerned with regard to the rear walls of the house in general and specifically the en-suite shower room and the ground

floor bedrooms, part of which we can see dampness in and part of which we can see false walls have been added we assume to hide the dampness.

We would also expect some dampness to get in under and around the door of the lounge with the feature fireplace. We would reiterate our recommendation to have a French drain around the perimeter of the property and amend the existing drain to ensure it falls away from the house.

ANTICIPATED COST: If you wish this property to be dry we would recommend you buy a different property in a different location. If you are happy to live with an element of dampness but would like to improve it then we would recommend the above. We would suggest you set aside the sum of £10,000 - £15,000 to add a French drain and amend the existing drain and possibly land drains too around the property. There are many permutations of what you can do here, we would be happy to advise you further. Please obtain quotations before you start the work.



Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

2.0 Woodworm active?

As with many older properties there are signs of woodworm. In most cases we find that there is no longer active woodworm however in this property we believe woodworm is active in all three roof spaces (although no-one can be 100% certain without living in the property for some time and setting traps for them).



Woodworm in roof over kitchen
– frass on top of knife

- (1) the main roof over the kitchen
- (2) the small roof over the utility room
- (3) right hand side bedroom areas

In addition to this we feel that there is some woodworm in the actual timber frame that is used to support the floors and no doubt is embedded in the walls.



Utility/services room roof which is in a poor structural condition due to woodworm

Remember when we are trying to identify woodworm a lot is hidden by such things as insulation and the configuration of the roof. We feel that some of the woodworm is at the point where we consider it will be structurally significant and is therefore likely to cause structural problems.



Woodworm in roof over right hand bedroom

However equally these properties were vastly over-designed in their day and they can accommodate a considerable amount.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that woodworm treatment is carried out throughout the property. We are not a great lover of chemicals and would much prefer to use woodworm traps but in this case the chemicals may be the only way to get some form of guarantee to enable the future sale of the property. We would also recommend that some timbers are replaced/strengthened in the property. We don't by any means feel that we have been able to discover the full extent of the woodworm in the kitchen roof due to the amount of stored items in there and we feel we do have to air on the cautionary side due to what we have seen as you can see in the photos.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would set aside the sum of £10,000 - £30,000 for long term repair work. As we discussed with you there are various different measures that can be taken with many things in the property world. There are certainly holding measures that can be put in place here as long as you are happy to live in this way with the removal of timbers and the adding of treated timbers, for example extra bracing to form 'A' frames and back to backing of some of the timbers in the

kitchen roof and replacement of timber for example in the roof above the kitchen/utility/service room area.

We feel that emptying of the roof space and clearing the insulation will make the problem a lot clearer and we would be more than happy to return and comment upon this further.

Frass defined

The chewed up sawdust that the beetle leaves behind. A light coloured dust and a light coloured hole indicates this is relatively recent. Obviously if it is a darker coloured frass, or darker coloured hole, it means it is older and the woodworm may have gone.

Please see the Timber Defects Section of this Report.

3.0 Robust customer

From our discussions with you at the property we have the impression that you are a more robust customer than we usually come across and are happy to take on a high level risk than our customers in general (if this is not the case please advise). We generally feel the pros outweigh the cons in this property as you understand them to date. We wish you to go into the purchase of this property with your eyes wide open. We would be more than happy to discuss the above further.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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.

MAIN PRIORITIES

1.0 Main central chimney – badly repaired

The property has a grand old chimney. We can see that it has been repaired and the repairs are not particularly sympathetic to an older style chimney. Repairs have been carried out in a cement mortar and brick; we would have expected a matching lime mortar and matching stonework to avoid the chimney deteriorating.



Badly repaired chimney

We can see staining to the chimney, we believe this to be sulphate attack (you can't be 100% certain without taking a chemical analysis). This does tend to cause chimneys to twist and lean and we can see that part of the chimney has been rebuilt in brick which indicates that there has been leaning to the top (unfortunately the effect has been sorted out rather than the cause).



Close up of cement repair to main central chimney

With regards to the sulphate you need to decide whether the chimney is going to be used or not and cap it if it isn't and use it if it is going to be used fairly regularly once you have had it cleaned.

We also noted cracking in the chimney. Any property such as this where there is a mixture of old and new construction should expect some cracking and movement.

Ideally such cracking should be monitored for a year as a one off inspection is not ideal when looking at this type of problem.



Likely to be sulphate attack

ACTION REQUIRED: Repairs and improvements required to the chimney. We would also recommend that the existing owners make a

claim with regard to the cracking that can be seen with their insurance company.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £2,000 to £3,000 to repair the chimney properly as it is likely to need scaffolding access. We would also as mentioned like you to have an insurance claim initiated by the existing owners with regards to the cracking and the general condition of the chimney which you could then take over. This would limit your liability to the excess which should be removed from the cost of the property, this needs to be in writing before you commit to purchasing the property. Please obtain quotations with regards to the repair work.

Please see the Chimney stacks Section of this Report.

2.0 Asbestos

We can see an asbestos flue at roof level and also in the roof above the kitchen and no doubt it carries on down into the building. Asbestos was quite a common material to be used in older properties particularly around the 1960/1970's.



Asbestos flue

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the asbestos flue is replaced and indeed we would recommend that all asbestos is replaced. Please note that you should use licensed asbestos operators to carry out this work.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would recommend a full asbestos survey. We would anticipate costs in the region of £2,000 - £5,000 although you definitely need to obtain quotations due to the specialist nature of the work and of course you will need to replace the flue.

We are not specialist asbestos surveyors; we recommend that you have specialist asbestos surveyors.

Please see the Chimney stacks Section of this Report.

3.0 Cracking

There are various cracks throughout the property that can be seen. To some extent we expect them in older properties however they do need repairs to be carried out to stop dampness from getting in through them.

3.1 Crack to front right hand gable

We can see within the roof there is a crack to the front right hand gable. We cannot see this to the front of the property as it is newly painted. You need to be aware that there may be other areas of cracking that are not visible due to them being painted over which will appear as latent defects.



Crack to front right hand gable

ACTION REQUIRED: We have mentioned already that an insurance claim needs to be put in for the cracking to the chimney. We feel that one in general needs to be put in for the property as we feel that cracks have been hidden in the property by the relatively new paintwork. Whilst our comments have to be based partly on assumptions we feel these are reasonable assumptions given what we have found.



Crack not visible to outside of property due to paintwork

3.2 Cracks to outbuildings

We noted that cracking is particularly bad to some of the outbuildings. Whilst the main focus of the report has been on the main property we have had a very brief inspection of the outbuildings and would say they are suitable for agricultural use although will need repair, there is problems with water coming through them, woodworm and cracking in some of them. They would need a survey of their own to establish exactly what repairs need to be carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: General re-pointing and repair of cracks and we would suggest monitoring them over the next year or so to see if movement occurs. We would expect some movement in properties on a sloping site of this age.

You do need to decide how important the outbuildings are to you, we would be more than happy to come back and do a survey specifically on these as at present they have had the briefest of inspections. If the outbuildings do have value to you then please instruct us to carry out a survey and report on these areas.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

4.0 Dampness

As mentioned there is dampness coming in via the sloping site and the drain around it. In addition there is dampness coming into the property in a number of other areas. There are various places throughout the property where we obtained damp readings, the damp was visible in some places and other places we obtained readings via our damp meters. As you can see from the photos there is a lot of dampness in this property; it relates to several areas as below:

- (1) Roofs – we believe that some dampness is getting in via the roofs and the gutters and downpipes particularly in relation to where the roofs step.



Dampness coming in via step in roof



Defective guttering and downpipe



Damp staining to right hand side of property which we believe is coming from a leaking roof or leaking soil pipes

(2) Walls – we believe that in some areas rain is coming in via the walls which need a protective coat of lime wash or a breathable paint.



Defective wall coating



Dampness found to chimney breast in right hand side of property

(3) Base of the walls – we believe that dampness is coming in via the ground and the fact that the property is on a sloping site. Please see our comments in the Ugly Section.



Dampness coming in through the rear wall at ground level where you can see the moss and due to the lack of a protective coating to the walls



Dampness found around the steps down into the kitchen area

(4) Specific detailing problems – In some areas we think it is down to specific detailing problems such as the door to the lounge with the feature chimney.



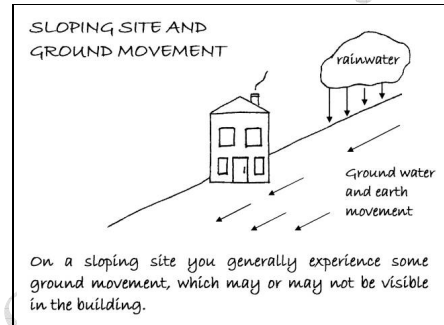
Dampness found by door in lounge with feature chimney

We noted that there was next to no carpet on the ground floor indicating to us that the ground slabs do get wet.

All of the issues can be worked through, it will take a long time and a lot of money to make the property as dry as a modern property, you need to ensure that you are happy to live with this.

5.0 Sloping Site

Just to reiterate what we have already said that this property really is on quite a steep sloping site which means the rain will come down and want to pass through and around the building. We are not sure if the extent of this can be fully appreciated, for example within the single storey height barn water literally runs through the barn. To some extent it is doing this to the house but is better covered up. We would almost recommend that next time it rains heavily you go and visit the property to ensure you are happy with this.



Single storey height barn

6.0 Joinery

6.1 Windows

Most of the windows would benefit from redecoration, some of them will benefit from repair as you can see in the photos below! It may be more economical to replace many of the windows rather than repair them.



Window in need of repair and redecoration



Rotten window

6.2 Timber lintels

It should be appreciated that in a property of this age timber lintels would have been used.

The first photo is of one of the barns where the timber lintel is rotting and there is cracking to the barn and repair work is required.



Timber lintel to barn

The second photo is also a barn where you can see a bearing timber, also known as a bonding timber (bottom left hand side of photo) which were often used in older properties and these too will rot in damp walls. These type of timbers will often need replacing over time.



Barn – where you can see bearing or bonding timbers

7.0 Condensation

You should be aware that if you increase the heat levels in a property such as this you are more likely to get condensation. Also you can cause problems with activating woodworm and also changing wet rot to dry rot. Care needs to be taken as you carry out work on this property. When we spoke you mentioned that you are not particularly interested in historic conservation/national trust/SPAB, etc however it is important that you understand more about the building to ensure that you don't cause problems in it. We would recommend a day or a weekend course with the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) which would give you a better understanding of the repair issues/responsibilities of older properties.

8.0 Fly problem

We noted a fly problem during the course of our walk around in some of the rooms and some of the barns.



Fly problem particularly bad in outbuilding two

9.0 Services

9.1 Will the property be warm enough?

Whilst the property has two boilers, it is also the thermal efficiency of this type of construction that dictates how warm the property will be. There can be a considerable chilling effect caused when properties are higher up a valley (such as wind chill causing hypothermia). We also noted that the radiators use a system of micro bore pipes which were common in the 1970's however the only people that seem to like them are the plumbers that use them in an installation as they allow central heating to be put in quickly however in our experience they do block up and are not that efficient. We have recently replaced lots of these pipes in our own house.



Micro bore pipes

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you consider carefully the areas that you want to warm, possibly having a winter area

of the house spreading out into the whole house during the summer months. We noted that the present owners had supplementary electric heating and we would suggest that you also invest in the same. We have found the portable electric heated oil radiators to be good.

Please see the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

9.2 Septic tank

The septic tank is situated behind the furthest barn and looks to be full. In our experience quite frequently owners leave with the septic tank needing emptying!

We spoke to the owners about this during our question and answer session; they advised that it was emptied about once a year. This tends to indicate that it is a brick manhole which is leaking into the ground to some extent although water usage is very low (or a very large tank).



Septic tank

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you ask the present owners to empty the tank.

ANTICIPATED COST: Owners cost.

Please see the Mains Drains Section of this Report.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of an older property's overall character and style. Such character defects are normally considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report. The Report is looking at structural issues which we consider may be a problem.

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.

Getting to know more about older properties

We would recommend that you go on a Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings weekend course on looking after and maintaining older properties. Even if you do not intend to carry out the work yourself it does give you a far better idea of what work should be carried out. The website for this is www.SPAB.org

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

We did notice some wiring in the roof that we believe may be DIY standard. We generally recommend when a property changes hands that you have an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) inspection, test and report carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor.

Heating

We would recommend that you have the existing owners to provide evidence of test and servicing prior to purchase of the property or have it carried out yourself.

Drainage

We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains. In older properties, such as this, drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together.

Water Supply

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

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

Outside water tank

We are aware that there is an outside water tank. We find in older properties they used to have tanks to ensure that if the water supply got interrupted then they would have water available. We have no way of opening up or looking into the tank from what we could see. We have also come across water tanks that are used as balancing tanks during heavy rainfall and they fill up rather than discharging into/around the house.



Water tank

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 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 £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 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 feel there is a fair amount of work which needs to be carried out and you need to think seriously about the work. We don't believe the present owners focus has been on maintenance and decoration of the building. The additional spend would put many people off purchasing this property, you do need to ensure that the condition of this property which is in below average condition is reflected in the price. We would always say that the average person offers a price based on the property being in average condition for its age, type and style. This property is below average and should be discounted.

We would say that this property is verging on rural isolated and it may be difficult to get access to and from it; you need to be happy with that even with the purchase of a 4x4 vehicle.

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 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.

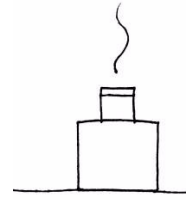
THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS

Your Legal Advisor should investigate whether this property is listed. If so, it will require various permissions to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials for the age, type and style of property.



EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS AND FLUES



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 are two chimneys to this property they are located one to the middle of the property and one to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property). We believe there were other chimneys in years gone by which have been amended, altered or removed.

Chimney One – located to the middle of the property

This chimney is predominantly stone finished with a brick top section and a chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style. Unfortunately we were unable to see the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them. We believe there is sulphate attack to the base of the chimney.



Chimney one

ACTION REQUIRED:

see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Please



Base of Chimney one

Chimney Two – located to the right hand side

This chimney is also built in stone, it looks to have been dropped (lowered), and capped. We found some dampness coming into it, we much prefer these chimneys to be well ventilated with a cap as this also reduces the chances of staining/sulphate attack.



Chimney two

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend venting of this chimney if you are not going to use it.

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 several flues. We would draw your attention particularly to:

- i) Asbestos flues – please see our comments within the Executive Summary with regards to this.



Asbestos flue



Water staining on flue indicating dampness is getting in

- ii) Flue to the left hand side of the property which feeds the burner in the kitchen/breakfast room area which looks to be relatively modern and held in place with straps which may be affected by strong winds.



- iii) Flue on right hand side of property – we believe relates to the boiler below.

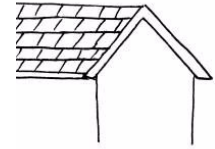


Please note we haven't tested any of these flues or chimneys.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks and flues from the parts we could 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.

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 slate roofs, the tile roofs and the flat roofs.

Main Roof Covering

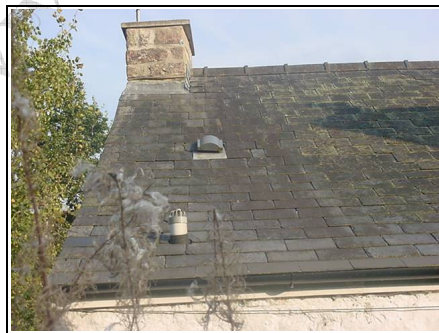
The property has a mixture of roofs. We were pleased to see that the majority of them are pitched and clad in slates and a clay tile.

Slates

There is a mixture of natural slates and manmade slates in a variety of conditions. This relates to the age of the slate, its location as well as the type of material. Some of the roofs are suffering from moss sitting on them which tends to be the man made slates.



Slate roof left hand side front



Slight displacement and opening up of slates on far right hand side of property



Rear left hand side slate roof – in worst of conditions which looks to have some man made slates

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally we would replace all the slates with natural quarried slate. We would also recommend that you get a supply of slates for when wind damage occurs. We would recommend you having your own tower scaffolding so that you can give roofers, etc easier access to carry out high level repairs.

We noted where there are different upstands between the roofs the detailing was poor as commented on in the Executive Summary. We would recommend a general replacement of all flashings with a good quality lead flashing.

Tiles

Generally the tiles are in average to slightly below average condition with some tiles damaged as you can see in the photo. We would add that the roof above the kitchen is not in the best of conditions and we have identified woodworm in its and its semi-soft to touch in some areas indicating that rain does get in, we suspect it is wind driven rain.



General view of tiles



Damage in tile of roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that this roof is replaced with a slate roof as the laps to the slate make a much more watertight finish however this roof needs to be emptied first and the condition of the frame checked.

Upstands, flashing details and roof changes of material and changes in direction

To reiterate and advise further we find that the junctions on properties are the areas where rainwater gets in. In this case we can find damp patches within the property, for example to the rear left hand side where there is an upstand also coincides with the steps into the kitchen and we believe that water is getting into this area. We would recommend a flashing detail is added and improved in this area. In the same way where the flat roof meets the pitched roof on the right hand side, again we found dampness at ground floor level which we believe may relate to this or a leaking service pipe within the boxed in section.



Dampness to upstand



Slate and tile roof meet

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a plan over the next two years to gradually upgrade the roof.

Roof Lights

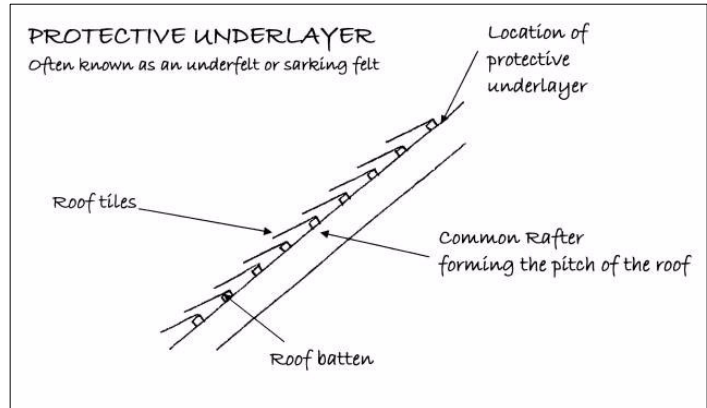
Roof lights generally sit in line with the roof pitch and are often used to allow rooms to be formed in the roof space. They are also commonly known by their trade name of 'Velux' windows or skylights.

The property has a mixture of roof windows from factory made to made on site. They looked in average condition; they certainly helped add light into the property. Generally we find that it is inevitable with roof lights that they will sooner or later leak. If this doesn't occur then they seem prone to condensation and if this doesn't occur and they are double glazed then they seem prone to misting up. Keep a cloth handy!



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.



We gained access to three roofs. In each of the roofs there was a protective underlayer indicating that they have been re-roofed since the 1960's.



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

Copyright www.1stAssoc

Flat Roof

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees. Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

The flat roof was difficult to see as it is jammed in for want of a better term, between the middle chimney and the corridor to the front bedroom and the stairway area. As mentioned we were given limited access to this area so we weren't able to check properly whether the roof was leaking. We would however say that flat roofs do tend to leak sooner or later.



Flat roof



Close up of flat roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that a pitch is added to this roof in the form of either insulation cut to falls with a high performance felt or in the form of a mini pitched roof.

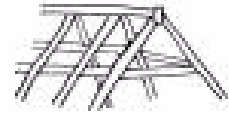
It could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

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

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately seventy five 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.

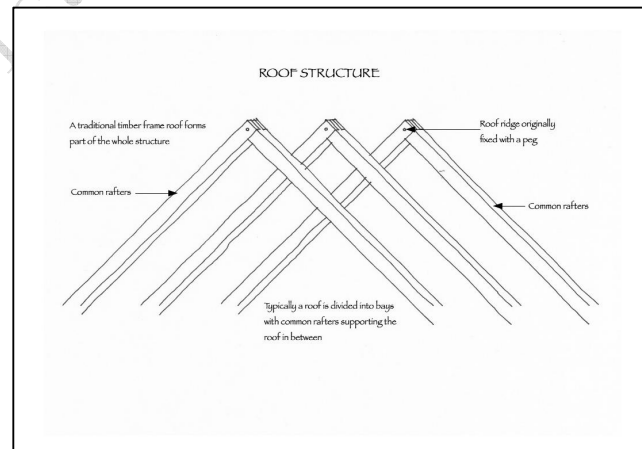
Main Roof

Roof Access

There are effectively two main roofs to this property that we could access; one to the left hand side and one to the right hand side. There is an additional roof to the left hand side that can only be viewed. There is a smaller roof above the kitchen/utility room where we were also able to inspect. We were unable to view within the flat roof and we had a limited view of some of the other roofs due to the amount of stored items and the configuration.

Roof Structure

Both the roofs are hand built and purpose made and very old. We can see many peg fixings in the roofs.



Peg fixing within right hand side roof

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure of the three roofs we could gain access to for:

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



Roof over bedrooms right hand side

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation, boarding and wasps nest in the right hand roof, however we would comment that we generally found the roofs in below average to poor condition due to extensive woodworm.



Roof over kitchen

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

Water Tanks

This was located on the right hand side of the property and is plastic. 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

We noted next to no ventilation in the roofs, although we can see some vents have been added to the right hand side roof. However there aren't very many vents.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to have ventilation to the roofs added. This will help reduce the activity of the woodworm as they are not particularly keen on a colder, dryer environment rather than the warm moist environment that they have at the moment.



Vent in roof

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 we would see a mass of electric cables to the right hand roof, we were surprised that they hadn't been put in in conduit; it is possibly a DIY quality job. Please see our earlier comments.

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, structure to the rear. We have not examined every single piece of the roof. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible. Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has plastic gutters and downpipes, they are in below average condition and we suspect that are leaking and discharging rainwater down the walls during periods of heavy rainfall in particular which is adding to the dampness in the property.



Bending plastic gutter

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that next time it rains heavily you walk around the property. We suspect that sections will be best replaced ideally with a deep flow gutter. You may wish to change to an aluminium gutter that has more rigidity to it than a modern plastic guttering and therefore won't bend like you see in the photo. We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

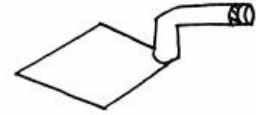
We can only see soil and vent pipes at roof level. As they are internal we can't comment upon their condition other than to say that it does look like there is a leak from a service pipe to the right hand side of the property near the stairway; you need to open up the property.



Soil and vent pipe

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.

Stonework

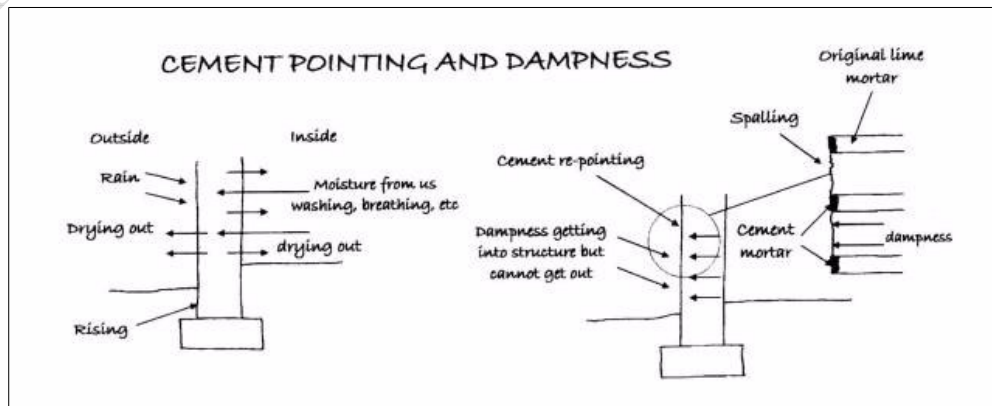
The property has been built in random rubble stone which is coursed to some degree. It has had alterations over the years; we can see areas where windows and doors have been amended and blocked up, etc. It originally would have been painted in a lime wash; some areas have then been repainted in a plastic based paint. We would use the term painted to sell which is what many people do when they wish to sell their property. In this case the area to the rear of the property hasn't been re-lime washed which is a protective coating. Without it, dampness is getting into the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you gradually work via each elevation reapplying the lime wash (or distemper or whatever is on the wall at present – you can have this analysed to make sure you are putting on the right produce) to make the property watertight. The rear of the property has suffered particularly badly from the weather; this may have been how the entirety of the property was. The only areas that have been painted are those visible as you approach the property to present it better.



Rear of the property

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £5,000 - £10,000; quotations required.



Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Lime every time

We noted inappropriate repairs in cement mortar have taken place. To some extent the cement mortar will fall out on its own. Again we would recommend that you have a programme of looking at elevation by elevation and gradually removing the cement mortar to allow the walls to breathe again.



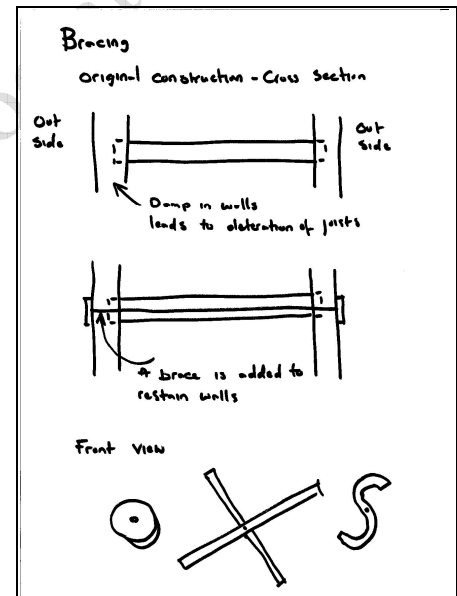
Wall with cement mortar

Tie in wall

The tie bars are normally added where the lateral restraint from the floor joists has given way and bulging or movement in the property has occurred. The tie bar is used to pull the property back together.



Tie in wall



Render

Some parts of the property such as the upstands have been finished in render.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments on upstands within the roof section of this report.

Timber lintels

This property will probably have timber lintels as we can see timber beams internally and given its age. However these have been painted over and we note that some have been replaced in concrete. As you work via each elevation that we have spoken about earlier in this section you will need to also check the condition of the lintels and any bonding timbers or bearing timbers.



Dip in lintel

High ground level

We noticed also the ground level is fairly high around some parts of the property or is concealed by plants. This means that the air cannot get around this area and any rain and dampness is held against the property.



High ground level



Plants growing around base of property

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by stonework / render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, metal lintels or concrete 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 stonework / render / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the stonework / render / 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.

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

In a property such as this it is likely to have a mixture of foundations, due to the property being extended and/or altered over the years.

We would expect this to include a stone foundation on the majority of the property or no foundations at all and possibly some concrete foundations in the newer sections.

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.

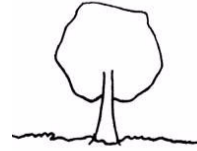
It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please 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 – we generally 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.

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

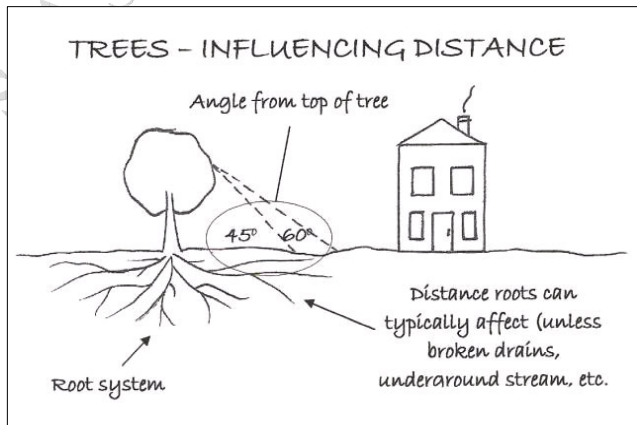
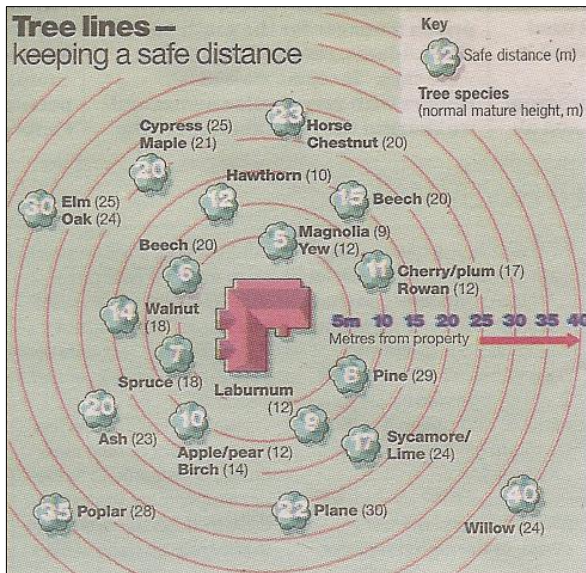


Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There are trees surrounding the property within what we would term as influencing distance of the outbuildings. As mentioned earlier it depends on what you wish to use the outbuildings for and how important these are to you. Some are closer than most insurance companies would like! We feel that generally where trees and the buildings have lived together for some time there aren't any problems as long as the trees are maintained and not allow to literally grow next to the buildings.



Surrounding trees

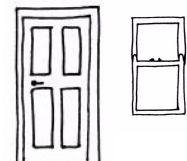


Influencing Distance Defined

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.

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

The fascias and soffits are painted timber. We could see some deterioration and we would comment they are in below average condition for their age, type and style.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend redecoration in the summer of 2012.



Fascias

Windows and Doors

Windows

The property has a mixture of double glazed plastic windows and single/double glazed timber windows. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Plastic double glazed windows with
Plastic windows



Windows in need of repair and
re-decoration



The property has plastic double glazed windows, which generally look to be of a reasonable quality. 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 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

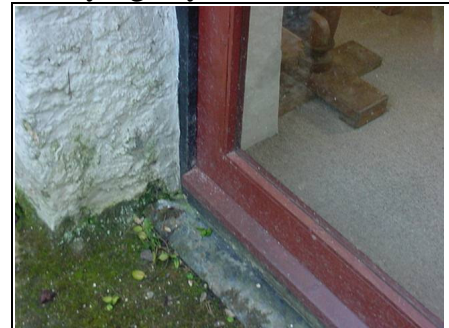
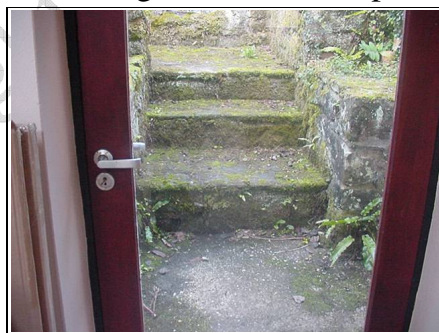
Trickle vents allow a trickle of air through, therefore stopping/reducing the likelihood of condensation occurring within the property.

Knife Test

We have tested the windows by pushing a knife into a random selection. We generally tend to do the lower windows as access is easier. The knife test found them in better condition than they look nevertheless they do need quite a number of repairs.

Doors

There are a mixture of doors to the property. We are particularly concerned about the rear door which we believe is likely to allow water through it although we have been constantly surprised at how difficult some places seem to be to get water through and do the impossible in staying dry.



Door water is likely to come through

ACTION REQUIRED: Next time it rains heavily stand next to the door or carry out a water test with a hosepipe if you wish to get it fixed before the winter.

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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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 is a lot of external decorations required to this property in the form of lime wash or breathable paint on the outside to add a protective coat. You do need to check what is already on there before you apply another coat over it as the wrong coat can make the next one almost worthless. As mentioned elsewhere within this report we would recommend that you work around the property elevation by elevation.

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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

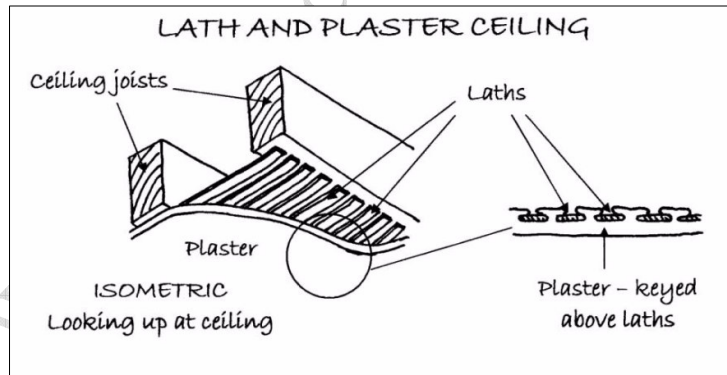
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.

Ceiling Construction

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 have originally been lath and plaster but where we could access them in the right hand side roof space they were plasterboard.

Lath and Plaster Defined

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



Plasterboard Defined

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

Internal Walls and Partitions

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

Perimeter Walls

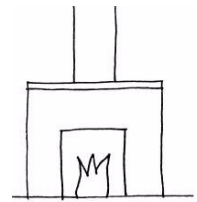
We have mentioned elsewhere within the report that there is dampness in the property. This can cause the plaster to degrade and it is generally recommended that walls are re-plastered where dampness has occurred. As this is an older property we would always recommend a lime based plaster, where as in a newer property carlite plaster is recommended.

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 www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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.

There is a feature chimney breast to this property; there is also a chimney breast to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). In the years when this property was built every room would have had a fire, we would expect other rooms have had chimneys altered and amended. There are also a number of wood burners/multi-fuel units in the property.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to speak with the owner about the use of these various fires as they normally have their own little quirks. Please see our recommendations in the Executive Summary.

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 and we do not comment as modern techniques for adding support can concealed very well particularly when plastered over.

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 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

As with most older properties, the ground floor is not level and true.

We have assumed that originally the ground floor construction was tiles on earth or trampled earth. Over the years this has been replaced with various different floors. There is now on the ground floor a tile and a stone flooring. Quite unusually there wasn't any carpets. We often find with properties that are on a sloping site such as this of this age that there is some dampness that comes up through the floor, sometimes this is visible during wetter months. We can see within some areas that tiles have lifted.



Poorly finished kitchen tiles



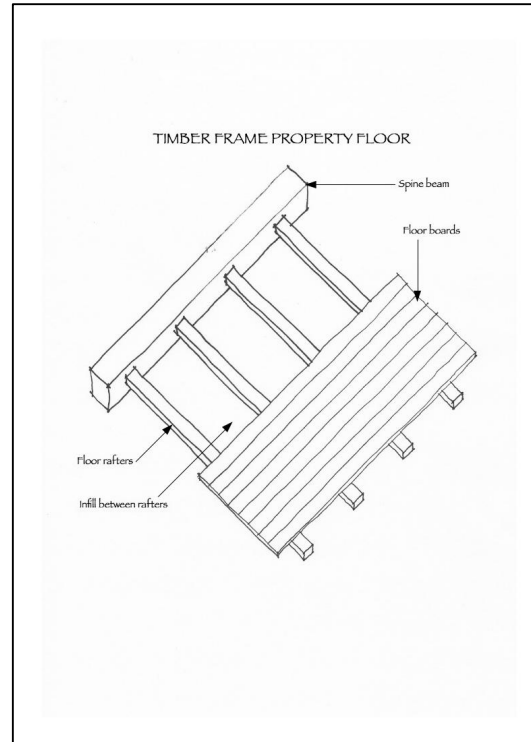
Lifting off the floor which we believe relates to dampness

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to make sure you are happy to live with these characteristics of the property as it is very difficult/expensive to remove them.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

First Floor

We can see within some of the rooms timber beams and we can see that these beams have had woodworm in the past. The areas that we can see don't look to be presently active although much of the timber is hidden and as mentioned elsewhere within this report there is active woodworm (please note we are not asbestos specialists). The floor would have consisted of a main spine beam as can be seen in the photos and inter-connecting floor joists making the structural frame. This then is covered by floor boards as can be seen in the sketch. There will be more deflection in this floor than in a modern property due to the way the timbers were used. In this instance much of the timber floors are hidden. Our concern is with regard to woodworm.



Timber beam in middle bedroom
right hand side



Rear bedroom right hand side

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that a section of the floor is opened up to check to see if there is any woodworm.

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets, quarry tiles and stone floors, 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.

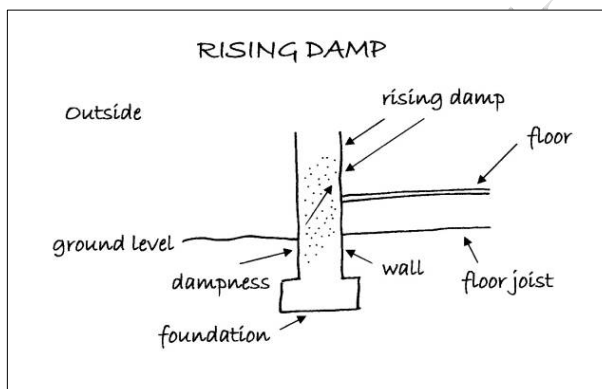


DAMPNESS

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.



A visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls.

In this particular case we have found rising damp.

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



Rising damp in rear shower room

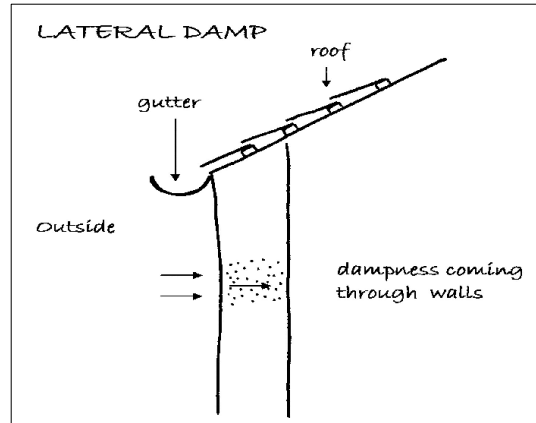
Copyright www.1stASSOCIATED.CO.UK

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 found dampness.

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



High level damp internally in far end of property

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation however please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Condensation does depend upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

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

Extract fans in kitchen, bathrooms and shower rooms

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens and bathrooms.

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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

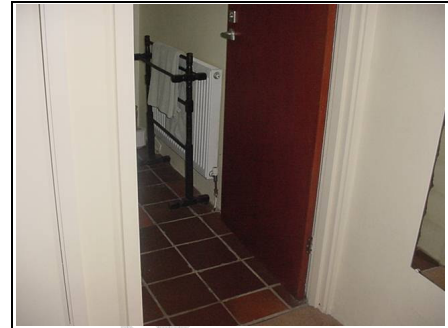
INTERNAL JOINERY



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 a mixture of doors from the modern hollow core doors sometimes known as egg box doors to the older style veneer doors for example the one into the shower room (in the photograph) to painted doors. It is very much down to personal taste and whether you like this style of door.



Veneer door to shower room

Staircase

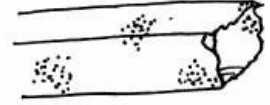
The property has two staircases formed in timber.

Kitchen

The property has a large kitchen which doubles also as a breakfast room and a lounge. It incorporates an Aga. We found the kitchen in average condition, subject of course to some wear and tear as one would expect. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

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. There is a danger in a property such as this that when you occupy it and perhaps warm it to different heat levels than the present owners dry rot can be created.

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.*

We have not visually seen any structurally significant wet rot during the course of our inspection however the timbers in all the roofs were soft to touch when tested with a knife indicating that dampness/condensation is getting into them to some extent and therefore it may be beneficial to background heat these areas.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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 looked for woodworm, we found woodworm throughout the property and we believe that some of this woodworm will be what we would term as causing structurally significant damage if not dealt with.

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.



Third roof where there is the worst woodworm



Woodworm in roof over kitchen – frass on top of knife



Woodworm in roof

Frass defined

The chewed up sawdust that the beetle leaves behind. A light coloured dust and a light coloured hole indicates this is relatively recent. Obviously if it is a darker coloured frass, or darker coloured hole, it means it is older and the woodworm may have gone.

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

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

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

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

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The internal decorations are dated and you may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



This property was built a long time before modern methods of insulation were considered. We have only given real thought and consideration to the insulation of properties since the fuel crisis of the 1970's. 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, particularly with older properties, that they 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, particularly of this age, as it can lead to timber deterioration and other problems.

HIPs

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

Roofs

Although current regulations recommend a lot of insulation in the roofs (currently 300mm) this is not necessarily the best thing for older properties as it tends to promote condensation and is an ideal environment for woodworm. You should ensure that the roofs remain well ventilated; the more ventilation the better.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have. Also they are unlikely to have any substantial insulation, however, unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property.

Windows

The windows are a mixture of single/double glazed and therefore will have below average to average 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 below 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](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

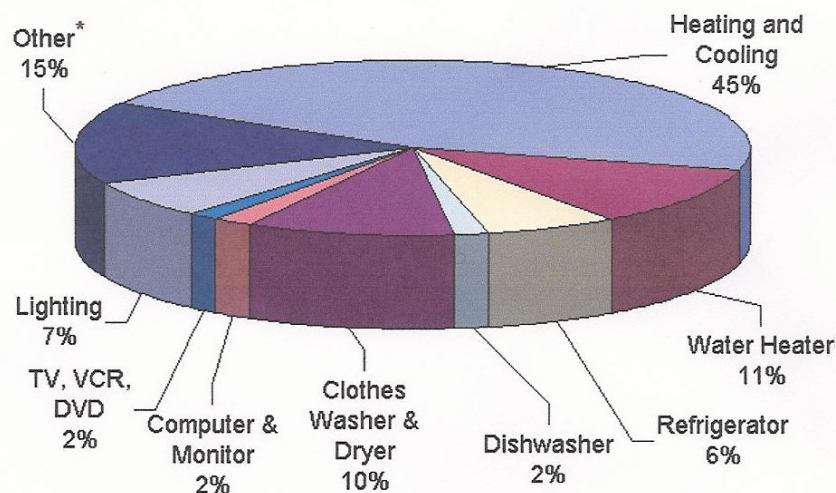
or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay [HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html](http://www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html) to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.

It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay [HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs)

SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings) are currently researching how best to insulate older properties and it is worth checking their website for the latest information at www.SPAB.org

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.

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.

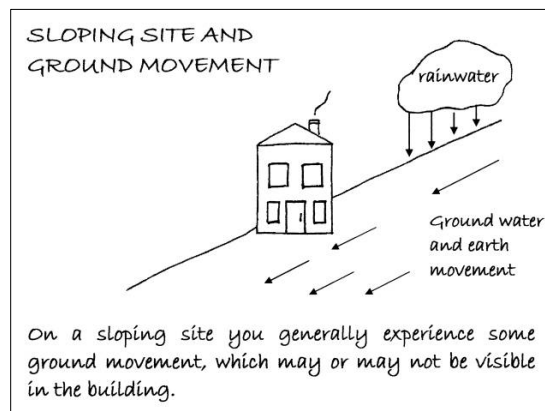
OTHER MATTERS



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

Sloping site

Any property on a sloping site is more susceptible than one on a flat site; it is simply the laws of gravity. Foundations normally allow for such occurrences, particularly in new properties. There can still be some minor movement.



Security

No security system was noted (other than the dogs). It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and 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

With older properties it is particularly important to have a good fire / smoke alarm system, as often they are built from many burnable elements.

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 more smoke detectors are installed.

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

Insurance

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

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

Asbestos

We have found asbestos to the flue, there may well be some more 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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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 utility/services room. The fuse board looked dated. In an older property a defective fuse board can be particularly dangerous.



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.



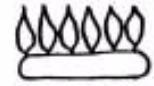
Earth test

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an Instituted of Electrical Engineers report is required (IEE), carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

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 www.1stAssociated.co.uk



All appliances, pipework and flues should be subject to an annual service by a competent OFTEC registered engineer. 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.

Oil Tanks

We were pleased to see that the oil tanks are plastic. These usually replace the older metal tanks that can rust and they typically have a double lining, meaning that if they leak they leak into the outer lining. We didn't check to see if the tank was full or not, in our experience most people leave them empty.



Plastic oil tank

Copyright www.1stAssoc

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

We were advised that the controlling stopcock is located in the shower room at the back of the house.

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

The cold water cistern was located in the right hand roof. There may be an additional cold water cistern to the kitchen end of the property.

Plumbing

We are using this term to refer to supply pipes, wash hand basins, sinks, etc. Where visible it comprises of micro bore pipes. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Micro bore pipes

Heating

There are two oil boilers which are located in the utility/services room. They are manufactured by Gant and by Worcester.

ACTION REQUIRED: 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.

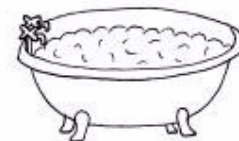
Ten Minute Heating Test

The heating wasn't turned on at the time of our inspection. We would recommend that you reinspect the house and ask the owners to turn on the heating for ten minutes.

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.

Ground floor jack and jill bathroom

The property has a jack and Jill bathroom which is called this as it is accessible from two rooms. This has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition and slightly dated.

Ground floor en-suite shower room to the rear right hand side

This comprises a shower, wash hand basin and WC which looks in average condition with the exception of the dampness coming through the wall and the floor.

First floor bathroom

The first floor bathroom comprises a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which is the most modern of the bathrooms and looks to be the one regularly used.

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.

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 two inspection chambers / manholes.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be fairly clear and free flowing at the time of our inspection although it was relatively shallow.



Manhole one

Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two

We were unable to lift this manhole cover.



Manhole we didn't open

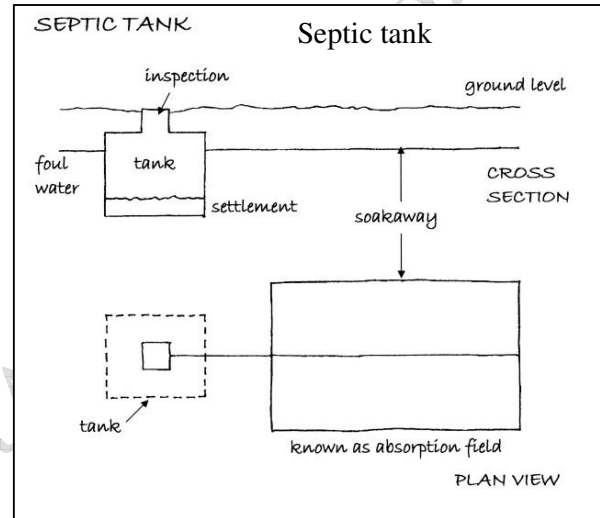
We have only undertaken a visual inspection of the property's foul drains by lifting covers and running water from the taps within the house.

Septic tank

The property has a septic tank. Septic tanks can be of brick, concrete or modern GRP construction but should all operate on the principle of solids being broken down by bacteria, the partly treated foul water then being disposed of by discharge into adjacent ground by a system of soakaways, land drains or perforated pipes.



We have been unable to determine the adequacy of treatment or the effectiveness of the disposal arrangements.



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.

In this instance the rainwater pipes discharge on to the ground close to the property. The rainwater pipes need to be moved away from the property to stop dampness.

ACTION REQUIRED: A way to do this is to literally take the downpipes half a meter or so away from the building and also utilise water butts to get the water away from the building.

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

OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING



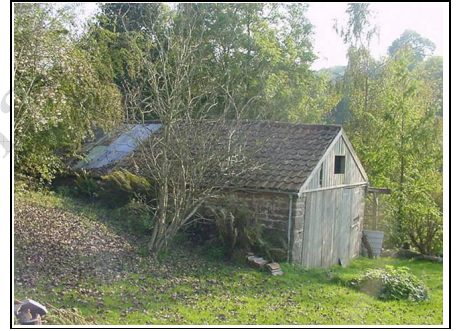
The main focus of this report has been on the main building. We have taken a cursory inspection of the outbuildings and would be happy to return and carry out a survey if so instructed. As discussed we spent only a few minutes in each outbuilding.



Outbuilding one



Outbuilding two



Outbuilding three

Outbuilding one

The water literally runs through it as the back wall is also a retaining wall. There was heavy woodworm in the property and we feel that some of the roof timbers would benefit from extra timbers being added to strengthen it.

Outbuilding two

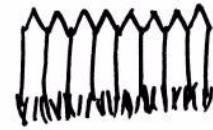
There are a number of large cracks in this building. We only looked at the upper floors; there was a mass infestation of flies in this area. We feel a fair amount of work is required to this outbuilding.

Outbuilding three

This outbuilding is being partly used as a stable. It has a DIY roof to the rear. Again there is heavy woodworm in this outbuilding and also a damaged roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: All buildings require work, the extent of which would require a further survey.

EXTERNAL AREAS



Surrounding Gardens



Acreage

There are a number of acres that the property is being sold with which we have not inspected



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

Often with older properties the boundaries are subject to negotiation and local practice. You do need to make sure that your solicitor is aware of the complications that can occur with older property boundaries.

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

In this case the neighbours were quite a distance away so we have not actually checked on them; however it is well worth visiting them to see if there are any niggling problems.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - viii) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - ix) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
 - x) Removal of walls and chimneys and supporting documentation
- 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**.

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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 www.1stAssociated.co.uk

APPENDICES

Copyright www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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 an unusually warm Autumn day 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

NOT LOCAL

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

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to us not opening up the floors and due to us not having full access to the roof due to the amount of stored items and a limited view of the study area.

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.

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.

www.BritishListedBuildings.co.uk

This is a very good website for establishing if the property is Listed and general information on British Listed buildings.

French Drain

Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

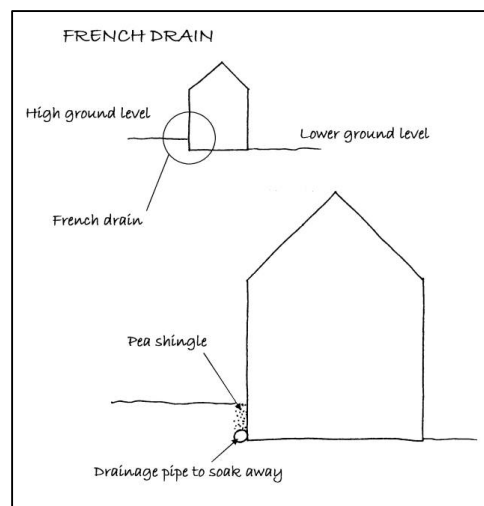
We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio area. This then discharges any rainwater against the building. Quite often the solution is to add a French drain.

Whilst French drains are quite simple and are basically nothing more than trenches filled with gravel, although there is a bit more to them, as we will explain, they are almost a D.I.Y. job for most people and they are relatively easy to install and are low cost. However, you do need some care and attention, otherwise you can install what we have heard referred to, as the French pond.

What use is a French drain?

A French drain is a trench, the width of approximately six inches or 300 millimetres wide, or the width of your spade, and is approximately twice the depth, i.e. 12 inches or 300 millimetres. In most cases this will suffice, however, where there is a great deal of ground water you may wish to make the trench wider and deeper.

The French drain acts as an area where water soaks away quickly. We often recommend them close to building, but not next to the building, as this helps reduce the ground level and/or take any water that is directed at that area away. For example, where a patio has been put in place which aims any rainwater at part of the wall. As mentioned, whilst a French drain is a D.I.Y. job, it does need some understanding of how it works.



French drains must be on a slope

The piping that goes at the base of a French drain should be perforated or, as we did years ago for land drains, there should be gaps between each pipe. It should be set onto a bed of firm ground and the pipes should on a fall to the drain. Whilst you should be able to ensure there is enough fall by sight, we also like the idea of rolling a marble from one end to the other.

You will then need to put the pipes down, fill the trench with half an inch, to an inch, of good sized gravel. You can leave it at that, or in addition you can cover with sand and then turf over. This is how a basic French drain is carried out.

The French drain system that we would recommend

This would be as described, although we would add to the base an inch or two of gravel on to which the perforated drainage pipe will rest. It will then wrap around that drainage pipe filter fabric. This is to stop the holes in the perforated pipe from blocking up. By the way, the drainage pipe should be four to six inches/100 millimetres to 250 millimetres. We would then fill with gravel. In addition to this, we would add a silt trap and this is added in the run of the pipe and is very similar to a road gully (not that's of much use if you don't understand how a road gully works). The silt trap is a rectangular box with a pipe opening at each end. The drained water passes onto this and any particles sink to the bottom of the box and then the water travels on to the other side of the box, enabling you to feed into a drain.

These are usually made of glass reinforced polyester and have been available in this form since the mid-1980's. They are normally reinforced with a steel frame for additional strength and re-bedded in concrete.

The French pond!

French drains will, over time, clog up, which is why we recommend using a filter fabric. However, even with this they will eventually clog up. Unfortunately, there is no dyno-rod equivalent, as it is normally fine sand, organic matter or clay that has clogged up the French drain. So, it is a case of digging it up and cleaning the pipework (or it may be quicker to just replace it), adding a filter fabric and re-filling the gravel.