

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Norfolk



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of XXXXXX; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on XXXXXXXX.

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

A two storey detached property situated in what we would term as an isolated rural location with one adjoining property and the ruins of the mill. It has surrounding gardens accessed via a private road.

We believe that the property was built in the early to mid Victorian era. 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:

1837	Victoria becomes Queen of Great Britain.
1840	The First Postage Stamp
1851	First World Exhibition held in London
1854	Florence Nightingale pioneers modern nursing in the Crimea
1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)
1899-1902	Boer War between Britain and Boers in Southern Africa
1901	Queen Victoria Died

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Left hand view



Access driveway



Garden looking towards summer house



Meadow area

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Kitchen/dining room
- Living room
- Pantry (under stairs area)

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Bathroom
- Guest bedroom
- Main bedroom

Outside Areas

The property has surrounding gardens accessed via a private road and a pond to the right hand end of the property.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Ground Floor



Lounge



Lounge



Fireplace in lounge



Pantry – under stairs area



Kitchen



Kitchen

First Floor



Main bedroom



Main bedroom



Guest bedroom



Landing and awkward stairs



Bathroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Large brick chimney
Main Roof:	Hipped and clad in a pantile
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Painted brickwork
Fascias and Soffits:	Exposed rafter feet
Windows and Doors:	Timber casement windows with double glazing

Internal

Ceilings:	Predominantly lath and plaster with some plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Solid (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Tiled on earth (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist embedded ends (assumed) , joists run from front to back of property

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply and electricity. Heating is via a Rayburn during the winter months and a wood stove to single panel radiators via an immersion heater during the summer months. We would date the electric fuse board as the 1950's/1960's which is located in the area under the stairs.

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.

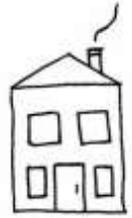
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

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

Generally we found the property to be in below average condition considering the property's age, type and style. You should give serious consideration as to whether to purchase the property. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

- Situated in a picturesque location with surrounding land although it could be considered isolated by some.
- It has had some modern improvements in the form of double glazed timber windows.
- The property has many of the original features which add to the overall character of the property.

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

The Bad

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

1) **Roof**

The roof is covered with Pantiles. Pantiles of this age will be susceptible to rain particularly wind driven rain which means that some dampness can get in. Unfortunately there is very little you can do about it other than ensure any displaced pantiles are replaced and rebedded. In the area of the roof we could see there is a protective underlayer which will help .



Pantile roof

ACTION REQUIRED: Day to day maintenance.

ANTICIPATED COST: Expect a few hundred pounds per year; quotations required.

Please see the Roof Coverings and Underlayers Section of this Report.

2) **Roof structure has woodworm**

The property has an old timber roof that has been repaired over the years with the addition of new timbers. We can see that many of the timbers have signs of woodworm activity. It is difficult to tell whether this woodworm was active or not due in part to the live wasp nest limiting the time we wished to spend in the roof!



Woodworm in roof

And also the general difficulty of identifying if woodworm is active. The timbers we could see to the left hand side of the roof had what we would term as structurally significant woodworm damage. We didn't wish to access the right hand side of the roof due to the chimney and the thought of being trapped in there with the wasps wasn't a pleasant one!

We often find that roofs particularly older roofs seem to defy gravity as to how they are being held together. The problem is that if one part of the roof goes or if one part of the roof is moved the whole roof acts like a pack of cards and collapses.

ACTION REQUIRED: We are unhappy that we were unable to access part of the roof given other things that we noted within the property. We feel it is best to look at a worst case scenario with regards to the roof.

ANTICIPATED COST: From the other things we seen in the property and our experience and knowledge of older properties we feel it is best to set aside a sum for repair. We recommend that you set aside the sum of £5,000 to carry out work to the roof starting with the addition of a further loft hatch at the right hand side of the property; quotations required. We would be happy to come back and comment further. This does need to be carried out in the summer/autumn of 2010.

Please see the Roof Structure Section of this Report.

3) Wasp nests in the roof

As noted above there is a wasp nest. We advised the owner and he advised that he would call the Local Authority to have it removed/extinguished.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to check and confirm that it has been removed.

Please see the Roof Structure and Loft Space Section of this Report.

4) Movement in the property

We can see from the cracking in the property and the different bricks that have been used that there has been some movement in the property. Having discussed this with the owner during the question and answer session he advised that the property was underpinned to the



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left hand side prior to them coming to the property.

Unfortunately in the 1970's lots of properties were underpinned we consider unnecessarily. In addition to this they used too much concrete, often therefore adding unnecessary weight to the property. In many cases we would comment causing as many problems as they solved.



Cracking to walls

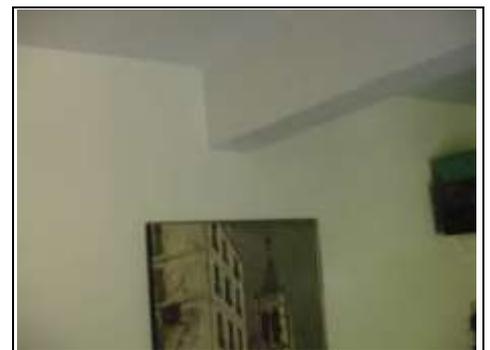
We anticipate that there will be some minor ongoing movement in this property to be considered part of the character of this building.

ACTION REQUIRED: The existing owner to place an insurance claim for the cracks that have been identified in this report. This will then allow the insurance company to carry out monitoring over a year which is the Building Research Establishment's recommendation rather than a one off inspection such as we have just made. It will also enable you to take on the insurance claim and limit your liability to the excess only. We consider this to be a requirement of purchasing the property.

Please see the External Walls Section of this Report.

5) Additional Structural Support?

To add to our thoughts and concerns with regards to the structure if you can read this section and the next section about the deflection to the floors and the tie bars. We did note what looks to be additional structural support that has been added within the bedroom as you can see in the adjoining photo. The owner wasn't aware about this happening in their time.



Additional structural support boxed in

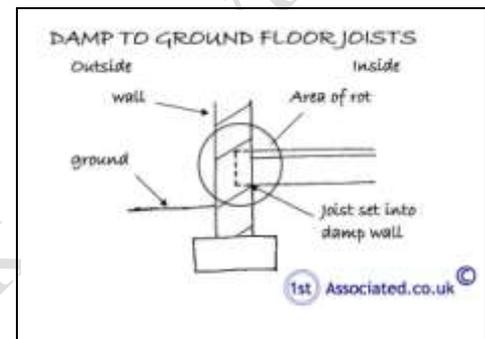
6) Deflection to the floors and tie bars

There is excessive deflection in the master bedroom floor. We believe this is due to the floor joists timbers rotting particularly at the ends and possibly woodworm. This age of property typically has floor joists that are embedded into the walls.

ACTION REQUIRED: A way of improving this which we would recommend is to add extra timber supports; quotations required.



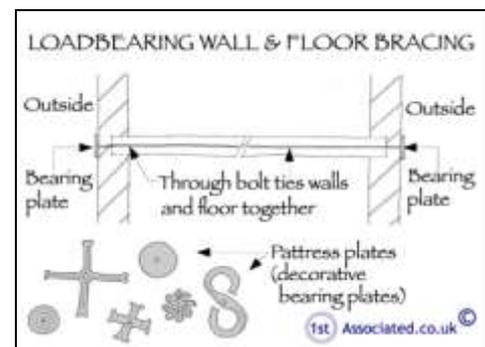
Tie bar



Tie Bars

We can also see that tie bars have been added. Tie Bars were typically put into properties in the 1960's to put this into perspective of the long term nature of the problems in this property.

Where we've opened up the floors to inspect properties such as this we found that sometimes the tie bars have rusted away.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the first floor is opened up and inspect to see the condition of the timber and the tie bar within it. We would be more than happy to return to do this or it could be carried out using digital photos and these emailed on.

Please see the External Walls and Floors Section of this Report.

7) Damp

We found damp throughout the property particularly the front and right hand side elevation.

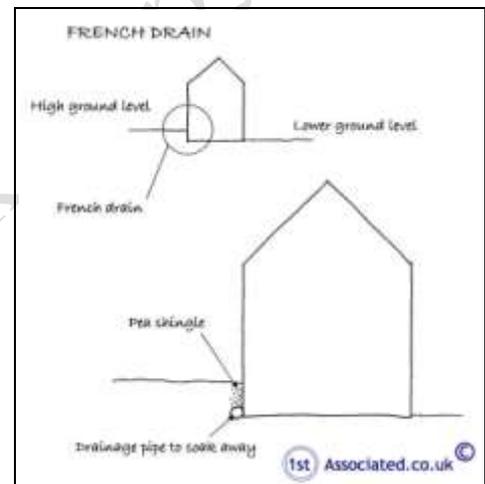
ACTION REQUIRED: In this age of property we would recommend a French gully.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £2,000 - £3,000; quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.



Rising damp



8) Lateral dampness

We can see staining within the master bedroom indicating lateral dampness is getting in. We also suspect from the different colours of yellow paint externally that there have been areas of paint deterioration over the years that have let in dampness.



Lateral damp

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to keep the exterior paintwork in good order to minimise dampness although in this age of property you should expect some damp particularly if the property is left unoccupied for some time. It is almost a characteristic of the building.

It should be noted when you do repaint that a paint that allows the property to breath should be used, not a plastic based paint.



Repainted yellow sections of the property

ANTICIPATED COST: Regular repainting externally with a suitable paint; quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

9) Land ownership and access rights

Your legal advisor needs to check and advise who owns the road and the land and whether the road has been adopted and maintained by the local council or whether you have to maintain it and also repair it and have liability for it.



Ownership of this driveway needs to be confirmed

ACTION REQUIRED: Full investigation by your legal advisor as to who owns what and who is liable for what.

SERVICES

10) Electrics

The fuse board is dated.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend it is replaced.

ANTICIPATED COST:In the region of £200 - £400 plus any other amendments and improvements recommended such as increasing the number of socket points; quotations required.

11) **Heating**

The heating may not be to the standard you are used to.

ACTION REQUIRED: You may wish to look at improving this such as with an oil fired boiler system; quotations required.

The Ugly

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

Further investigation is required before we can recommend purchasing this property. You also need to be comfortable with the characteristics of older properties being accepting of them because some of the issues in this property will not be easy to resolve to modern standards.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

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

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

Maintenance

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

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating in your own personal taste and style. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

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

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

Unfortunately we have to recommend further investigation on this property. We would be more than happy to carry out a return visit to comment further on the roof area to the right hand side which we weren't able to inspect and the roof as a whole once the wasps nest has been removed. We would also be happy to inspect the first floor when opened up and comment on the tie bars and the condition of the timbers. Finally we would comment that the ground floor is laid probably directly onto earth and therefore you should expect some dampness in this area. This will be particularly noticeable if you are living in a more modern property at the moment.

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.

If you so wish we can prepare specifications and obtain quotations for the work, whatever you do don't allow the estate agent to organise the quotes as he will utilise people he regularly uses who know they have to keep in with him/her to get further work and therefore are very keen to please the estate agent, as opposed to you the real client and at the end of the day it doesn't take long to organise.

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

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



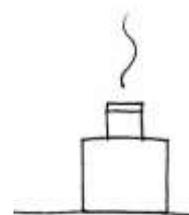
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EXTERNAL



CHIMNEYSTACKS

Chimneystacks

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

This property has one chimney, which is located reasonably centrally.

This is a substantial brick chimney which is brick finished with two chimney pots with a lead flashing. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition.



Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

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

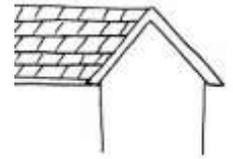


Close up of chimney pots – pots have protectors on to stop rain from coming in

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

Main Roof

The property has one main roof which is hipped; hipped roofs are self supporting and are more susceptible to movement than gable roofs.

The roof has a pantile roof covering, considering the age of the pantiles we believe they are in slightly below average condition. Some of the ridge tiles are starting to spall if you look at the photo these are ones that are a brighter red colour. You should watch the ridge for deterioration and also exposed areas such as the eaves.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Pantiles General information

Pantiles are generally found in areas that had trading connections with Holland. They were originally imported from Holland in the 17th Century, but were gradually superseded by home produced tiles. Both handmade and machine made pantiles went out of fashion in the 1900s.



Pantile roof



Some of the ridge tiles are starting to spall



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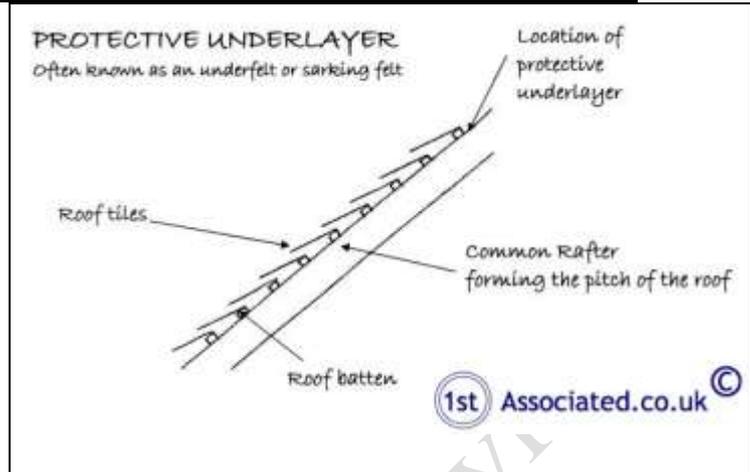
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You can see that the roof really has settled onto the timbers

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

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



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, its damaged in a few more places than we normally find.

This means that there was probably some work carried out in the 1960's/1970's on this roof.



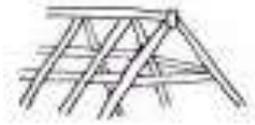
This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

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

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately seventy 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

We had a limited view of the roof due to the active wasps nest.

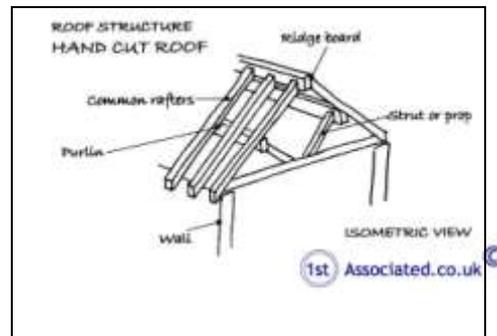
Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site with hand cut timbers (rather than machine cut). This is an old roof structure many old timbers and repairs with more modern timbers. We cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects as we have not been able to access all the roof; however its configuration is in line with what we typically see.

ACTION REQUIRED: Open up the right hand side section so that we can view the timbers.



View of roof

Roof Timbers

We found the area of the roof timbers that we could see generally in average condition considering their age albeit that it had woodworm as we would expect. We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



Repairs to the timbers

Our examination is limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items, as mentioned what we could see was generally found to be in an average condition considering its age with the exception of the woodworm. It is, however, feasible that there are additional problems in the roof that are hidden.

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

Water Tanks

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 did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation. We find condensation is more likely in relatively highly insulated roofs such as this all things being equal.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add vents.

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 couldn't see any due to the insulation.

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

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

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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

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be plastic and appeared in reasonable condition. There may be some minor leaks, but we feel that most people could live with these. It is notoriously difficult to secure gutters on this type of exposed rafter feet detail to the end of the roof.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out particularly as you have got some nearby trees they are likely to fill with leaves, twigs, etc. We would also recommend the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

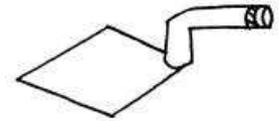
We could see a plastic soil and vent pipe. Generally the waste pipes and soil stack appear to be satisfactory where a surface inspection is possible, although in some parts they run in ducts and cannot be inspected.



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

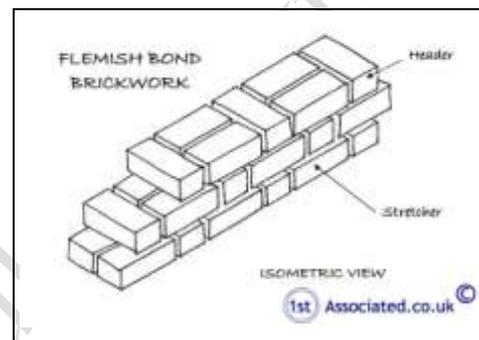


External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

Painted Brickwork

The brickwork is built in Flemish bond brickwork, which has had the original lime mortar repointed in cement and painted. Often the brickwork is carried out to try and reduce dampness.

The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.



Painted brickwork



Close up of spalling painted brickwork

Bonding Timbers

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are, of course, prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Penetrating Dampness

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case we believe that penetrating dampness has caused problems and will cause problems again. You will see spalling of the brickwork. It is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

Cracking

We noted areas where there was cracking visible and we also noted areas where different bricks had been used indicating repair work has been carried out.

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



Cracking to brickwork

Lintels

We noted timber lintels in some areas.

ACTION REQUIRED: If the walls are damp these will in turn be susceptible to rot and will need checking when the floors are opened up where possible.



Timber lintel

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

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

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FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

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

Under pinning

The long hot summers of the 1970s brought with them a mass of insurance claims for settlement which resulted in lots of under pinning, which as they were paid by the metre cube of concrete poured they poured a lot of concrete which we think may be the case in this instance which was not appropriate at all to older properties. In our question and answer session we were advised the property has been under pinned. The under pinning can take several forms from foundations being put under the original foundations, to piling, to ring beams.

In our experience we have found much of this mass concrete under pinning to have caused as many problems as it solved particularly on older properties where the weight and rigidity of mass concrete has not worked well with the original flexible construction

Please see our comments in the executive summary.

Building Insurance Policy

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

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

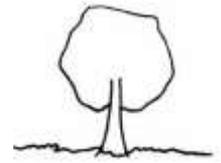
Present owner to place an insurance claim

We consider this a necessary condition of purchasing the property that the present owner places an insurance claim. You carry on with the claim with the same insurance company of course.

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.

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TREES



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

The trees and the property have obviously sat together happily for many years. However if trees are not maintained then they can cause problems. Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. There are a number of trees in the vicinity of the building, what we term within influencing distance, and we believe that these trees may be affecting the property. Properties with trees nearby will always be more susceptible to movement.

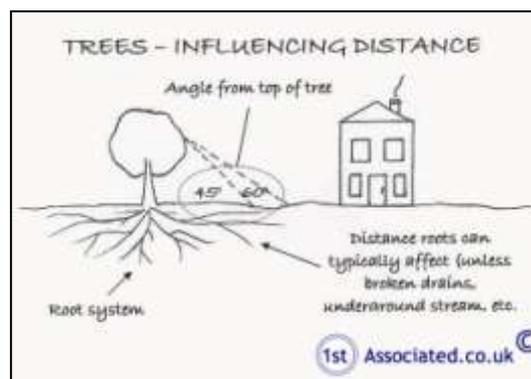
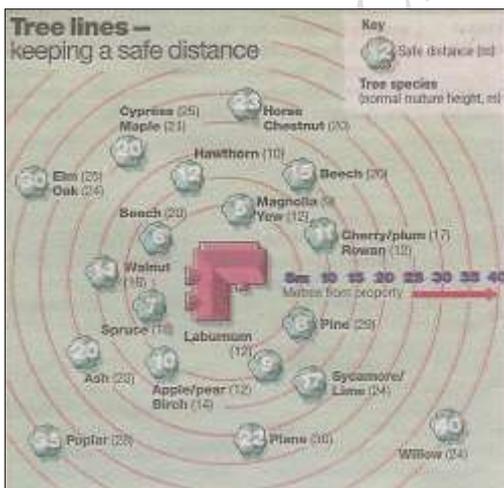


Nearby weeping willow tree

We noticed a mixture of trees including willow trees which can have a large root system which can affect properties. Interestingly, its generally considered that, where there is a willow tree there is usually water. There were some willow trees away from the pond itself.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend in the next few years that you take advice from an arboriculturalist (not a tree surgeon) as to the general maintenance required of the trees.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds; quotations required. Please see our comments within the executive summary.



Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.



DAMP PROOF COURSE

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

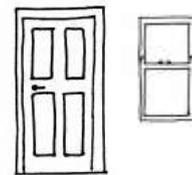
All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, unfortunately we can't see a DPC to the property because of the painted walls.

ACTION REQUIRED: We did find dampness, we would recommend in this instance initially that a French gulley is added.

Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

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

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 roof perimeter detail includes exposed rafter feet. We generally find that due to the awkwardness of these they do not get painted / stained as often as they should and you may find rot if they are closely examined. They are also very popular with birds for nesting.

ACTION REQUIRED: Re- Stain.



Rafter feet

Windows and Doors

The property has modern double glazed windows which were installed in 2009, 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 particularly prevalent in timber windows where they move at a different rate to the actual glass double glazed unit. 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.



Double glazed windows

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.

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

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EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

We would comment that, the redecoration of the walls when it is required will be either fairly expensive or take up several of your weekends. You should not underestimate redecorating and the importance of keeping the building water tight.



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

Please see our comments in the Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors section.

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INTERNAL

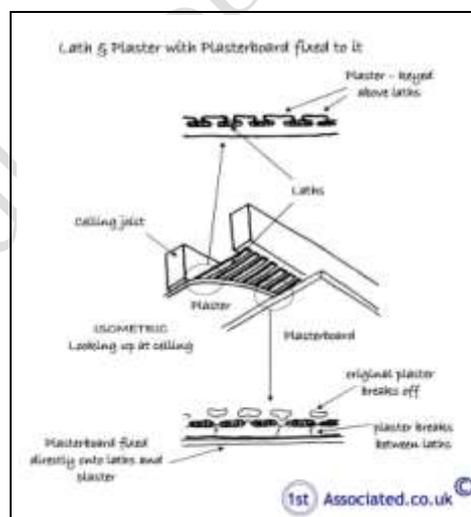


CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

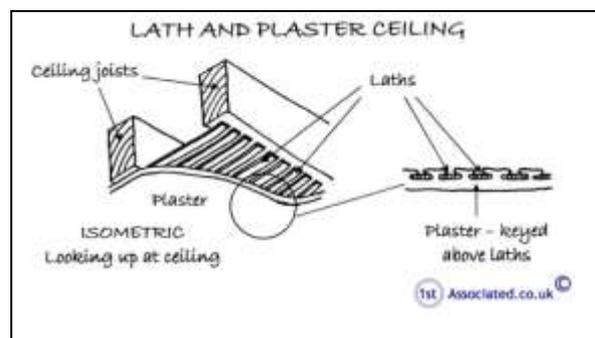
Ceilings

We would comment that we have only had a limited view of the ceilings due to limited access to the roof space, however we would comment from a visual inspection within the rooms and our knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are originally lath and plaster, but may have in some areas had plasterboard tacked over them or been replaced with plasterboard. This type of work is normally carried out where the ceilings are in poor condition, as removing lath and plaster is very messy, time consuming and expensive as it is labour intensive.



Lath and Plaster Defined

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



Plasterboard Defined

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

Internal Walls and Partitions

We have carried out a tap test on the internal walls (this is not rocket science, it is literally tapping the walls and listening for the sound made) and found the majority to be solid when tapped, which, for this age of property, indicates that internal construction is likely to be brickwork. We much prefer this type of construction as it minimises noise transfer between rooms.



Crack in main bedroom

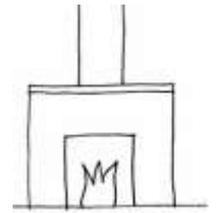
Perimeter Walls

The plaster to the brickwork looks to be the original lime based type plaster.

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

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

CHIMNEYBREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

Both chimneys are in regular use we are advised by the present owner. The Rayburn in the kitchen and the wood burner in the lounge provide the heating for the house as well as the single panel radiators and the electric heaters.



Fireplace in lounge

The chimneys were last swept in March 2010 and they had a new liner and cowls in 2007.

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

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

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

The floors are finished with a tile and carpet finish. The tiles are likely to be directly onto earth in this age of property. We lifted the carpet and found there was timber underneath this. We suspect tiles are underneath this and then directly onto earth again. It is likely there will be some dampness. Only major work costing many thousands of pounds with the replacement of the floor would make the floor dry to modern standards. You have to consider this is part of the character of older properties which we feel you have to make a decision whether it is acceptable before you buy the property.



Quarry tile floor to kitchen

First Floor

We have not opened up the floor, but we do feel that it has an above average level of deflection - it is certainly more than we typically see (bearing in mind we are seeing old properties all of the time). This can be for many reasons, from under sized timbers to lack of lateral restraint, to wet rot and wood worm. In this instance we would like to open up the floor as we note there is modern floorboards we believe there is likely to be older floor joists which are embedded into the walls.

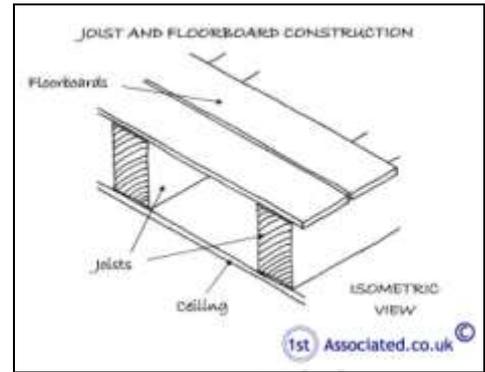


Modern floorboards
which are embedded into the walls.

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

DAMPNESS

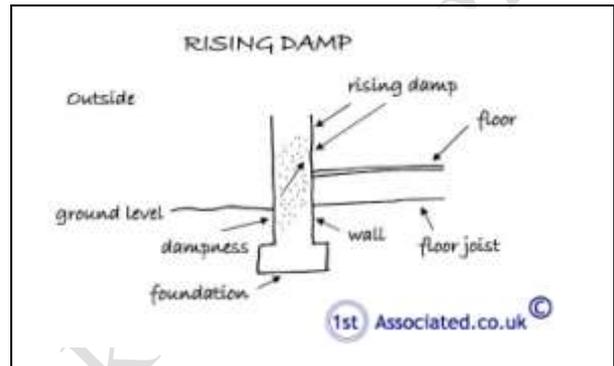


In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

Rising Damp

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

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



The readings we obtained indicated that there is some dampness in the property. It is located throughout but we had higher readings towards the front of the property in the right hand side. You should bear in mind that these readings have been taken during warm weather so it is only likely to get worse in the colder, wetter months.

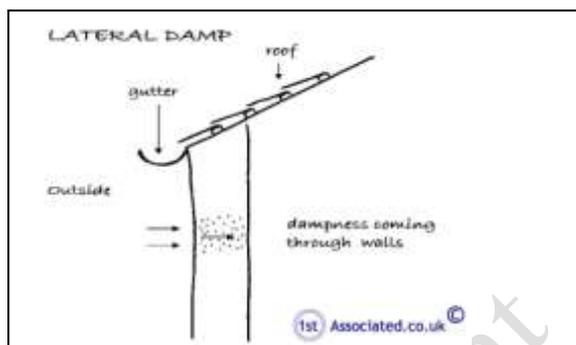


Checking for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our recommendations in the executive summary but you do need to accept that dampness in this age of property is part of the property's character.

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. Whilst we got damp readings these were in line with what was expected for this type of construction. The area of staining within the main bedroom we think is due to a leaking gutter or tiles above.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to check the gutter, the tiles above and also the painted brickwork in this area.



Checking for lateral damp

Condensation

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

When we inspected the roof space we noted very little air movement and believe due to the insulation levels that condensation may be or become a problem.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation to the roof.

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

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The property has painted timber ledge doors, this is the traditional construction.



Typical ledge brace door

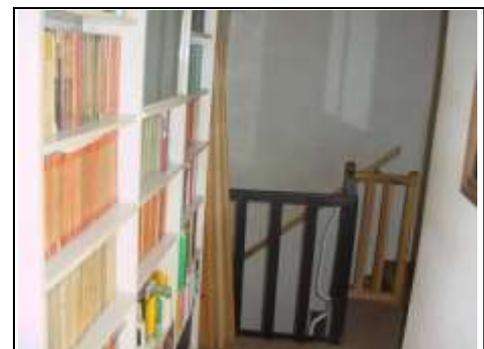
Staircase

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

The staircase is steep and quite awkward. Again you need to consider this as part of the character of the property.



Underside of stairs not lined



Awkward steep stairs

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in average condition.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Storage

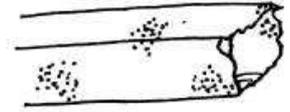
The owner explained there is limited storage in which meant they put the false part ceiling within the master bedroom. (This has therefore limited our view in this area). We would suggest an opening is made in the roof from this side to check the roof timbers.



Underside of storage system

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 Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors Section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please remember we have not opened up the floors and there is limited access into the roof.

Wet Rot

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

In the areas inspected no evidence was found of any wet rot, however we believe it is likely there is some wet rot in the first floor timbers. Please see our recommendations to open up the floor.

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.

In the areas inspected we did find woodworm as we would expect.

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

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

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

As explained earlier our view was limited in the roof. The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity other than flight holes. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers. We would comment in this instance that the wasps nest did mean that we had a shorter than usual look and we would be happy to return once the wasps nest is removed.

ACTION REQUIRED: Remove the wasps nest. We would be happy to return.

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



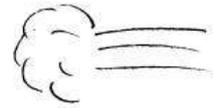
With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paint (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The internal decorations are in a reasonable condition although they may not be to your 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.

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are now required within 28 days of putting your property on the open market and in most cases you must have commissioned an EPC in England and Wales before you market your property.

Roof Insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not to current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. In this instance you have approximately 150mm.

Walls

The walls to this property are probably solid, but you cannot be certain of the construction in this age of property without opening them up. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in old solid wall construction without major alterations, which will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space.

Windows

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

Services

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

Summary

Overall, considering the properties age, type and style, it has below average thermal properties.

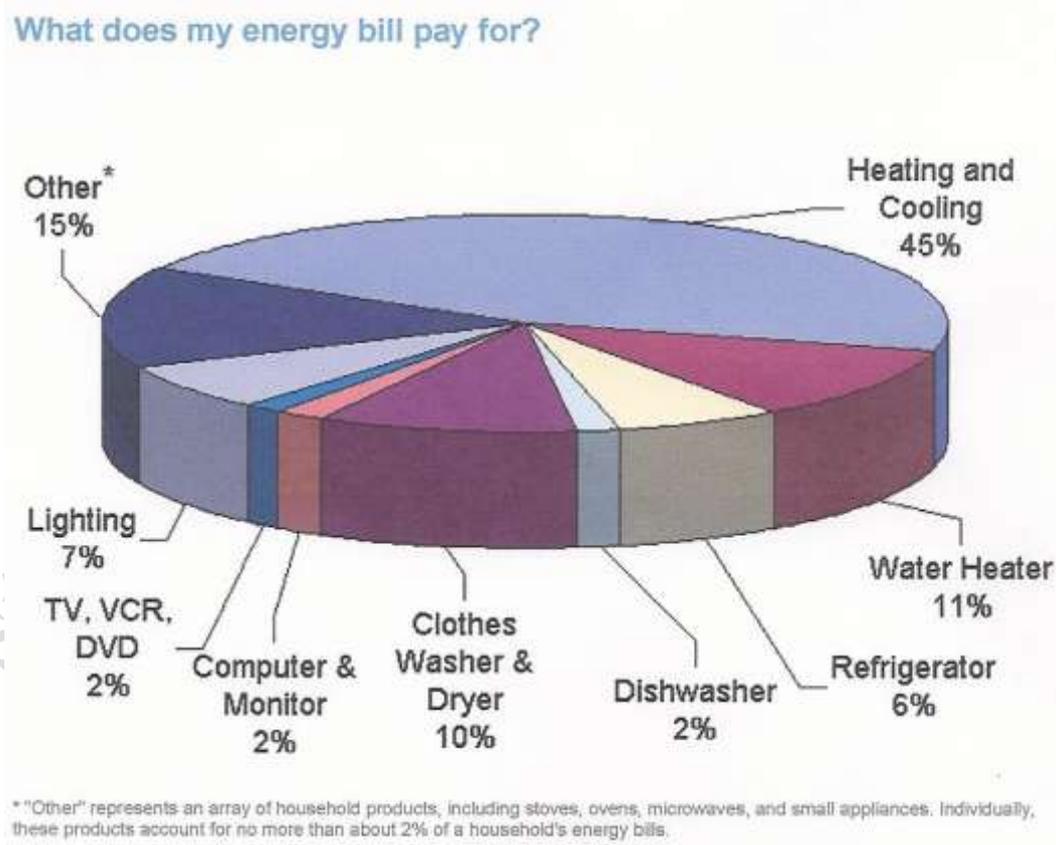
Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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



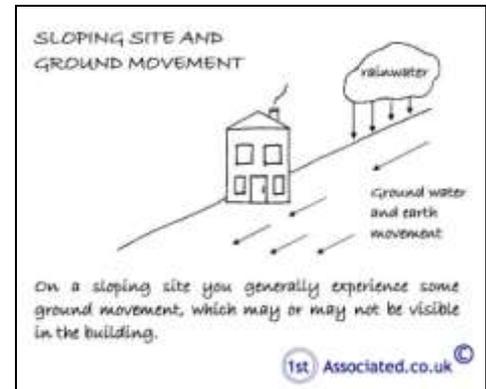
OTHER MATTERS



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

Sloping Site

Any property on a sloping site albeit slight as in this case, is more susceptible than one on a flat site; it is simply the laws of gravity. Foundations normally allow for such occurrences, particularly in newer properties, although there can still be some minor movement.



Security System

Given the location you may wish to consider a good quality security system. You can get some that are linked to the internet and you can view by close circuit tv cameras at your property.

Insurance

Please note our earlier comments with regards to the present owner making a claim. We would always recommend staying with the existing insurance company, and then if there are any problems you should not have the difficulty of negotiating with two insurance companies passing the blame between each other.

Asbestos

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

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

SERVICES

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

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

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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 area under the stairs. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1960s. Re-wireable fuses are now superseded. Far better fuse boards are now available.



ACTION REQUIRED: Replace the fuse board as soon as possible. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Dated 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 and this proved satisfactory.

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

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

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

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 are advised that the controlling stopcock is located by the kitchen sink. The external one is located on the footpath approaching Metfield Common. We would recommend that the existing owner shows you where this is.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage tests we checked the pressure, literally by putting a finger over a tap, and the pressure seemed typical of what we find.

The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones, have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

We have not used a listening stick to check for water leaks

Cold Water Cistern

We have not found a water tank. This may be due to our limited view of the roof space.

Plumbing

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

Heating

We noted that there are a fair number of single panel radiators, which may not warm the property to the heat that you desire. In most modern installations double panel radiators are used and often double panel convection radiators, which are more efficient.

Heat is very subjective you may wish to live in the building before you change the radiators.



Single panel radiators supplemented with electric heaters

Ten Minute Heating Test

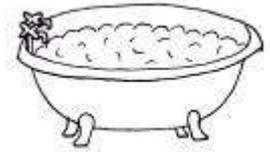
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the system is a Rayburn solid fuel burner and would need a fire starting, so the heating has not been tested.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owner to confirm the heating is working satisfactorily and provide any guarantees or/ and annual inspections

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

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

BATHROOM



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

The property has a dated bathroom suite. You may wish to look at replacing this in due course.

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.

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MAIN DRAINS



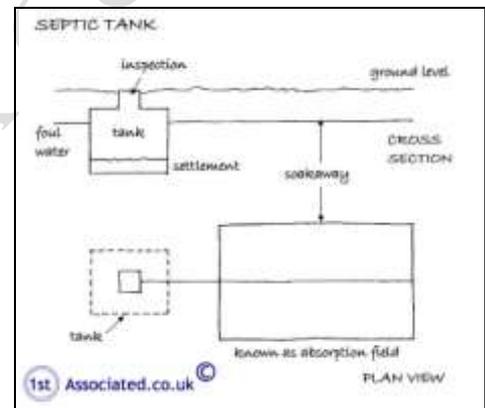
The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.

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.

We were advised that the property has a septic tank.

Septic Tank

The property is served by a traditional septic tank installation, a private drainage arrangement that is entirely the responsibility of the building owner. 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. We asked to be shown the lid of the septic tank. The owner advised that he has only had it emptied three or so times in the time he has been at the property (28 years) therefore highly likely that it is leaking which is a common problem with brick.

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.

Rainwater in this age of property is likely to be discharged directly into the ground which can be an additional reason why the property is damp.

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.

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OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING



**Victorian
Detached
Cottage**

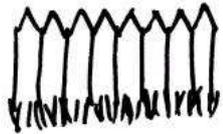


Owners car park next to the adjoining property (ownership and liability needs to be confirmed)



Access driveway/private road

S EXTERNAL AREAS r r Gardens



Garden looking towards summer house



Meadow area



The pond was dark and murky on the day of our visit

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

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

Neighbours

Only Neighbour

We knocked on the door and went around the property and there was no answer however we did note the remains of a mill in the garden.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

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

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

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the www.1stAssociated.co.uk Home Page.

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

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REFERENCES

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Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components
*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
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Surveying buildings
*By Malcolm Hollis published by Royal Institution of
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

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APPENDICES

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LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was a very hot summer's 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	Third wettest August since 1956
2009	Heaviest snowfall in March since 1991
2010	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years

References BBC News www.bbc.co.uk

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

NOT LOCAL

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

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as we haven't been able to get into the roof properly due to the wasps nest and also into the right hand side of the roof and we haven't opened up the first floor. We also haven't had the benefit of meeting yourself at the property to discuss your requirements.

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.

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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.

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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

www.globrix.com

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