

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Croydon, Surrey CR0



FOR

Mr Q

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey development in a modern courtyard style pattern. It has been extended and amended over the years.

To the rear is the garden and adjacent, but a short walk away, is the car parking area.

We believe the property was built in the 1970's; in fact this is typical of Local Authority developments that we have come across before and carried out or sponsored by the GLC (Greater London Council). 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!

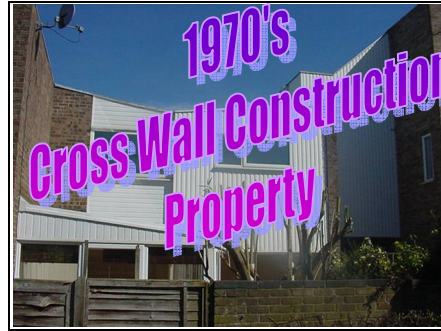
Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

1971	Decimalisation
Early 1970s	British Property Boom
1973	Britain enters the European Economic Community
1977	Elvis Presley Dies
1978-1979	The Winter of Discontent
1979-1991	The Thatcher Years
1980	John Lennon Shot Dead

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear View



Entrance area



Garden



Courtyard area

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance area
- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Cloakroom
- 4) Living room, extended to a conservatory area

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Four bedrooms
- 2) Bathroom

Outside Areas

There is a garden to the rear and car parking is a short walk away; as far as we could see it was not allocated, although we generally find it normally is. Your legal adviser needs to check the Deeds to see if there is a specific parking spot that you have and parking spots for visitors. We did note warnings with regard to clamping of vehicles.

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



Kitchen



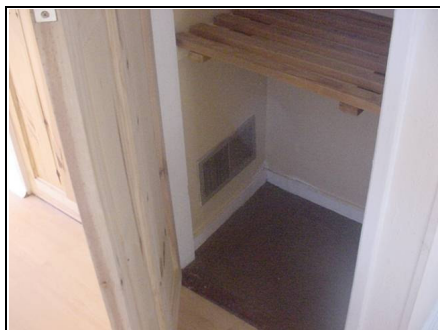
Cloakroom



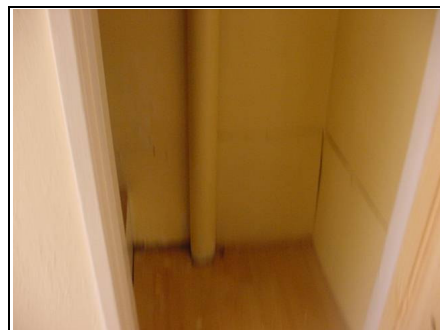
Living room



Conservatory



Airing cupboard



Old cupboard for boiler

First Floor



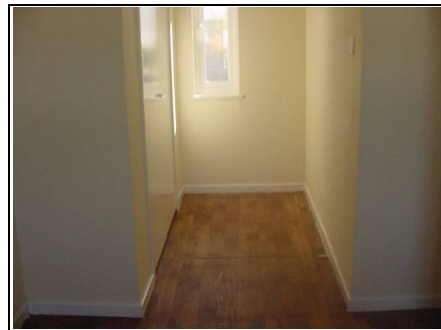
Front bedroom



Bathroom



Bedroom over archway



Rear bedroom



Rear bedroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Main Roof:	Modern butterfly roof
Gutters and Downpipes And Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal (assumed plastic)
Walls:	Mixture of Stretcher Bond brickwork, plastic cladding and painted render (assumed)
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed plastic windows without trickle vents

Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (vaulted to first floor)
Walls:	All internal studwork and perimeter walls dry lined (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Solid underfoot, assumed concrete
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards (lightweight) (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The boiler is located in the rear bedroom and is a Worcester and the electrics are from the 1990s and are located next to the kitchen and the gas meter is also located here.

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 100 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 and also this age, type and style of property has a few specific problems with design that you need to understand and be aware of. 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!

- 1) Surrounding landscaping was well maintained at the time of our inspection.
- 2) The rooms are quite spacious for a relatively modern building.
- 3) The property has been extended in the form of a conservatory, although also please see our comments about the extension.

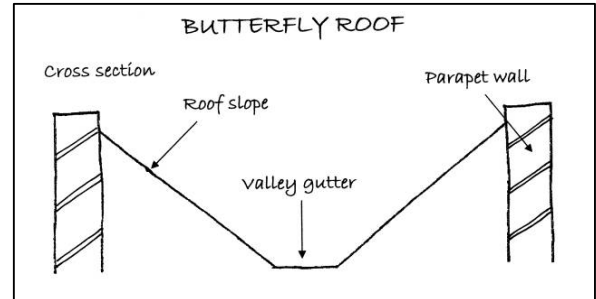
We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

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) Main Roof

We have been unable to get onto the roof which we prefer to do, however we have been able to view it from the adjoining property and it looks to be a modern butterfly roof. It looks to be a felt roof that has been covered in a reflective paint, more normally used on an asphalt roof.



Overview of roof



Close up view of roof

The areas that we have been able to view, albeit from a distance, look to have some life left in them. We would however, if we had been able to get onto the roof, have been examining the valley gutters, as this is the weak area in this style of butterfly roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: There is no easy roof access at the moment. We would suggest adding a roof hatch so roof access can take place or a roof light if you want the extra light in the room, or employing a roofing contractor with a set of long ladders or tower scaffolding prior to purchasing the property to view the roof. If they take further photos, particularly to the valley gutter we would then be able to comment further.

ANTICIPATED COST: A better safe than sorry way of doing this is to budget for the sum of £2,000 to £3,000, of which you will need £500 to £1,000 of this to form a roof hatch to give access to the roof area. We suspect that work will be required to the valley gutters and the parapet walls, around flues and other surface pipes and the drainage points, as these are common areas. Please obtain quotations.

Alternatively, if you do not wish to form a roof hatch or roof light you do need to get access to the roof via a long ladder or tower scaffolding before the winter of 2011.

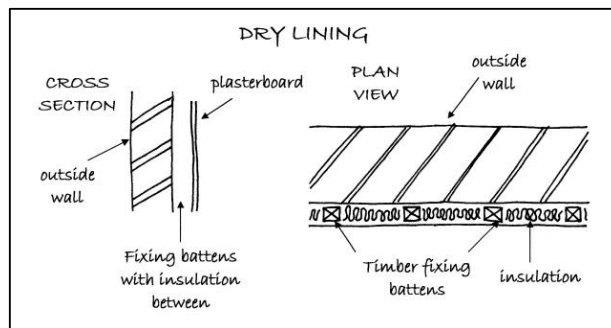
On reflection, if you do form a roof hatch then it will also give the opportunity to check the level of insulation within the roof void which is important with this property. Please see our comments later on within this report.

Note: if you do decide to add insulation you need to be very careful to avoid causing condensation or interstitial condensation.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

2) Cross wall construction – Characteristics of the property you need to be happy with

1.1 The property is a 1970's cross wall construction, which is a construction which is no longer commonly used. Cross wall construction means the weight of the roof is supported on the main brick walls and the in fill walls (the cladding panelled walls and the render walls) are a lightweight construction. Typically in a 1970's construction they were not insulated or not insulated very well at the time of construction (although they could have been insulated after by the Local Authority).



Cladding

1.2 They are likely to have used concrete lintels which can cause condensation in this age, type and style of property.

1.3 They often used non-traditional roofing, such as the modern butterfly roof on this property, and little thought was given to maintenance of them.



Concrete lintel

ACTION REQUIRED: We suggest a section of the cladding is removed to check the insulation level before the winter of 2011, as this would then give the opportunity to increase the insulation if you so wish.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 to £500 for investigation work, as it will need a tower scaffolding for all the cladding boards to be removed safely. Please note our comments later on about the damage and deterioration to some of the cladding boards.



Deterioration to base of cladding board

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

3) Mastic Seals Externally

We noted that some of the mastic seals externally to the brickwork/cladding/render were starting to deteriorate and these should be replaced as they will allow damp in.

ACTION REQUIRED: Remove existing mastic and re-mastic.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds, plus the cost of accessing the area which could be awkward and may need tower scaffolding.

Please see the Windows and Doors Section of this Report.



Mastic going between render and brickwork

4) **Lightweight Floor**

You need to re-check the floor is to your satisfaction as it deflects more than a floor of today or yesteryear would. We come across this from time to time in 1960's/1970's built houses.

ACTION REQUIRED

AND ANTICIPATED COST: No cost, you have to decide whether this is a characteristic of the property that you are happy to live with the deflection in the floor. We recommend a re-visit to the property.

Please see the Floors Section of this Report.

5) **Services**

Heating

This property originally had a warm air system which has now been changed to a boiler and central heating system, but many of the radiators are internally positioned. Radiators are normally located under windows so that as the heat rises it circulates the cool air from the window.



Old air vent for old warm air system

The retro fitting of radiators internally has usually been carried out to:

- 1 Make the job easier for the plumber as there is less piping to do.
- 2 Keep the costs down
- 3 Ensure the job is done quickly



Internal radiator

Either way they do not work as well as radiators on external walls.

Another reason why radiators may not have been put on external walls is because of lack of insulation in the external walls which may lead to them freezing up.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to be aware that the changing to radiator panels within this property may not be ideal, particularly given the high vaulted ceilings.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

6) Heat gain in the summer and heat loss in the winter

Heat Gain

As an overall comment, the property will have considerable heat gain during the summer, due to areas we have mentioned, such as the likelihood of there being a lack of insulation in the roof, lack of insulation to the panels of the property, and also due to the heat gain from the conservatory area.

We noted in the conservatory there is no windows in the roof, which is often added to allow the heat to be let out quickly (when we spoke to one of your neighbours they advised us that the properties do get warm in the winter and as far as we could see she did not have a conservatory to add to the warmth).

Heat Loss

Equally, you are likely to have heat loss during the winter months, due again to the lack of insulation in the roofs and the walls and the conservatory area. We do not wish to put this out of perspective, as many houses of this era are constructed in the same way and we have actually lived in a house with vaulted ceilings such as this and enjoyed the height of the ceilings, though we noted the extra heating bills!

ACTION REQUIRED

AND ANTICIPATED COST: No cost, you have to decide whether this is a characteristic of the property that you are happy to live with.

7) Bedroom Over Archway

One of the bedrooms sits over an archway. We have come across instances in the past where the accelerated wind speed beneath the arch causes a cooling to the room (wind chill factor) and one incidence led to lots of condensation; which was especially evident to the floors. Whilst we cannot see it in this property it does need the property to be occupied for us to be able to view this.



Archway and room above

A solution to this is to insulate underneath the floors, which may or may not have happened as part of the design or been added later. One of the cases we were involved with ultimately led to the sale of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to specifically ask whether there is a cooling effect in the bedroom over the archway and condensation occurring. We are particularly concerned about this room because it looks to have been re-painted; what we would term as 'painted to sell'.

ANTICIPATED COST: No cost, you have to decide whether this is a characteristic of the property that you are happy to live with.

8) Condensation Likely/Painted to Sell

In this property, due to the way it has been constructed:

- 8.1 the insulation levels
- 8.2 the roof having a void, being vaulted and following the line of the roof.
- 8.3 the archway under the property, with the accelerated wind chill factor
- 8.4 the internal radiators

we think it is likely to have condensation internally.

We are concerned that internally the property looked to have been 'painted to sell', particularly given that it is likely to have condensation which could be being hidden.

ACTION REQUIRED

AND ANTICIPATED COST: No cost, you have to decide whether this is a characteristic of the property that you are happy to live with.

Please see the Dampness and Internal Decoration Sections of this Report.

The Ugly

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

This age of property has various characteristics that we have identified and which some people may or may not be happy to live with. We are aware that some local authorities and housing associations are now having serious problems with these buildings. We are aware of one local authority who actually pulled them down due to the problems.

Having said that, we do not wish to get this out of perspective and we suggest you have a return visit and speak to some of the neighbours. The neighbours we did manage to speak to were friendly and enjoyed living in the property, but we are aware we only spoke to two neighbours so it would be well worth you returning to review the property and speak to other nearby neighbours.

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 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 have some challenges with regard to maintenance, for example access to the roof, the insulation levels of the walls and generally keeping the property free of condensation. Please see our comments above.

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 (please see our comments about the property being 'painted to sell'). 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:

We strongly believe you need to re-visit the property with a copy of our report and review the property, as well as talking to neighbouring houses. We would also like to have a chat with you about this era of construction.

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**



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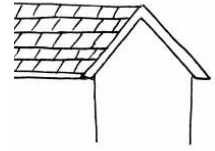
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EXTERNAL

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

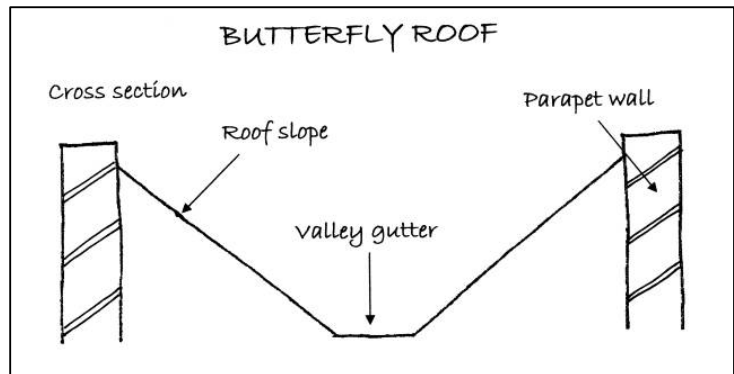


The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.

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

Unfortunately we could not see the roof properly. We have viewed it from next door's property and can see this is a modern butterfly roof. Typically this type of roof would have been built in the 1880's/1890's and was revived in the 1970s. Both eras of roofs are well known for their problems.



Overview of roof



Close up of roof



Extreme close up of roof

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary. From the photos the roof looks in reasonable condition, although we cannot see the valley gutters which are typically the problem areas, as well as the parapet walls and around the flues and drainage points.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to get onto the roof to get it viewed. This will need a long ladder or scaffold access, or a roof hatch forming in the ceiling internally leading out on to the roof; presently there is no way of going inside the roof space. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Problems with the Parapet Wall

We think there are problems with the parapet wall, as we can see discolouring in the cladding, which indicates that water is getting down behind the cladding which could come from the parapet wall.

Conservatory

The conservatory has a single pitched roof. We are not certain whether it is plastic in the form of polycarbonate or glass; either way it needs a good clean. Our main concern is the amount of heat gain that the conservatory will give to the property and we would expect normally to have a window in the roof to allow the heat out and also to have blinds in this type of roof to reduce the sun.



Lack of flashing to conservatory roof

Flues

We were able to see the top of one flue. This looks to be the disused from the old air ventilation system and it looks to be asbestos, which was a common material used in this age of property.



Asbestos flue

Unfortunately we were only able to see the roof via access from next door's property, looking down from their third floor bedroom, which is not ideal. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection is recommended and 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

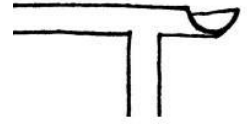
No access, we therefore cannot comment on its construction or condition.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend an access hatch be provided to facilitate inspection of the roof, maintenance and repair and it will also enable the construction of the roof to be established.

Roof Structure

As mentioned, we have lived in a property such as this where we opened up the roof to find plasterboard, 50mm of insulation, an underfelt and the roof covering, which is what we suspect you have in this instance. It is fair to say there is very little between you and the outside elements and therefore you will feel the effect of warm days and cold days.

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES

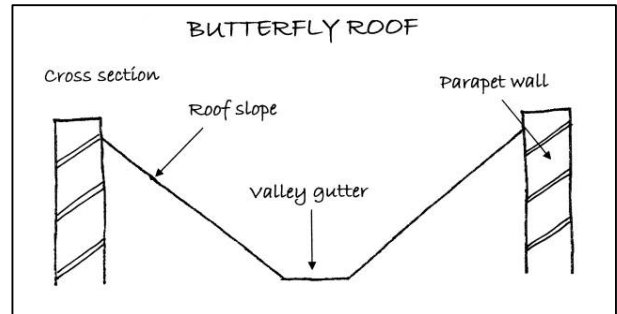


The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

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

Gutters and Downpipes

We believe the gutters to be internal. This is reasonably typical with this age, type and style of building with a modern butterfly roof, where water will discharge down the valley gutters and this is where problems can occur.



In this case we were unable to see how the rainwater discharges. Typically it is down plastic downpipes in this age of property, however these are concealed within service ducts, therefore you cannot see if they are leaking or not unless it is extreme and the actual ductwork is getting wet as well, in which case you really have problems.

We feel that the inside has been re-painted relatively recently which could be hiding latent defects ('painted to sell'). We have carried out a check with an electronic damp meter to the top of the walls and ceilings to see if there is any dampness coming through and we have not found any, but we will repeat our earlier comment that this is not the same as actually getting on the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: For the above reasons it is essential for you to gain access to the roof.

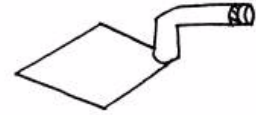
Soil and Vent Pipe

The waste pipes and soil stack are internal and in ducts and cannot be directly inspected. We can see the top of the soil and vent pipe (as you can see in the adjoining photo), the remainder is within the service ducts.



Soil and vent pipe in front right hand corner and asbestos flue pipe in rear

WALLS



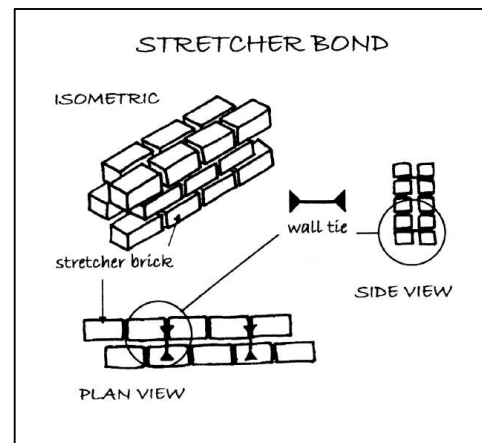
External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

We will consider the walls in three areas; Stretcher Bond brickwork, render and shiplap boarding/cladding.

Brickwork

This property is brick finished and laid in a cement mortar. This is all bedded in what is known as Stretcher Bond.

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



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

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. As there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties.

At around this time construction was starting to change and some were being insulated, although it was not common.

Wall Tie Failure

We did not note any signs to indicate there is wall tie failure. Normally this is in the form of horizontal cracking.

WALL TIE FAILURE

Wall tie failure occurs from around the 1940's to 1970's and the wall ties used can rust. It is possible to replace defects and a specialist contractor should be engaged to investigate further to establish the extent of the problem and the cost of replacement.



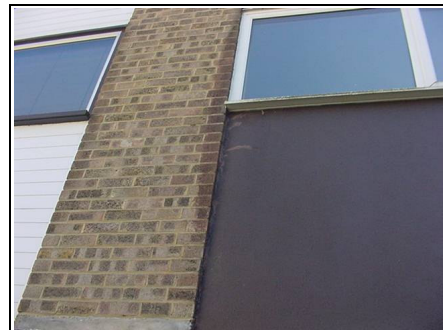
Stretcher Bond brickwork

Mastic

The mastic is starting to fail and this will lead to dampness. We think some dampness is already getting into the brickwork, as can be seen in the adjoining photo. It may also be due to the window detailing.



Mastic disintegrating



Dampness getting into brickwork

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

Render

Some walls to this property are finished in a smooth faced painted render. We have carried out a tap test to the render level (by literally going up a ladder and tapping the render with the back of a hammer) and there does not appear to be any hollow areas where the render has lost its bond with the background in the areas inspected.



Render

Hairline cracks to the render

In this instance we can see some render cracks that have been repaired. We also noted on other buildings that the render has been completely clad over. Doing this gives the opportunity to add insulation as well as additional weather protection.



Render cracks that have been repaired

Shiplap Boarding / Cladding

The property has a plastic cladding. There is no way of knowing what is beneath the cladding, however with this age of property they tend to be poorly insulated and it is likely it goes on to a timber frame which in turn then has the plasterboard that is inside of the room.



Cladding

There certainly looks to be a problem with the cladding in some areas where it is deteriorating at the base. To us this indicates it is getting in at roof level, possibly via the parapet wall (if you recall we mentioned in the roof section that the parapet walls can be a problem), then transferring down behind the cladding and coming out at the base. We have come across this problem several times previously.



Some deterioration to base of cladding

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to check the parapet walls on the roof to ensure they are watertight and we recommend you strip back a section of the cladding to check the condition underneath. It could be that it sits on timber battens and these are rotting due to the water that is being transferred down from the roof.

Garden Wall

We can see a lot of moss to the base of the garden wall and we noted it was actually built in a different brick. It therefore leads us to the conclusion that may be a great deal of water running against this wall to cause the moss and it is certainly unusual to have a garden wall in a different brick to the main building.



Moss to garden wall

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

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

Given that the properties age and type, we would expect to find a strip concrete foundation. As these are generally used in this type of construction as they are both quick and economical.

London Clay

This property stands on London Clay, as with the majority of properties in London. It is, therefore, more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow, etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

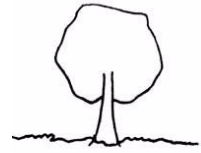
Building Insurance Policy

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

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

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

TREE

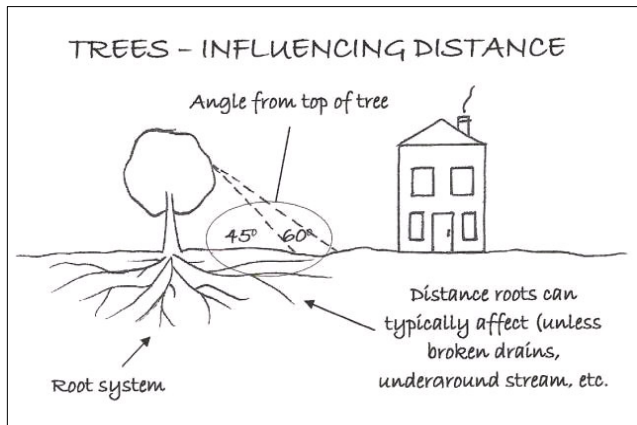
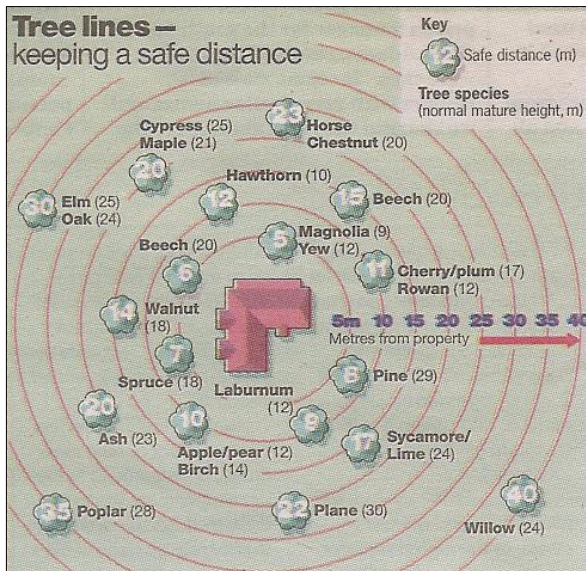


Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

The property has a smallish tree nearby in the courtyard area which are probably maintained by the management company. We noticed there is a tree that looks to be dead within your garden, having said that many things come to life in spring! It should be remembered that trees need maintenance.



Nearby tree



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.

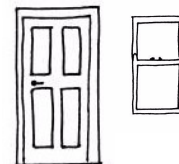
All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, we could see a DPC visible which looks to be the older bitumen style DPC. Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.



Damp proof course

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.

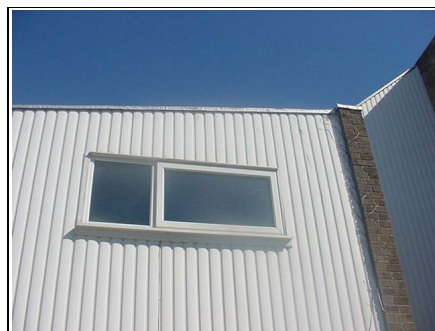
WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

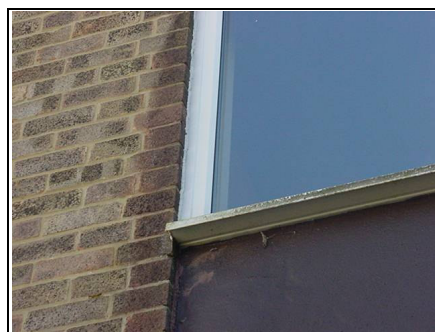
Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

The property has plastic, double glazed windows, which generally look to be of average quality for the year made. We would term them as being from the poorer end of the market. We did not for example note any trickle vents, indicating the windows are pre 1990s and this is another reason why condensation could be occurring in the property.



Plastic windows without trickle vent

We would also add that some of the plastic has seen better days and needs a good clean, possibly replacement. We noticed for example to the window sill that can be seen in the photo that moss and mould were getting in to the sill.



Cleaning of plastic windows required

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. In this case they are in average condition.

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

Small vents to the windows to allow air movement inside the property to stop a build up of fumes or humidity.

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Conservatory

The property has had a conservatory extension added. We assume that some form of guarantee was obtained with this. We would also advise that typically in our experience these roofs always leak and are prone to condensation.



Conservatory

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to ask the existing owners about a guarantee.

We have also noted elsewhere within this report there will be considerable heat gain due to the conservatory, which we could feel on the day of our inspection, which was only a spring day. We would normally expect to find some way of releasing the heat via a window and we would always recommend blinds / shutters for all windows on a conservatory to enable you to adjust the level of heat coming in.

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. We have opened up a random selection of windows and doors 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.

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 there is not that much to redecorate. There are some painted render areas and there are some cracks in the render which need filling as soon possible and then redecorating.

This may be something that the landlord / management company organises with a contribution so that everyone paints at the same time in the same way.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to check.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL



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.

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings (because we have not been able to get into the roofs) and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe the ceilings are to be plasterboard (assumed).

Plasterboard Defined

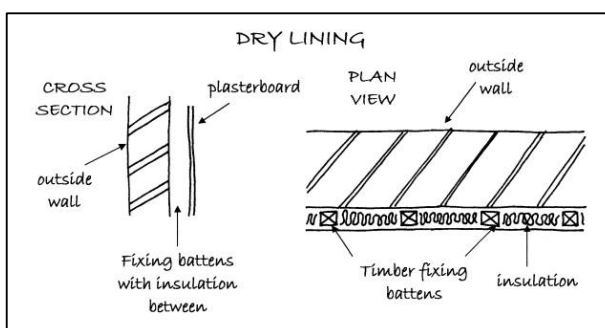
The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard, which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

Internal Walls and Partitions

These are all studwork, based upon a tap test and our comments earlier that this is a cross wall construction property.

Perimeter Walls

These are all dry lined, which unfortunately means we have been unable to establish things like dampness, condensation, etc due to the way this type of construction affects our electronic damp meter readings.



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.

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

The floors felt solid underfoot so we have assumed they are formed in concrete, however, we have not opened up the floors or lifted carpets/floor coverings.

First Floor

We do feel that it has an above average level of deflection; it is certainly more than we typically see. This can be for many reasons, from undersized timbers to lack of lateral restraint, to wet rot and woodworm. In this instance we feel it may be because there is proprietary style of construction that they were using to this type of property and it could well be a steel joist or what is known as an engineered timber joist. We simply do not know without opening up the structure.



Damage to timber floor

From your point of view you need to check to see that you are happy with this extra deflection that it is causing and the lightweight feel. We would emphasise this as we had one client who was particularly unhappy when they moved into the property and they found this.

The first floor had an unusual finish in some areas, which unfortunately stopped us from viewing it, as it was literally tacked down and in other areas there was laminate flooring.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regard to condensation occurring on the floors and accelerated wind affect.

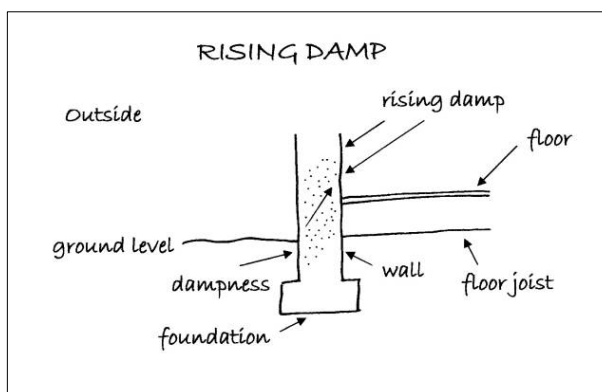
DAMPNESS



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

Rising Damp

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



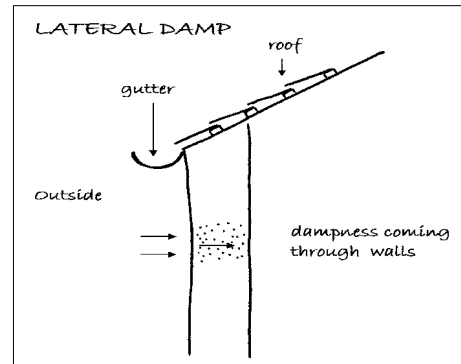
We would normally carry out tests with an electronic damp meter. However, as your property is dry-lined we were limited in what readings we could get. We carried out a visual inspection and did not find any signs of significant dampness coming through but has the property been 'painted to sell'?



Checking for rising damp

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Again, we would normally carry out tests with an electronic damp meter. However, as your property is dry-lined we were limited in what readings we could get. We carried out a visual inspection and did not find any signs of significant dampness coming through but, as mentioned previously, has the property been 'painted to sell'?



Checking for lateral dampness
but property dry lined

Condensation

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

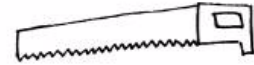
There are several factors in this property that mean it could have condensation; the main one being the way it has been designed and originally built and in addition to this amended.

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

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 pine glazed doors and panel pressed doors and, all things considered, they are in average condition and fit reasonably.

We note that the glazed doors do not have the British Standards kite mark, meaning that this is not safety glass, which it is now required to be. We would emphasise the importance of safety glass in doors, particularly if you have small children living in the property, as they can literally run into these types of doors.

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace with safety glass or replace doors.



Painted panel door



Glass door without any safety glass

Staircase

You have an open tread staircase, which was common in the 1970's and a popular part of the style of this era.

Kitchen

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

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please remember we have not opened up the floors, we have not had an inspection of the roof or had the benefit of talking of the owner.

Wet Rot

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

Generally no visual evidence was found of any significant wet rot. We would advise again we have not opened up the floors, we have not inspected the roof or had the benefit of talking of the owner.

Woodworm



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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm, however we have been unable to access this area. We would temper this with, in this age of property timber was normally treated for woodworm etc, nevertheless it can be brought in on furniture and such like and we were unable to inspect the floors due to the floor coverings.

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The decoration is reasonably new. We believe the property may have been 'painted to sell'. Our concern here is what defects are being hidden by the paintwork and latent defects may appear, such as condensation.

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

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place. This very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, within hallways this tends to be greater than for example within a spare bedroom.

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs

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

Roofs

The property has a modern vaulted roof and given the age of the property it is likely to have limited amount of insulation that has been added at a later date, and we could not see any signs of this.

Walls

Whilst the cavity wall construction allows the opportunity to put insulation in, in this age of property it was not originally common practice. Without opening up the wall we cannot confirm if insulation has been added or not.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the executive summary. Your legal adviser should make full enquires and investigation to see if insulation has been added and report any findings to us immediately. Problems can occur where insulation has been added at a later date.

Windows

The windows are double glazed and therefore have reasonable thermal properties. Windows have no trickle vents to aid the ventilation balance. This is in theory carried out by the internal vents. Without proper ventilation you may get condensation.

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:

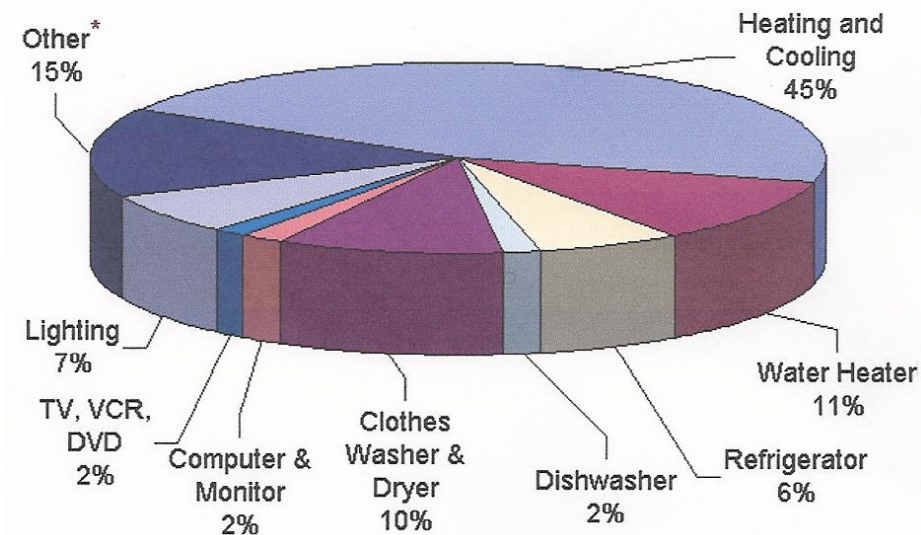
HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

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 likely to be required for future house sales.

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.

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OTHER MATTERS



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

Security

No security system was noted. It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. We suggest you contact a member of NACOSS (National Approval Council for Security Services), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

No 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 that is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

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

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

Insurance

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

Asbestos

We believe you have an asbestos flue pipe at roof level, coming from what was the old warm air vented system. It was quite common to use asbestos in this age of property and it was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time. We are not asbestos surveyors.

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

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located next to the kitchen. We would date the fuseboard as being from the 1990s and not the best now available.



Fuseboard

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.

Neither of these indicators can give certainty as to the condition of the rest of the wiring.

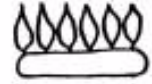


Earth test

ACTION REQUIRED: If there is no record of an electrical test having been undertaken within the last five years, it is recommended that the installation be tested by a competent electrician (NICEIC registered) and all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be re-tested every five years.

Also note that Building Regulations require certain electrical work to be certified by an approved contractor. Please see the appendices at the end of this survey for further details.

GAS



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

The gas meter is located in a cupboard next to the kitchen. There is a strange boxed in section within the kitchen, underneath the kitchen unit itself, directly next to this area which may have something to do with the gas appliances. We did not open up this area and further investigation is required.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of Gas Safe; works to gas appliances etc., by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

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

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

The controlling stopcock was not located; normally it is under the sink. 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.

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

We have not found a water tank. We can only assume that the water is directly fed to the taps or it is located on the roof (we were unable to view). The original idea behind a water tank was to help water pressure and to give an emergency supply of water.

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the rear bedroom and is manufactured by Worcester. A bedroom location is not ideal for a boiler as it is slightly noisy.

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

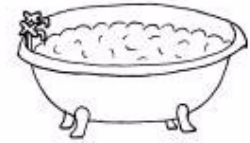
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present, therefore the heating has not been tested.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owner to confirm the heating is working satisfactorily and provide any guarantees and/or 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 family bathroom suite consists of a WC, wash hand basin and a bath with shower, which look in average condition, subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect. What was an unusual feature was that the taps were at one end of the bath and the shower head was at the other.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One, located to the front of the property

We have been unable to lift the manhole cover, which is often the case with this type of concrete manhole.



Manhole we were unable to lift

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

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 age of property it may have shared drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

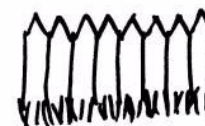
Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING

There is an adjacent small car parking area. As far as we could see there was no allocated parking, but there are warnings in adjacent properties that clamping is in place.

EXTERNAL AREAS

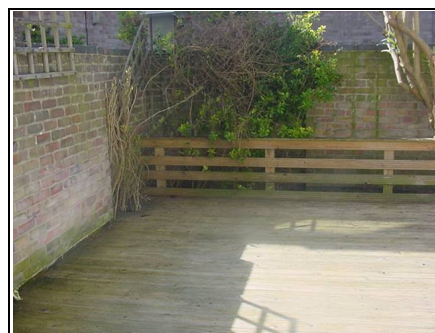


Gardens

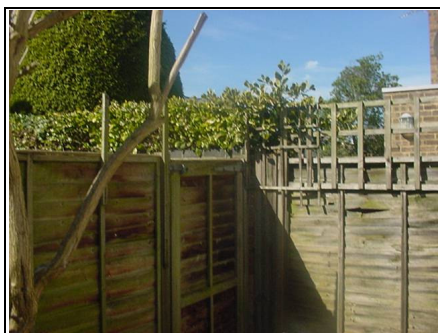
There is decking in this area. Please be aware that rodents living underneath decking is quite a common problem. The decking comes right up to the walls of the property and the garden which can cause dampness. We also do not think it is ideal to hide the drains.



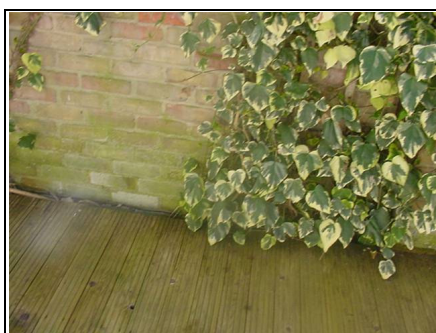
Shared outside area



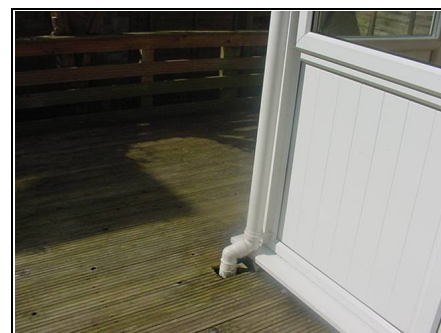
Garden



Fence requires re-staining



The decking is become slippery



Discolouration of decking indicates it is getting slippery. It is also best not being brought right up to the building

We are finding that with decking in general it is getting very slippery where it does not get sunlight for long. In this case we can see a discolouration of the decking, which to us indicates it will be slippery when wet.

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

Adjoining Diagonal Neighbours

This was a very kind lady who allowed us into her property and a view over your roof. She would make a good person to have a chat with.

Other Neighbours

We also spoke to some neighbours who were passing through the area and who were happy with living in the area.

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) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
 - ii) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Central heating installation.
 - v) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vi) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

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

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

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

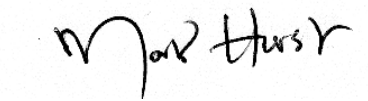
LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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



For and on Behalf of
GEM Associates Limited
Independent Chartered Surveyors
Hoo View House
Stanley Street
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK41 7RW

This Report is dated: 8th April 2011

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated 5th April 2011 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 warm spring 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.

EMPTY PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to not having access to the roof space, not lifting any floors and not meeting the owner and unfortunately not having our usual question and answer session.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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

www.globrix.com

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