RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Flitwick, Bedfordshire. MK45

Ms X

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey end of terrace period property with a driveway and garden to the front, passageway to the left hand side and a large overgrown garden to the rear and includes an outbuilding.

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

Putting Life into Perspective!

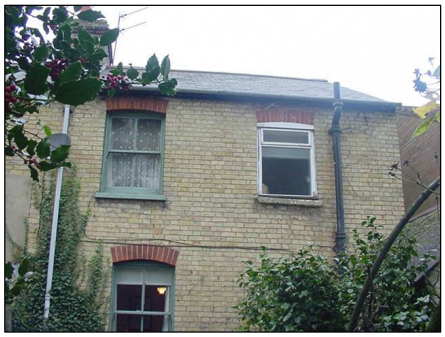
Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

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 elevation

Front garden and driveway



Rear elevation

Rear garden

Rear garden patio area

Dilapidated outbuilding at rear

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

Front living room

Rear Dining room

Rear kitchen

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

Front bedroom

Rear bedroom

Rear shower room

Outside Areas

Front driveway and garden, side passageway with a large overgrown rear garden.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Ground Floor

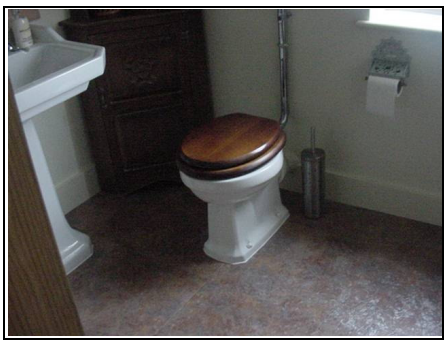
Front Living Room

Rear Dining Room

Kitchen to the rear

First Floor

Front Bedroom



Shower Room to rear

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched slate roof
Gutters and Downpipes:	Mixture of cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron
Walls:	Flemish bond yellow brick with a lime mortar finish that has been repointed in some areas with a cement mortar (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber hidden by gutters
Windows and Doors:	Windows are single glazed sliding sash

Internal

Ceilings:		Mixture of original lath and plaster, lath and plaster that has been overclad with plasterboard and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:		Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor:	Front half suspended embedded (assumed) timbers and rear solid
	First Floor:	Joist and floorboards embedded (assumed) timbers

Services

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas. The boiler is a Bosch boiler located on a cupboard on the landing, the electrics are 1970s/80s and located on the left hand side of the entrance hallway and the gas meter is to the left hand side of the property behind the gate.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

Generally we found the property to be in below average condition considering the property's age, type and style specific detail of this is outlined below. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

The property is a period property which has a lot of its original charm and character.

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

The property also has good natural light.

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) Cracking and movement

Crack to front of the property

There are external cracks and internal cracks (a list of the cracks are included within this report) our concern in particular is due t the rebuilding of the gable end with a block work wall where it is visible within the roof. There are other factors that also may affect the stability of the property:-

1. The neighbours close by extension
2. The drains that run down the side of the property
3. There is a large overgrown tree in the garden
4. There has been major rebuilding work with the block work that is visible to the gable, but the present owner advises they are not aware of.

Gable end rebuilt in block work

All of the above could mean that there is progressive movement to the property. From a one off inspection it is not possible to confirm whether there is progressive movement in this property but there certainly has been major repair work.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend either you do not buy the property or the existing owners (and we have spoken to the existing owners about this) put in an insurance claim and that you then continue with the same insurers. The existing owners to put in an insurance claim that is agreed with the insurers that they will inspect and monitor the property then you continue with the same insurers as this would therefore limit your future liability (you need to check and confirm this of course with the insurance company) to the excess of the insurance. Additionally the insurers would have the benefit of monitoring the property for a year or so (the building research establishment

recommended time) and you would then have absolute confirmation as to whether or not it is moving together with work that is recommended being carried out at the cost of the excess of the insurance. You need to be happy with this proposal or not buy the property be aware that even if your property has had problems and has now been repaired it inevitably makes it more difficult to sell on the open market.

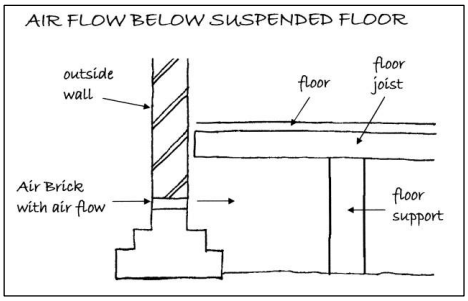
Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

2) **Chimney removed left hand side**

The left hand side chimney has been partially removed please see our comments about movement within the structure as a whole.

3) **Suspended timber floor without airflow**

The front of the property has a suspended timber floor the rear has a solid floor and this means that there is not an air flow underneath the timbers which means they are susceptible to rot. In addition to this you have an airbrick acting as a gutter which will allow water into the property.



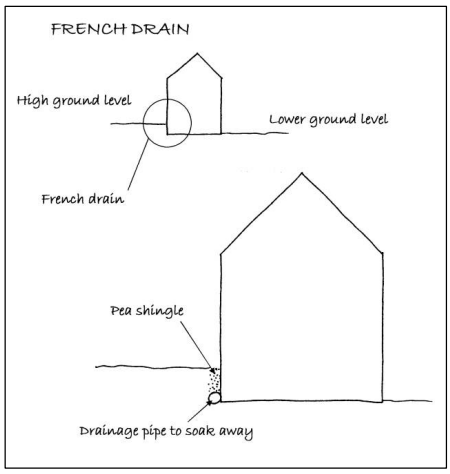
Suspended timber floor to front of property

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to amend the airbricks to the front and also we recommend a French drain is added. You also need to add a vent to the rear of the suspended timber floor. You also need to open up the floor to check the condition of the timbers beneath. Typically there is normally enough room to go underneath the floor and carry out repairs.

Quarry tile to rear of property

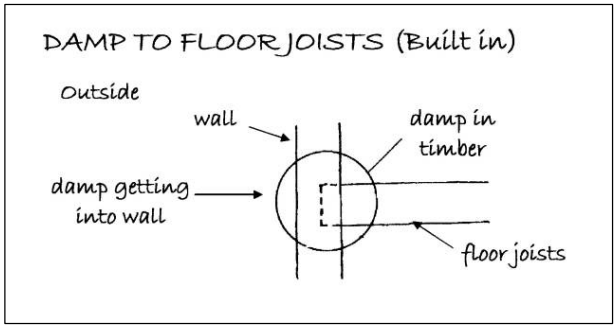
ANTICIPATED COST: £2000-£5000 assuming the floor is in average condition, the French drain you may partly be able to do as a DIY project but to carry out a proper French drain you do need to have a perforated pipe at the base; quotations required.

Please see the Floor Section of this Report and the Appendices where we have written an article regarding putting in a French drain properly and not making it into a French pond!



4) **A lean on the stairway**

There has been some movement to the stairway and this is likely to be due to embedded timbers being used for the staircase support. It is fairly normal for timbers to experience some rot however the movement has been exaggerated we feel by a general movement in the property as a whole.



ACTION REQUIRED: This should be included as part of the insurance claim.

Please see the Internal Joinery Section of this Report.

5) **Services**

Dated electrics

The electrics are 1970s/80s and dated.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a new circuit board.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £300-£500 we would also at the same time increase the number of socket points as we find today we use a lot more electricity than we ever did. Normally we would look for old wiring within the roof space but unfortunately we were not able to view it due to the mass of stored items; quotations required.

Internal radiators/condensation

Internal radiators make condensation more likely as they do not assist in the circulation flow of airflow i.e. normally they are underneath the windows, the warm air rises and is affected by the cool air from the window and circulates around the room.

Radiator with cover not close to the window

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that radiators are located underneath the windows, we would first suggest that you live in the property to ascertain the extent of this issue as heat is a very subjective subject!

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds per radiator.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

6) **Asbestos roof**

There is an Asbestos roof to the garden shed, we are recommending that all Asbestos is removed, this is more because of the way it affects value as perception when buying a property we know that some people would not entertain buying a property with any Asbestos whatsoever as the perception is that it can be a problem.

Asbestos roof to outbuilding

ACTION REQUIRED: Remove Asbestos roof and replace.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500-£1000; quotations required.

Please see the Garden Section of this Report.

7) **Trees**

Large tree in the garden which needs maintaining

We would recommend an Arboriculturist (not a tree surgeon) to inspect and carry out work.

ACTION REQUIRED: Maintenance.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds; quotations required.

Large tree in the rear garden

Leylandii conifers

You have Leylandii conifers to the rear of your garden and we would recommend that they are cut back or ideally replaced with something more appropriate to the age of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: Maintenance.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds; quotations required.

Please see the Tree Section of this Report.

The Ugly

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this category.

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 to make the house into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

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

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

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

There are a substantial number of cracks within the property, the rebuilding of the gable end is unusual and we feel a major flaw in future sales of this property you therefore need to think very carefully before you purchase and we would strongly recommend you negotiate a substantial discount to have the inconvenience of dealing with this type of problem. Expect a reduction of 30% of the market value (please remember the cost of the work does not reflect the inconvenience of the work).

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

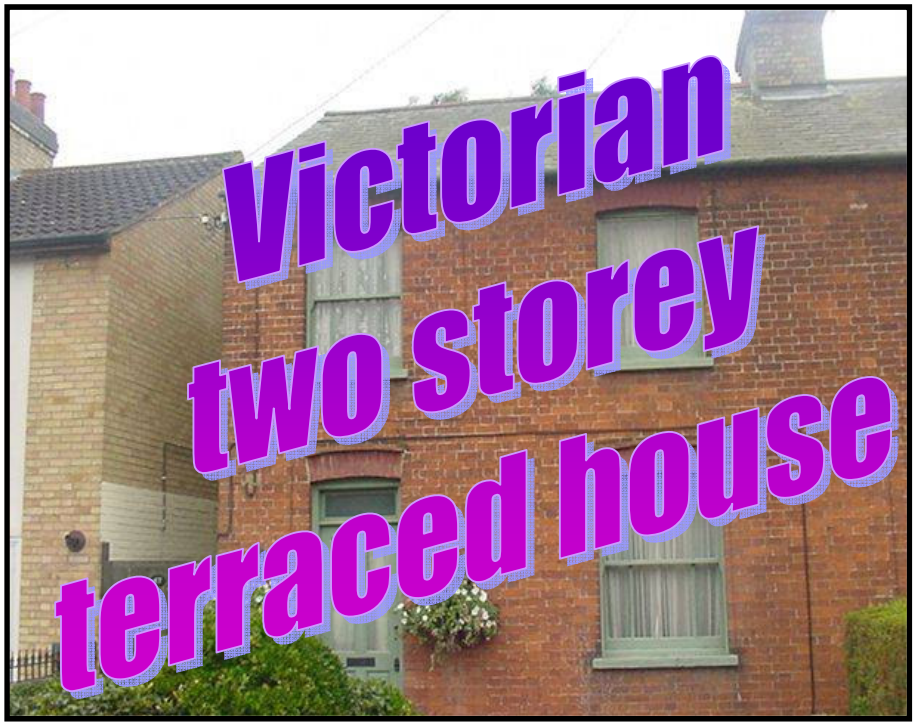
TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

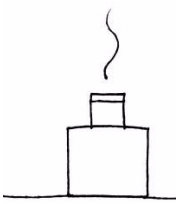
OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



EXTERNAL



CHIMNEY STACKS AND PARTY WALLS

Chimney stacks

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

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

Chimney one

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and numerous chimney pots. From what we could see the chimney looks to be in average condition for a chimney of this age although all chimneys are in exposed areas. Unfortunately we were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon it. We did note some aerials on it sometimes the wire that is used to fix these can cut into the chimney.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend close inspection and probably minor repointing to the chimney within the next two to three years, but this is nothing to be overly concerned about with the exception of we could see some dampness is getting in via the chimney.

Chimney two

From within the roof space we can see that the left hand chimney has been removed at high level and the chimney breast being visible within the roof , unfortunately we were unable to locate them beneath this in the bathroom. We would need all the items removing in the roof to study the chimneys properly to see if they had been removed or supported.

Chimney two

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

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

Party Walls

The chimney one is sitting on the party wall, if any work is carried out to this you need to carry it out under the Party Wall Act, here is some information on this.

Party Structures Defined – Party Wall etc Act 1996

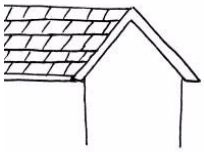
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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:

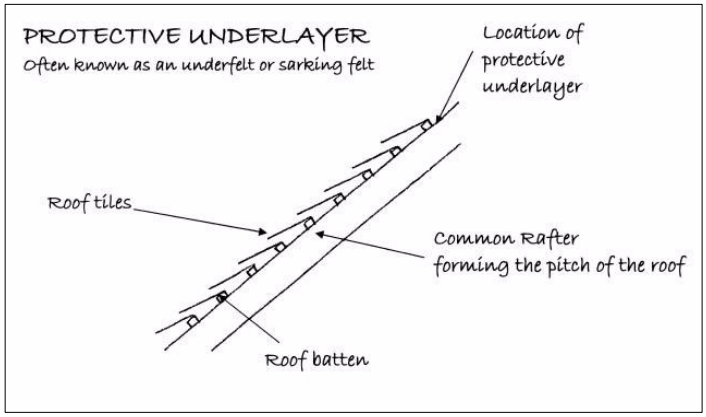
Roof

The roof is pitched and clad with quarried slate. The Slates sit fairly true and are generally in average condition considering the property's age, type and style. There is some very minor lifting of the slates near the chimney.

Slate roof showing minor lifting of slates

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

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

If you look closely at the photo you can see where the underfelt has been put into position next to chimney one.

Asbestos Roof

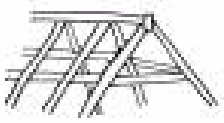
Please note our comments within the Executive Summary with regard to the Asbestos roof and the perception of problems and we would also advise that we are not Asbestos Surveyors.

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 all of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain, however we have not had a close up inspection. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see; however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

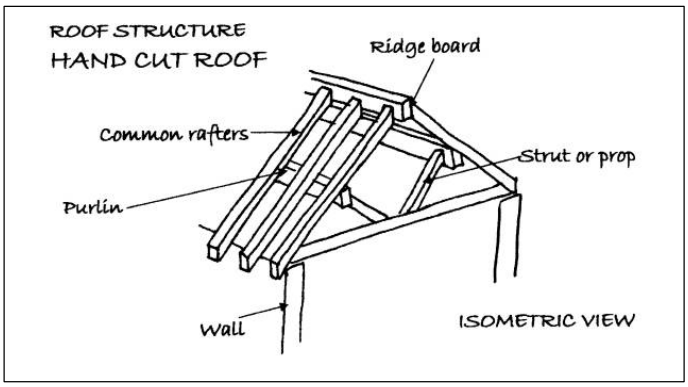
The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.

Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located in the landing. There is no loft ladder or floorboards, but it does have an electric light. The loft perimeter has been viewed by torchlight which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure



Compared to access we would normally have we have had a very limited view of this roof space due to the stored items within it as you are aware. However, from what we could see this is a cut roof which is a purpose made roof which is hand built on site which is common of what was being carried out in this era of construction.

Roof Timbers

We found the roof timbers generally in average condition, with the exception of dampness which we found in it which we believe is a combination of condensation and minor probably wind driven rain getting into the roof structure . We have inspected the roof structure for:

Dampness to the purlin end

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

Roof timbers obscured by stored items

Our examination was 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 average condition considering its age with some minor condensation and damp. It is feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

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

Fire Walls

There is one brick firewall to the right hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the property), again we had limited view of this due to the mass of stored items within the roof.

Fire walls defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are now a requirement under the building regulations and general considered good practice by us.

Water Tanks

The water tank was not found. This may be due to the mass of items stored in the roof.

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.

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 due to the stored items we were unable to see the electric wires properly.

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES

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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has a mixture of the original cast iron gutters and downpipes and the more modern replacement plastic gutters and downpipes. What we found were in typical condition for this mixture of materials but we have not seen the property when it is raining and suspect that there will be some leaks. However we feel that most people could live with this.

Cast iron downpipe

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

Cast iron – some rusting was noted.

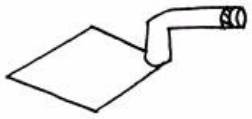
ACTION REQUIRED: Use a rust stop agent and redecorate

Cast iron 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.

Brickwork

The property is brick built in a soft red brick to the front and a white/yellow brick to the side and rear with detailing such as the segmented arch soft red brick over the windows. The brick bond is Flemish bond which is originally in a lime mortar and has now had some repointing in a cement mortar.

Close up of cracking to brickwork at front of the property

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.

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

Close up of cracking to brickwork at back of the property

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening

up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

Cracks

Living Room
Hairline crack next to the door

Dining Room
Hairline crack below the window
Hairline crack to the top left hand side
Hairline crack over the fireplace

Landing
Cracking

Rear Bedroom
Crack around the windows and over the door

Vertical crack to rear

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

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

FOUNDATIONS

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

Foundations

Given that the property is brick built, we would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar.

Building Insurance Policy

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

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

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

TREES

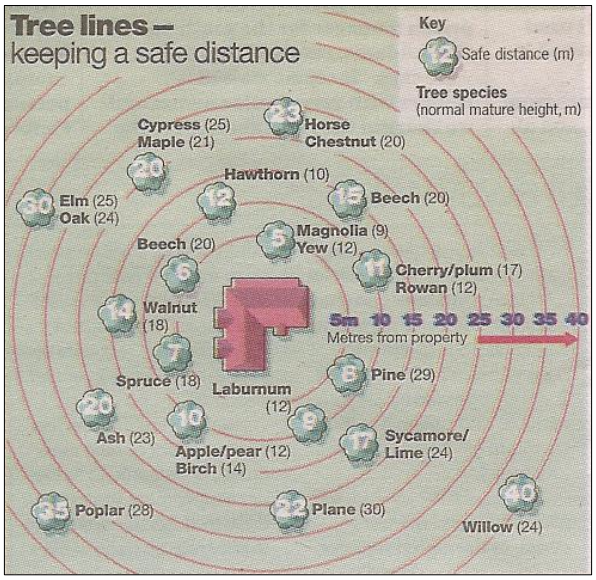
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

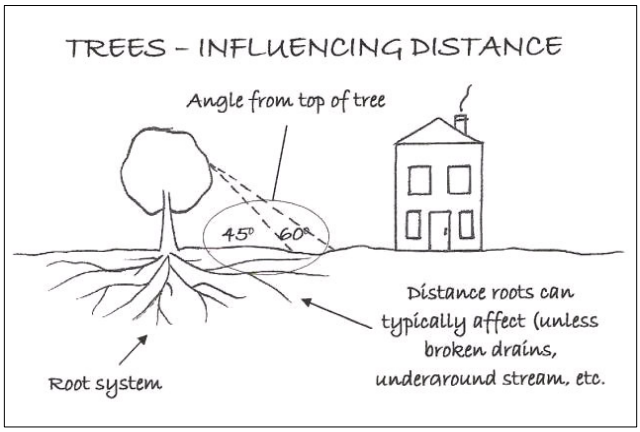
Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. There are a number of these in the vicinity of the building, what we term within influencing distance, and we believe that these trees may be affecting the property.

Large trees in rear garden close to property

Properties with trees nearby will always be susceptible to movement

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to obtain advice from an Arboriculturist (not a tree surgeon). 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.

Inserted damp proof course

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, the damp proof course is too low to the ground level due to the concrete being put too high which means when the rain hits it, it can bounce over the height of the damp proof course, we also note that a damp proof course has been inserted (the circular holes).

Damp proof course

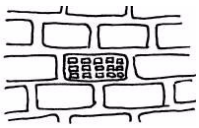
ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you reduce the ground level and put in a French drain.

The date of 1875-1877 is often given for the introduction of damp proof course via the London Building Act however it is equally said that it took over 20 years to become established building practice. When this property was built damp proof courses were leading technology of the day.

Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

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

AIRBRICKS

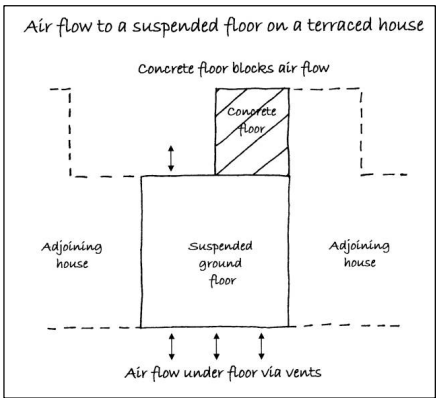


In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of airbricks. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances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

The front airbricks are acting as gutters, this can lead to rainwater going under the timber floor and rotting it. In addition to this you have no vent to the rear because you have a solid floor blocking the air circulation so you need to add a vent.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommended within the Executive Summary a French drain is added generally to the front, this should stop the airbricks acting as gutters and in addition to this you need to add a vent within the property to allow the through flow of ventilation.

Without opening up the floor we cannot confirm its condition we would be very surprised if the floor did not have some rot.



Although this is not exactly what is happening in your property you can appreciate the solid floor to the rear of it.

Airbrick acting as gutter

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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

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

FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

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

Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

Fascias and Soffits

The fascia is hidden behind the guttering in this instance and so we cannot see it. However, it is common for this type of detail to have some deterioration to the timber.

Fascia hidden behind guttering

Windows and Doors

The property predominantly has painted timber sliding sash windows, which are single glazed and a nice feature of the property. There is however one ugly window to the rear, see photo . They are in average condition and need some repainting/repair.

Modern soft wood replacement window

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and redecorate in the summer of 2011 to minimise future repairs.

General Information

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case.

Rear Door

The rear door would benefit from some varnish as soon as possible.

Door showing deterioration

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

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

Generally overall the external decorations are in just below average to good condition and we would expect some redecoration to be required within the next few years however we would advise to redecorate in the summer of 2011 to minimise any future repair problems.

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

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

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

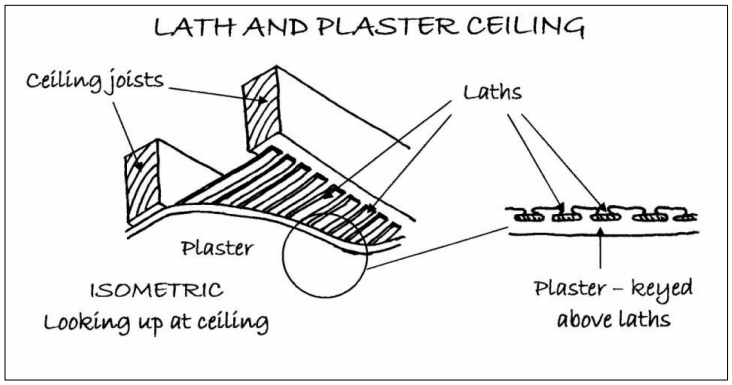
Ceilings

Lath and plaster visible

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are originally lath and plaster, but in some areas have had plasterboard tacked over them or replaced. This type of work is normally carried out where the ceilings are in poor condition, as removing lath and plaster is very messy, time consuming and expensive as it is labour intensive (the above was confirmed during our question and answer session with the owner).

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

These were predominantly solid assuming in this age of construction they are brickwork.

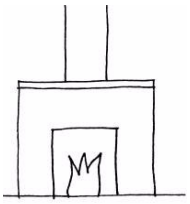
Perimeter Walls

The walls were smoother than we would expect in this age of property, we expect that they have had a skim coat of plaster however the present owner advised that she was not aware of this, she had however used lining paper in some areas.

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.

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

We are advised by the owners that the Chimneys on the right hand side of the property were not used very often and were more a feature for use at Christmas etc and have not been lined. In this age of property whilst you can get away with it we would recommend that a chimney sweep sweeps the property.

Fire place

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend the chimney is swept and if the lining of the chimney is loose (the chimney sweep will soon tell you) then we recommend you have repairs carried out. You may also wish to check the chimney pointing within the roof space as you do not want any sparks to get out within the roof space area.

The chimney breasts that we could see are located on the right hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

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

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 Chimney stacks 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.

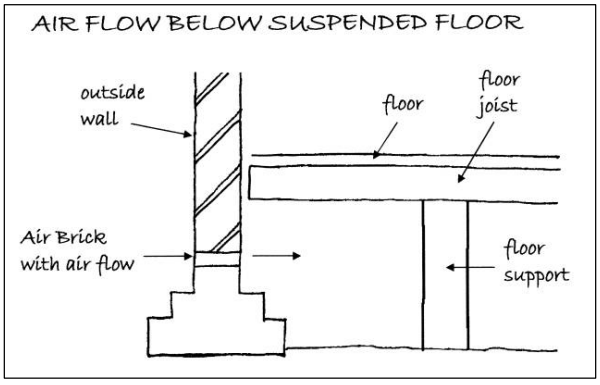
Ground Floor

The front of the floor is a suspended timber floor with the joists running from the front to the rear, the rear dining and kitchen area is a solid floor which stops circulation occurring, please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Suspended timber floor to front of property

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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

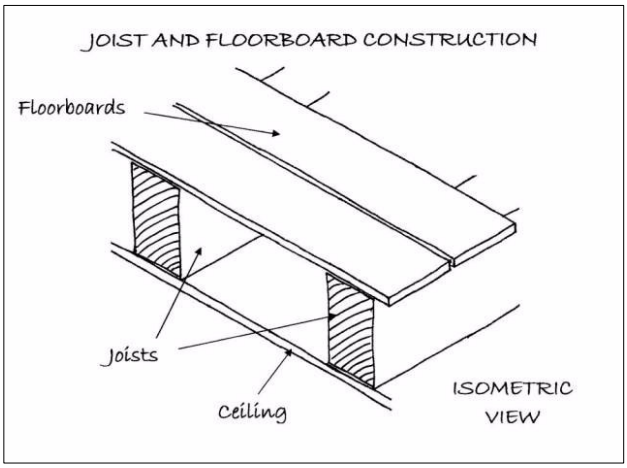


ACTION REQUIRED: You need to ensure there is a through flow of air ventilation to the timber floor and check its condition by opening it up. In an ideal world the concrete floor to the rear should be removed, but this is expensive and disruptive work, we would only reckon it if a major refurbishment of the property was taking place

Quarry tiled floor to rear of property

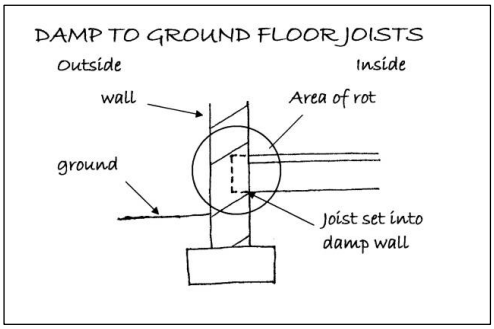
First Floor

There is a joist and floorboard construction, it is likely to be embedded timbers, please note our comments in the Executive Summary about the condition of the stairs.



Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

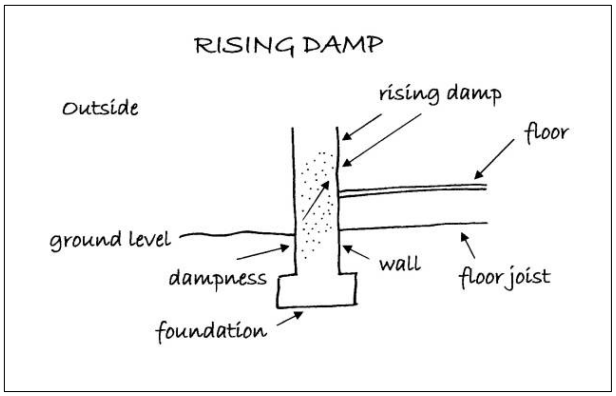
DAMPNESS

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.

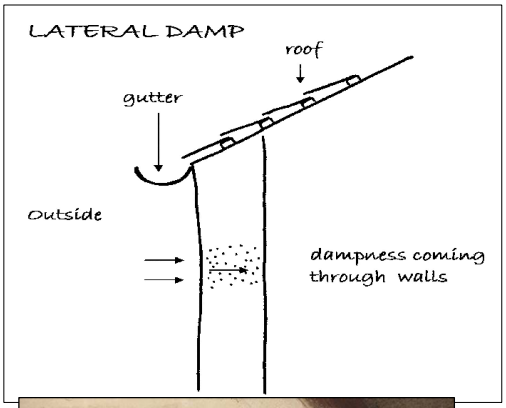


No evidence of any significant rising dampness was detected on the external walls however we would comment that in this age of property you should expect some dampness particularly during the wetter months.

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.



A visual inspection was carried. No

significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen. However in this age of property you should expect some dampness particularly during the wetter months. We would draw your attention to our comments we have made with regard to the dampness in the roof space, particularly to the purlin ends.

Lateral dampness

Condensation

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

We can see no obvious signs of condensation, however, it depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating 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 doors are out of square to the frames which indicates movement has taken place in the property over the years it is worth returning to the property and having a second look at these to see just how much movement has occurred.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you revisit the property to close the doors on the upper floor within the frames so you can see how much movement has occurred.

Staircase

The stairs are not horizontal. This is probably due to the end bearing timbers rotting but could be due to movement in the structure.

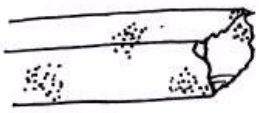
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Kitchen

The kitchen is in average condition but we have not tested any of the 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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors Section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please remember we have not opened up the floors and have had a limited inspection in 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 there is an outside chance that there is wet rot in the property because we have lateral damp to the walls which will affect the floor timbers. Please remember we have not opened up the floors and have had a limited inspection in the roof.

Woodworm

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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm, as you are aware due to the mass of stored items we have had a limited view of the roof. However we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some

of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

The decoration is average, with quite a lot of marking to the staircase area, probably above what we would expect in a home that's been lived in.

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

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY

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

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

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

Roof Insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not to current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. We would comment we typically find in roofs between 100mm – 150mm of insulation. In this instance you have approximately 100mm.

Walls

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

Windows

The windows are single glazed and so the thermal properties will not be that good.

Services

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

Typically we are finding that the wall mounted boilers, often known as combination boilers or 'combi' boilers, are lasting up to 15 years from new,

assuming regularly serviced.

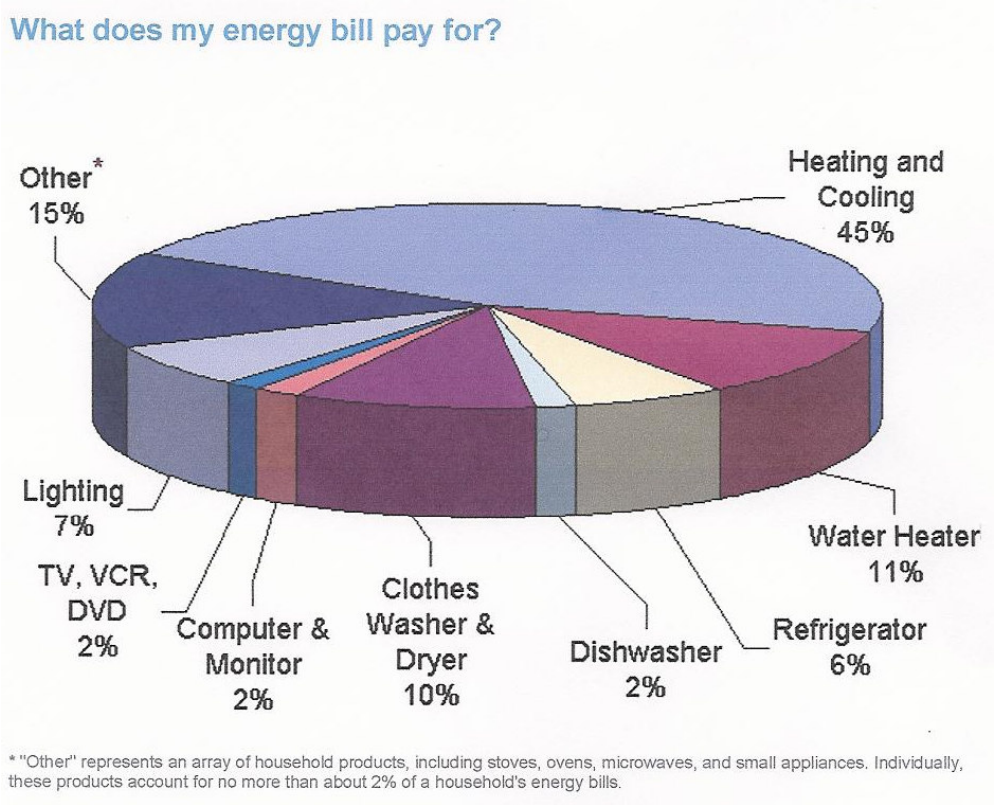
Summary

Overall, provided our assumptions correct and considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties from what we see.

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

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

Fire / Smoke Alarms

We noted one smoke detector to the top of the stairs, we would always recommend a smoke detector/fire alarm in the roof space if you are going to have real fires.

Insurance

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

Asbestos

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

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

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY

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

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

Fuse Board

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

ACTION REQUIRED: NICEIC approved contractor to carry out an IEE inspection test and all recommendations to be actioned. A new fuse board is recommended. 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.

Earth Test

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

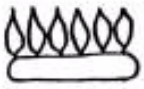
Earth Test

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an 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.

GAS



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

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a Gas Safe registered heating engineer; works to any gas appliance by an unregistered person is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

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

We assume that the property has mains water supply.

Water Pressure

When the taps where 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

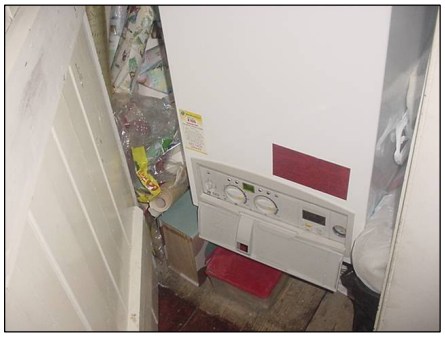
We have not found a water tank, we think it may be hidden within the mass of stored items in the roof. We can only assume that the water is directly fed to the taps. The original idea behind a water tank was to help water pressure and to give an emergency supply of water.

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 wall mounted boiler was located in a cupboard on the landing, it is manufactured by Bosch. Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects, however we would 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.



Wall mounted boiler in cupboard

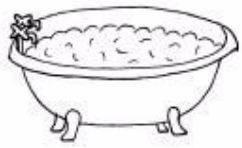
Ten Minute Heating Test

The heating was on at the time of the survey, the rooms were warm but electric heaters were being used too. We find heating is very subjective, if you move from a modern property to an older property you may find that they take awhile to warm up and some people feel they never meet the heat requirements that they wish to have.

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



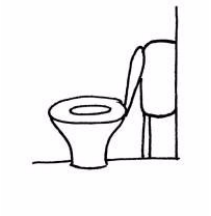
In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.

Main Bathroom/Shower room

On the first floor there is a shower room which has a modern up date suite which includes a large shower.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified two inspection chambers / manholes.

It is assumed that the drains are shared and discharge into a public sewer;

Shared drains can have problems during heavy rain fall 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.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One on the left hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the property).

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be free flowing at the time of our inspection.

From what we could see it is brick built.

Manhole one

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

Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.

Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal in this age of property rain/surface water is likely to be shared drains where there can be problems during the 9 o'clock rush if there has been heavy rain.

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

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

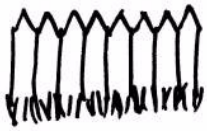
OUTSIDE AREAS

OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING

There is an outbuilding that is in a poor condition but still usable, please see our comment regarding the Asbestos roof.

Dilapidated outbuilding

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

You have off road parking for a smallish car at the front of the property

Front garden and driveway

Rear Garden

There is a patio area with uneven paving slabs and a further garden then an overgrown section of garden.
?

Rear garden

Rear garden patio area with uneven slabs

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

At the time of our inspection there was no one in when we knocked.

Right Hand Neighbours

At the time of our inspection there was no one in when we knocked.

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) 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.**

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was overcast at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

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

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

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 have not viewed under the floors and had limited inspection within the roof due to the mass of stored items.

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

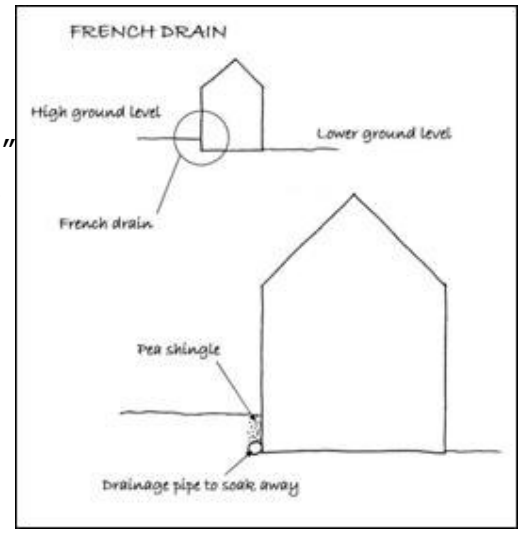
This is a very good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

French Drains

Using a French Drain to resolve a Damp Problem

We are finding where we are asked to look at damp problems in general (i.e. damp walls and floors) that commonly it is due to the external ground level being higher than the internal ground level. It could also be that air bricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio area which then discharges any rainwater against the building. Quite often the solution is to add a French drain. Whilst French drains are quite simple and are basically nothing more than trenches filled with gravel (although there is a little bit more to them as we will explain), they are almost a DIY job for most people and they are relatively easy to install and are for the most part low cost. You do however need some care and attention when installing them. You could install what we have heard referred to as the "French pond".

What use is a French Drain?



A French drain is a trench of approximately 6" or 150mm wide (or the width of your spade), approximately twice the depth (i.e. 12" or 300mm). In most cases this will suffice however where there is a large amount of ground water, you may wish to make the trench wider and deeper. A French drain acts as an area where water soaks away quickly. We often recommend them close to the building and not next to the building as this helps to reduce the ground level and it will take any water that is directed at that area away (for example as mentioned where a patio has been placed which aims any rainwater to part of the wall). As mentioned, whilst a French drain is a DIY job it does need some understand of how it works.

French Drains must be on a slope

The pipe that is at the base of a French drain should be perforated or as we did years ago for land drains, there should be gaps between each pipe which should be set onto a bed of firm ground and the pipes should be on a fall to the drain. Whilst you should be able to ensure that there is enough fall by site,

we always like the idea of rolling a marble from one end to the other! You will then need to place the pipes down and fill the trench with 0.5” (7.5mm) to 1” (15mm) sized gravel. You can leave it at that, or in addition you can cover this with sand and then turf over it. This is how a basic French drain is carried out.

The French Drain System which we would recommend

The French drain system which we would recommend would be as described although we would add to the base an inch or two of gravel onto which the perforated drainage pipe would rest (the drainage pipe should be 4” (100mm) to 6” (150mm). We would then wrap around that drainage pipe a filter fabric. This is to stop the holes in the perforated pipe from blocking up! We would then add gravel around this and further fill with gravel. In addition to this, we would add a silt trap. This is added in the run of the pipe and is very similar to a road gully (not that this is of much use if you don't understand how a road gully works!). The silt trap is a rectangular box with a pipe opening at each end. The drain water passes into this. Any particles sink to the bottom of the box and then the water travels on to the other side of the box, enabling it to feed into a drain. These are usually made of glass reinforced polyester (it being available in this form since the mid 1980's) and then normally reinforced with a steel frame for additional strength and bedded in concrete.

The French Pond!

French drains will over time clog up, which is why we recommend using a filter fabric however even with this, they will eventually clog up. Unfortunately there is no Dyno Rod equivalent and it is normally fine sand organic matter or clay which clogs up the French drain. In this case it will have to be dug up and the pipe work will require cleaning (or it may be quicker to just replace it) adding a filter fabric and refilling the gravel.

You may also be interested in these other articles about dampness issues: