

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Henlow, Beds



**Mr X**

Prepared by:

**INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS**

Marketing by:

**[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)**

**0800 298 5424**

## **CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION  
REPORT FORMAT  
SYNOPSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

### **EXTERNAL**

CHIMNEY STACKS, DORMER WINDOWS, ROOF WINDOWS  
ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS  
ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT SPACE  
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES AND SOIL AND VENT PIPES  
EXTERNAL WALLS  
FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS  
EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

### **INTERNAL**

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES  
CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES  
FLOORS  
DAMPNESS  
INTERNAL JOINERY  
TIMBER DEFECTS  
INTERNAL DECORATIONS  
THERMAL EFFICIENCY  
OTHER MATTERS

### **SERVICES**

ELECTRICITY  
GAS  
PLUMBING AND HEATING  
BATHROOMS  
MAIN DRAINS

### **OUTSIDE AREAS**

GARAGE WITH AN ELECTRIC SUB STATION NEXT TO IT  
EXTERNAL AREAS

POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

### **APPENDICES**

LIMITATIONS  
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS  
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

# **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. This Survey was carried out on XXXX

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 property with original room in the roof modern end terrace building with its own detached garage with electricity sub station attached to it with garden to the front and rear.

We have been advised that the property was built in xxxx. 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:*

2004	Major Tsunami Disaster in Indian Ocean – over 150,000 people die
2004	Mars rovers Spirit and Opportunity land on Mars finding evidence of water in the planet's past
2005	European space probe Huygens lands on Saturn's moon Titan
2005	London Subway bombings – 52 people die
2005	Hurricane Katrina destroys New Orleans

## **EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS**



Front elevation



Side elevation



Rear elevation



Garage and electric sub station

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)

0800 298 5424

# **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

## **Ground Floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

Entrance area with a cloakroom

Kitchen

Lounge

## **First Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

Bathroom

Front bedroom (currently being used as a lounge)

Rear bedroom

Rear small bedroom (currently being used as a study)

## **Top Floor**

The top floor accommodation consists of:

Master bedroom and en suite with access into the roof

## **Outside Areas**

Garden to front and rear, garage and electricity sub station



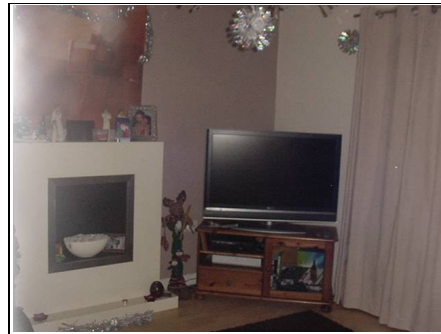
## **INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

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**



Cloakroom



Lounge



Kitchen

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)

0800 298 5424



## **First Floor**



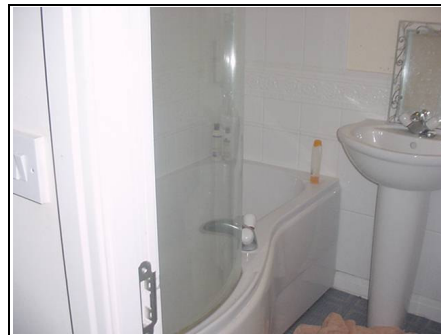
Front bedroom used as a lounge



Rear Left Hand Bedroom

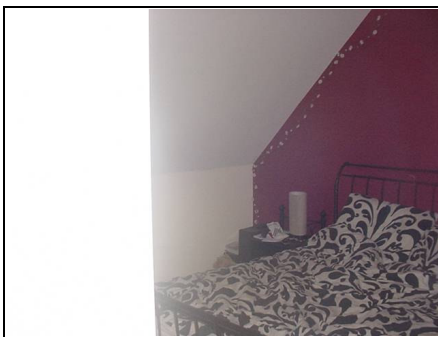


Rear bedroom used as a study



Bathroom

## **Top Floor**



Master bedroom



En Suite

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)

0800 298 5424

## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched roof clad with concrete tiles (assumed as covered with snow)
Dormer windows:	Two, one to front and one to the rear
Roof light:	One to the rear
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Walls:	Stretcher bond brickwork (assumed), yellow bricks
Fascias and Soffits:	Red brick
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed with trickle vents

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Perimeter Walls:	Dry lined (assumed)
Internal Walls:	Mixture of solid and studwork
Floors:    Ground Floor:	Suspended concrete or timber (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards (assumed)
Top Floor:	Joist and floorboards (assumed)

### **Services**

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The boiler is a Keston Celsius 25 and is located in the kitchen and the fuse board is located in the hallway. There is a mega-flow water tank and no manholes are located on the premises but it was snowing at the time which may have hidden them.

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.

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!*

Insulated to modern standards although these are forever being upgraded.

Room in the roof which is part of the original design.

Parking available close by, something we found on modern developments often to be lacking and there is a garage.

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.*

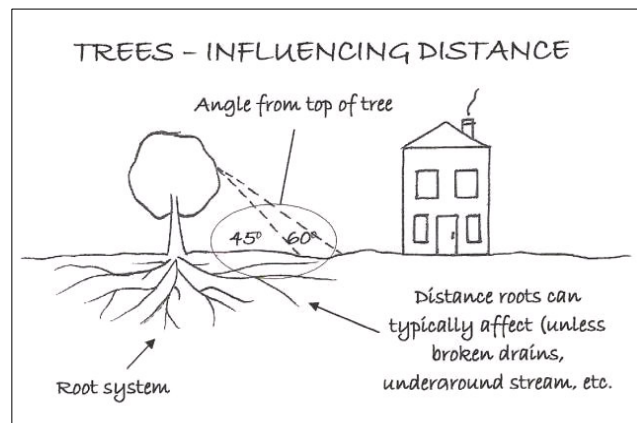
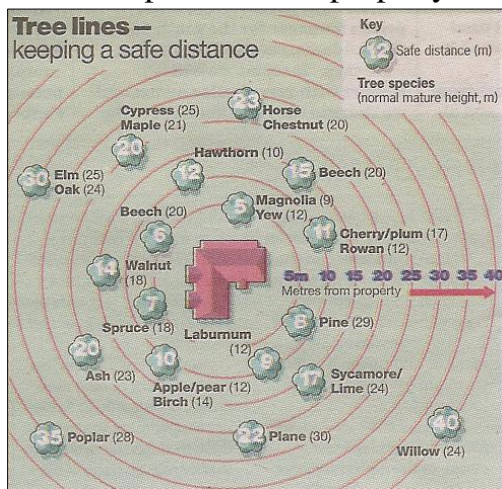
### 1) Tree and Foundations

The tree is in what we would term influencing distance meaning that it can affect the property however in modern properties such as this it should have been allowed for with the foundation design. It is essential you establish who owns the tree and therefore who is responsible for maintenance of it. We noted there is a locked gate to the right hand side of the garage, we spoke to the owner during the question and answer session and they were unsure as to who owned it, you do need to establish this before you purchase the property.



Large oak tree

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your solicitor to specifically request details from seller's solicitor/Building Control Department as to the depth of the foundation and then we will advise as to whether we feel this is sufficient. We are slightly concerned with this property having a suspended floor as this does indicate to us that it may well be a clay soil area and the suspended floor has been put in to allow for any movement in the ground level. If this is the case it would mean that we would have to insist on more information regarding the foundations before you purchase the property.



Please see the Foundation and Tree Sections of this Report.

2) **End cap of the gutter had come away, we could see stalactites had been formed there**

Unfortunately as there is snow on the rest of the gutter it is difficult to comment on their condition.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Replace end cap

End cap of guttering missing

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Set aside the sum of £100-£250 to check the guttering and downpipes, as it is high level it may need tower scaffolding, if this is the case we would suggest quotations are required.

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

3) **Extract fans generally need cleaning**

Most modern properties have high humidity generating areas such as the shower rooms, bathrooms and kitchen therefore it is important to ensure that the extraction systems are working properly. We noted that the fans would benefit from being cleaned.



Dirty extract fan

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

#### 4) **Decoration**

The property has had over and above average fair wear and tear in some areas particularly due to having a dog.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Decoration of some of the doors, as these are modern hollow core doors it maybe more economical to replace them than to paint and repair them.



Door in need of redecoration

**ANTICIPATED COST:** This type of door is relatively cheap, the main cost is in the hanging of the door which can cost more than the price of the door; quotations required.

Please see the Decoration Sections of this Report.

#### 5) **Poor laminate flooring**

As you often find with laminate flooring it has been put down and not finished properly for example in the photograph you can see where the quadrant bead has not been fitted and also we noted areas where movement was occurring.



Laminate flooring in need of repair



#### 6) Close to electric sub station

We noted that you are close to an electric sub station there is conflicting evidence as to whether these are detrimental to health particularly relating to the young and the old we feel it is fair to say the jury is still out on this, you need to take this into consideration.



Sub station close to property

#### 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 assuming you can get appropriate answers with regard to the tree.



## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Electrics**

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics and a test on this relatively new property (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you.

**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**

This type of property is relatively modern (i.e., less than one hundred years old) but nevertheless still requires ongoing maintenance and repair. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a 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:

We would reiterate although it is obvious from the photographs that it was snowing at the time of our inspection which limited it slightly.

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**



Independent Chartered Surveyors

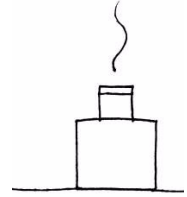
Marketing by: ———

[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)

0800 298 5424

## EXTERNAL

### CHIMNEY STACKS, DORMER WINDOWS AND ROOF WINDOWS



#### 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.*

#### Chimney One

This property has one chimney, which is located at the front of the property on the left hand side (all directions given as you face the property). The chimney is brick with a lead flashing in average condition.



Brick chimney

#### 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.

## **Dormer Windows**

*Dormer windows are often used where rooms are formed within the roof space and have the advantage of allowing light into the area and also giving the head space to allow them to be stood next to.*

### **Dormer One**

The roof is clad with tiles, the cheeks/sides are in metal or as this is a modern property it could be Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP). In reasonable condition, as viewed from ground level again subject to us viewing it in the snow.



Dormer windows

### **Dormer Two**

The dormer has the same roof and sides as the first one, and looks in average condition subject to limitations we explained in Dormer One.

Finally, Dormer windows have been viewed from ground level and literally from the dormer windows themselves.



## **Roof Windows**

The property has a metal (externally) and timber roof window. We have checked this the best that we can from ground level and also from within. It is difficult to be 100% certain with roof lights, as much is hidden. We believe they are in average condition.



It seems inevitable with roof lights that they will sooner or later leak. If this doesn't occur then they seem prone to condensation. Keep a cloth handy!



Roof light

## **Party Wall**

The chimney sits on the party wall here is some information relating to this.

### Party Structures Defined – Party Wall etc Act 1996

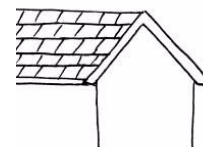
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

*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, dormer windows and roof windows 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**

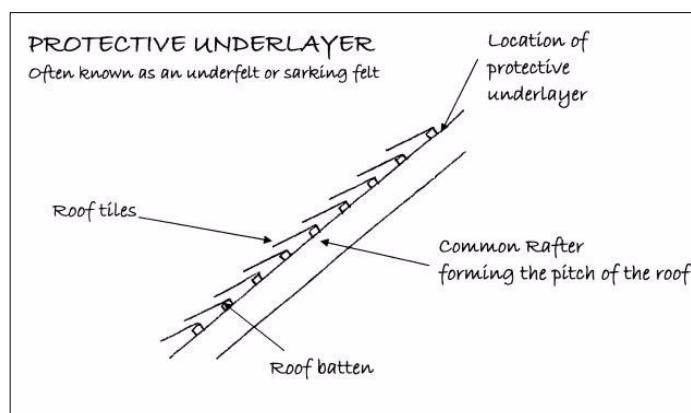
Whilst the vast majority of the roof was covered in snow we believe the pitched roof is clad in a concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying true and flat by this we mean that the snow is lying true and flat! Sometimes when it is not snowing we see deterioration occurs to the ridge and exposed areas such as the perimeter so you should periodically check these areas.



Roof with limited view due to snow

## **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.*



The roof has what looks to be a modern breatherable felt, although they are typically white and this one is black



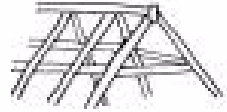
This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

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

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

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

## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**



### **(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)**

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

#### **Main Roof**

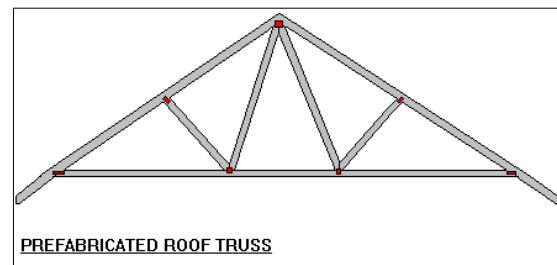
Whilst part of the top floor room is formed within the roof there is still a section of this we gained access to.

#### **Roof Access**

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

#### **Roof Structure**

The property has a pre-fabricated trussed roof rafter. These are made in a factory and transported to site and then lifted into place. Without the manufacturers calculations and installation details we cannot comment categorically on the roof structure other than to say it is in line with what we typically see when looking at pre-fabricated trussed roofs.



## **Roof Timbers**

We found the roof timbers generally in average condition considering their age. We have inspected the roof structure for:

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

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

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

## **Fire Walls**

### **Plasterboard or fire board**

The property has a plasterboard or a fire board, it is very difficult to tell from a visual inspection, wall dividing it from the adjoining property, this should allow half hour fire resistance minimum which requires two layers of plasterboard, which it is not possible to tell without opening up.

Firewalls are added to stop the spread of fire from one property to the next; it is generally a requirement of any mortgage company lending.

### **Ventilation**

On a modern roof they are usually ventilated it is difficult/impossible to tell due to the snow, you need to check and confirm that it is ventilated.

### **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 the mass of insulation stopped us from investigating the electrical cables.

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**

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be plastic and appeared in reasonable condition. What was very obvious was the stalactites hanging from the front right hand corner of the gutter telling that the end cap was missing. There may also be a few other repairs, but we feel that most people would be happy with getting these carried, please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



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. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

### **Soil and Vent Pipe**

We believe the soil and vent pipes to be internal within services ducts and cannot be inspected.

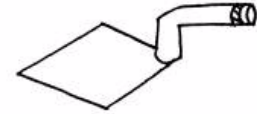
#### Service ducts defined:

These are passages running vertical and horizontally through the building for water supply and waste water pipes and sometime electrics (although not usually in the same service duct!)



Finally, gutters and downpipes 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.*

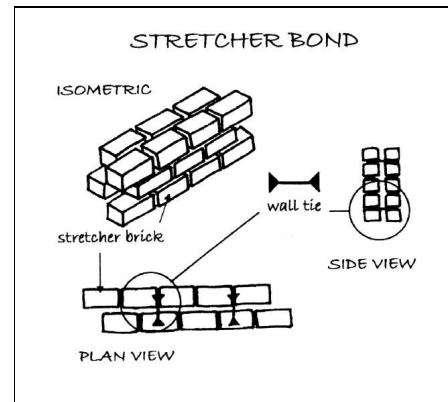
## **Brickwork**

The walls are built in brick and bedded in cement mortar in what is known as stretcher bond brickwork.

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".

There is brick detailing in a red brick underneath and above the windows and what is known as a string course.

We generally found the brickwork and pointing in average condition.



Brickwork

## **Trickle vents**

We noted trickle vents in the walls this is to allow any dampness that gets in the cavity to get out.

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 on the outside and plaster on the inside 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 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 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.

## **Soil conditions?**

As the property has a suspended floor we think it is likely that there may be clay in the area. It is, therefore, more susceptible than most properties to drainage, leaks or trees particularly when they are allowed to overgrow, etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in properties in this area, particularly during dry years.

### Clay Defined

Clay is an amazing soil although you and your insurance company may not think so if you get subsidence or settlement from the Clays amazing properties. Firstly let us explain what settlement and subsidence is this is when the Soil expands and/or Contracts and moves the building usually via the foundations clay has the amazing ability to expand and contract substantial based on its water content

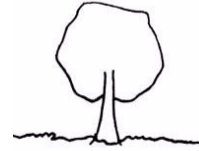
## **Building Insurance Policy**

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

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

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

## TREES



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

There is a tree to the rear garden but not within it, as we are sure you are aware it is an oak tree and we are advised it has a tree preservation order on it. Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. This is what we term within influencing distance, meaning that its roots could affect the property. With this age of property i.e. relatively new, the foundations should have been designed to allow for the tree.



Oak tree to rear of property

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary. You may need to obtain advice from an arboriculturist (not a tree surgeon) who specialises in this type of work.

### 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 damp proof course to the property in some areas.



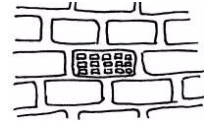
Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

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.

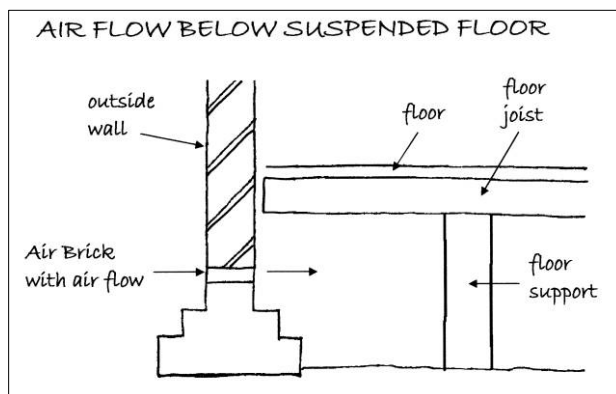


## AIRBRICKS



*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.*

We noted air bricks at the front and the rear of the property which indicates a suspended floor. From what we could see, providing the air bricks are kept clear you have adequate ventilation.



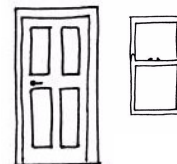
Airbrick

### Suspended Floor Construction Defined

A suspended floor is one that is suspended from the actual earth beneath and is used in older construction and modern construction such as this, they are often used where the ground conditions are such that they are likely to expand or contract or for speed of construction on larger developments. You need to confirm which it was in this instance.

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, 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**

Our view of these was limited behind the gutters and the snow.

## **Windows and Doors**

The property has plastic, double glazed windows, which generally look to be of a reasonable quality. We were pleased to see trickle vents.

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.



Double glazed window

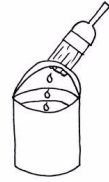
Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years

### Trickle Vents Defined

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

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.*

The external decoration required is minimal; the fascias and soffits will need painting in years to come and the fence.



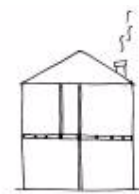
Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint, its exposure to the elements and the materials properties. Where painting takes place outside this maintenance cycle repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration should be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

Fence that will need to be maintained regularly

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.*

### Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely 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.

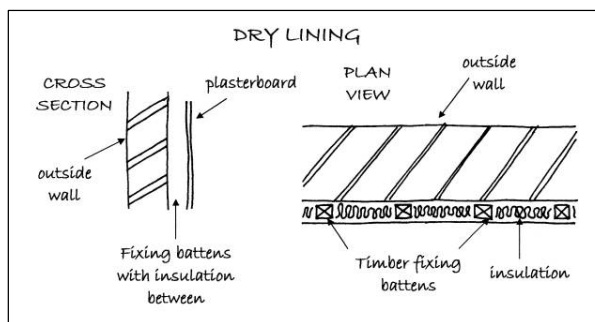
### Internal Walls and Partitions

The majority of internal walls were hollow when we tapped them indicating there is studwork or they have been dry lined which is a technique used on modern properties to insulate.

### Perimeter Walls

These were dry lined or false walls, this is common construction in modern properties to help them meet the thermal efficiency requirements of the current Building Regulations.

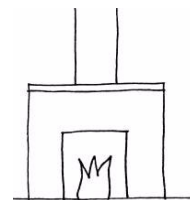
Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected



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.*

The chimney breast is located in the dining room and is what we would call a feature fireplace which makes a nice focal point to the room.

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, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

# **FLOORS**



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

## **Ground Floor**

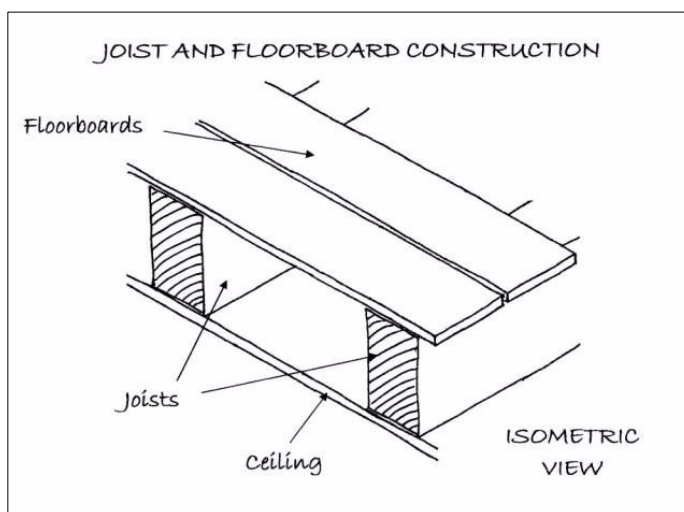
Based on the air bricks that we can see and the age of this property and the area we believe that the ground floor construction is a suspended floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it, this type of floor is used in modern properties for speed but also in areas where there are clay soils.

## **First and Second Floor**

The first and second floor we have assumed is built for joist and floorboard sheets, as this is typical in this age of property, however, we have not opened up the floor.

### Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

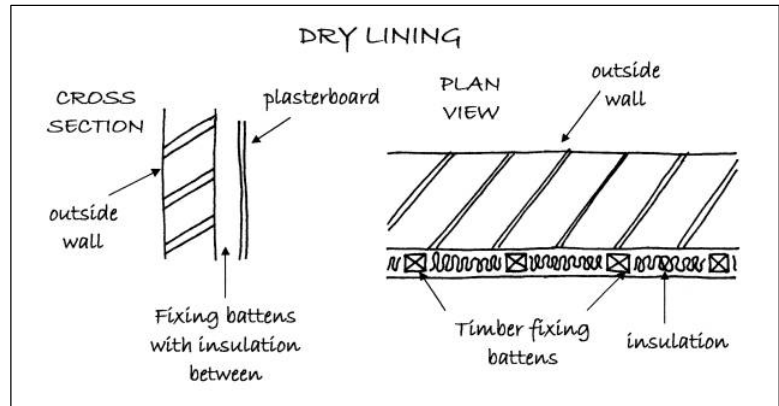


# DAMPNESS



*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.*

We would normally carry out tests with an electronic damp meter. However, as your property is dry-lined we were unable to do this. We therefore carried out a visual inspection and did not find any signs of significant dampness coming through.



Checking for dampness –  
readings less than 20 indicates  
dry lined wall

## Condensation

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

At the time of the survey we could 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.

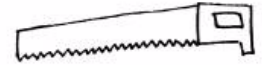
**ACTION REQUIRED:** The extract fans need a clean to work properly also increasing the size of the extract fan can help.

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.



Extract fan in need of a clean

# **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 hollow core doors (sometimes referred to as egg box doors, as this is what the internal of them looks like when they are opened up), which have a pressed and painted finish. We noted that some of the doors had Perko door closures which helps in the case of a worst case scenario of a fire as the doors are pulled closed therefore stopping the fire spreading.



Internal door

## **Staircase**

We noted that the underside of the staircase was lined where we could see it, however, part of the stairs is hidden from view. All stairs need lining for fire regulations.

## **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.



Kitchen

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors Section.

# **TIMBER DEFECTS**



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

## **Dry Rot**

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please note we have not had access under the floors

## **Wet Rot**

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

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

## **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.*

Our view was limited because we had limited access to the roof space which is the main area we would usually find woodworm. In the areas inspected we found no obvious visual signs of significant woodworm activity or, indeed, signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. It is fairly uncommon to find woodworm in modern properties.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to remove the insulation to check the property.

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 average, with minor marks as you would expect in a home that's been lived in.

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

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

# **THERMAL EFFICIENCY**



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

## **HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report**

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

### **Roof Insulation**

Roof insulation is present and looks to be to the current building regulation standard of 270mm/300mm. With this level of insulation it is important to ensure the roof is suitably ventilated to minimise condensation. If you cannot see the ceiling joists properly its likely to be 300mm in that area. Generally these roofs need ventilation.

### **Walls**

The property has a stretcher bond construction and we can only assume from the age of the property that it is likely that when it was built it included cavity insulation but, without opening up the wall, we cannot be certain. The walls are also dry lined which is an additional layer of insulation.

### **Windows**

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

### **Services**

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.

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

### Summary

Overall, provided our assumptions correct and considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties for what we see but refer to your HIPs report.

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

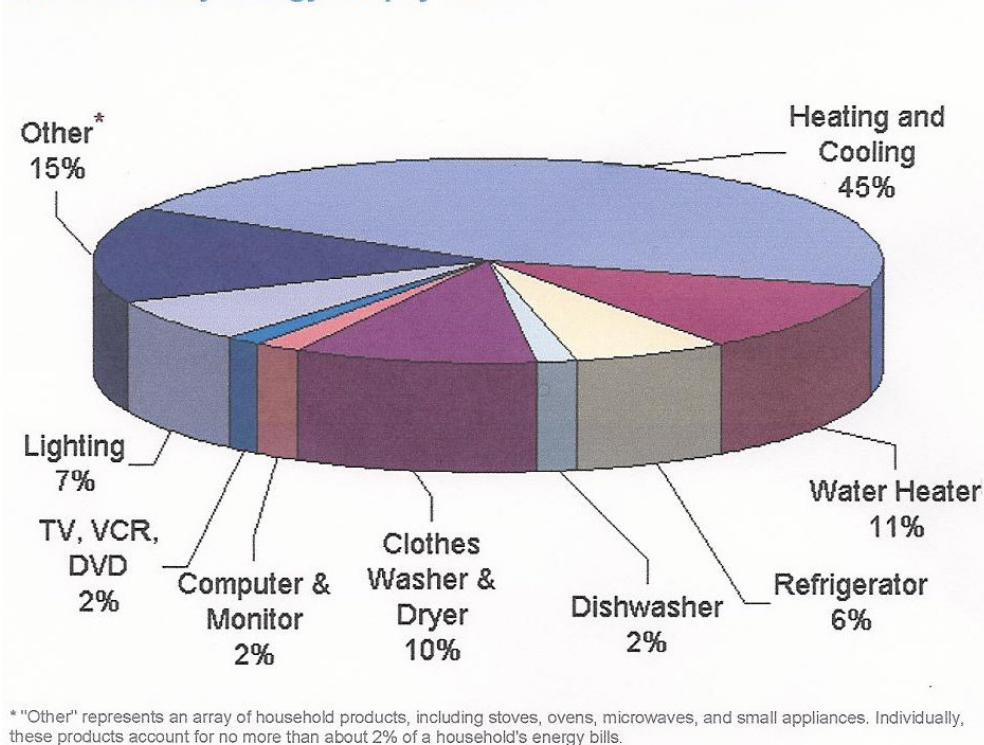
*[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.*

*or alternatively [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)*

*or [www.ecocentre.org.uk](http://www.ecocentre.org.uk) for an alternative technological view.*

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

#### What does my energy bill pay for?





## **OTHER MATTERS**



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

### **Security System**

Unfortunately we did not know if the property has security or not.

### **Fire Systems and Smoke Alarms**

These seemed to be located on each floor and as mentioned there are some fire door closures.

### **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

## **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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 kitchen. We would assume it is the original fuse board and is a 2000s make and model.



Fuse board

## **Earth Test**

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

Door hitting ceiling light on first floor

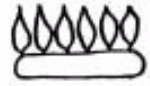


**ACTION REQUIRED:** As the property is changing occupancy an IEE report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor.

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.

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.



*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 plumber.*

The property has gas mains supply.

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

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

# **PLUMBING AND HEATING**



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

## **Water Supply**

Assumed mains water supply.

## **Water Pressure**

We turned the water on in the kitchen and bathroom and we feel the pressure was average.

## **Cold Water Cistern**

We have not found a water tank. 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.

## **Hot Water Cylinder**

There is a mega-flow water cylinder we have found these from personal experience to be very efficient.



Mega-flow water cylinder

## **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**

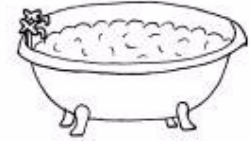
### **Ten Minute Heating Test**

The heating was on at the time of the survey, the rooms were warm.

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.*

## **Bathroom**

The family bathroom suite, looks in average condition.

## **En Suite**

The en suite has a three piece shower room suite, which looks in average condition and consists of a WC basin and shower and is in a larger room than we typically see.

## **Cloakroom**

There is a cloakroom which is always handy.

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.

### **We have not found any 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 not found any man holes/ inspection chambers or rodding eyes, this is unusual. These may well be covered by the snow but would be more than happy to return to inspect any manholes you identify being at the property.

### **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.

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

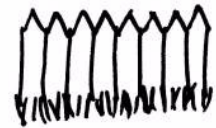
### GARAGE/OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING



The property has a garage with an electricity sub station adjoining it. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regard to the electric sub station.



### EXTERNAL AREAS



#### Front Garden

Small front garden covered in snow at time of our inspection so our view was limited.



#### Rear Garden

Rear garden covered in snow at time of our inspection so our view was limited.



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

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

## **Neighbours**

### **Left Hand Neighbours**

Knocked on the door but no response.

### **Other Neighbours**

Spoke to neighbours across the road who said that sometimes there is a problem with parking but we feel these comments were more related to the end of the road rather than where we were but only you will discover this by living at the property.

## **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) We understand the property has the benefit of the remaining part of an {\*NHBC/Foundation 15\*} Agreement. Your Legal Advisor should advise you further in respect of the duration of this Agreement and whether any claims have ever been made either against the builder/developer or the NHBC themselves. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that the Agreement is transferable and enforceable.
- d) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ii) Rising damp treatments.
  - iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
  - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - v) Roof and similar renewals.
  - vi) Central heating installation.
  - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- e) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- f) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- g) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- h) Adjoining roads and services.

- i) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- j) General development proposals in the locality.
- k) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- l) 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.
- m) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- n) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- o) 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](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

- p) 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



## **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](http://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 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 had snowed at the time of the inspection and there was snow on the ground.

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](http://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 limited due to the snow hiding such things as our view of the roof material and the ground conditions.

## **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](http://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](http://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](http://www.halifax.co.uk) and [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.globrix.com)

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