

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Houghton Regis, LU5



FOR

**Mr O**

Prepared by:

**GEM Associates Limited**

**INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS**

Marketing by:

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

**0800 298 5424**

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# **INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

## ***GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION***

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

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

## **A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS**



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

## **ORIENTATION**

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

## **ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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

## **SYNOPSIS**

### **SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The property is a two storey semi-detached post War era house. The front garden has been given over to driveway. The rear of the property has a garden area, paved area and an outbuilding. There is a garage to the front right hand side.

As mentioned we believe that the property was built in the post War era in the 1940's/50's possibly the early 1960's. 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:*

1939-1945	World War II (6 June 1944 D-Day)
1948	The Manchester Mark 1 developed (arguably the first computer)
1948	Olympic Games held in London
1950	The concept of artificial intelligence for computers was developed by Alan Turing (MOD)
1960	Internet was developed as a communications system for the defence industry
1963	President Kennedy assassinated in Dallas
1965	The Death Penalty is abolished
1966	England win the football World Cup
1969	Man lands on the Moon

## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Driveway View



Rear View



Garden to rear

# **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

## **Ground Floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance Lobby
- Front reception room
- Rear reception room
- Kitchen
- Under stairs storage space with alarm and gas meter

## **First Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Front right hand bathroom
- Front left hand side double bedroom
- Two rear bedrooms
- Landing with access to the roof space

## **Outside Areas**

- The front garden has been given over to driveway.
- The rear of the property has a garden area, paved area and an outbuilding.
- There is a garage to the front right hand side

## **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 Room



Kitchen



Rear ground floor room



## **First Floor**



Front Bedroom



Bathroom



Rear left hand bedroom



Rear right hand bedroom

## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Chimneys:	One brick chimney and a flue for the WC
Main Roof:	A pitched roof clad with a nibbed concrete tile (without a protective under layer).  The garage roof is part pseudo pitched with concrete tiles and has asbestos roofing to the rear.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron
Walls:	The walls are painted render and brickwork to the side (assumed).
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Plaster (assumed)
Walls:	Predominately solid (assumed)
Floors:    Ground Floor:	Predominately suspended timber (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards, likely to be embedded timbers (assumed)

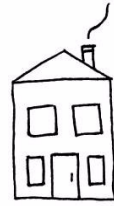
### **Services**

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas.

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 and we have identified these areas. 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!*

- Location for your business is literally a short drive away.
- Self contained off road parking

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

## **The Bad**

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

### 1) **Roof**

The roof has a nibbed concrete tile and unfortunately it does not have a protective under layer that would be commonly used today which is a secondary protection against any rain getting in. What this means is you will generally get wind driven rain in and some staining on the timbers that may relate to this.



Underside to nibbed roof tiles

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It is very expensive to add a protective under layer (often known as a sarking under felt) as it does mean re-roofing the property. We recommend leaving re-roofing until such time as there is some major deterioration with the roof.



Roof lined with board

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A worst case scenario where you would have to re-roof the property today with Health and Safety Regulations it is likely that you will need to scaffold the entire property, including over the top to give a dry working environment typically seeing costs in the region of £6000 - £10,000 dependent on whether the company is VAT registered etc, etc; quotations required.



Roof looks to have been cleared of moss

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

## 2) A lot of damp getting into the back of the property

We were very surprised that we found a lot of damp coming in from the back wall in the rear bedroom and readings were over double what we normally expect, which considering the dry weather we have had lately was very surprising.

We noted that this dampness is long term as some areas have blown plaster (hollow or blistered plaster it is also known as) indicating that over the years this area has had a considerable amount of water/dampness.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Next time it rains we suggest that you stand and look at the property, it may be that the gutters are not catching the rainwater properly and discharges down the render into the property. It may be simply that paintwork is relatively new and prior to this was in a poor condition allowing dampness in.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** To reposition your gutters would cost a few hundred pounds to render again would be a few hundred pounds; quotations required.



Damp to rear of the property



Cement repair to the lower portion at the rear is one of the reasons dampness is getting into the rear lower level.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

### 3) Asbestos Roof to the garage

As we come across quite commonly with this age of property it has an asbestos roof to the garage and often there is also one to the outbuilding. Whilst there has been a lot of publicity in relation to asbestos we feel the main problem is a perceived problem to any future potential purchaser and as such we would recommend that it is removed as soon as possible and replaced with a profile metal roof particularly as regulations relating to asbestos dangerous materials are likely to get more strict.



Asbestos roof to garage

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Remove asbestos roof and replaced

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Asbestos removers have to be registered Local Authorities offer lists of approved contractors. An approved contractor would be in the region of £2000-£4000. We have found that prices vary widely we recommend putting this out to tender for such work; For example we recently had quotes for a sample of asbestos which ranged from £30 to £150; quotations required.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

### 4) Dampness to the ground floor

There is a slight slope to the driveway towards the front of the house which could lead to dampness. There are slightly high readings at the moment but nothing to be overly concerned about however would be worth adding a French gully.

We would also bring your attention to the rear the patio that is high, particularly on the right hand side and we can see dampness getting in here within kitchen by the door, we physically could not get to the rest of the room due to the kitchen units.

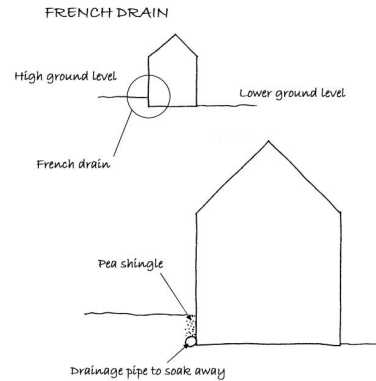


Dampness around rear door

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You may wish to ultimately put a running gulley to the front driveway to keep the water away from the property and to the rear put a French gulley to move the patio water away.

We also noted that the gulley on the rear patio is higher than the paving slabs and that the decking sitting against the rear section we tend to find are a very good feeding ground for mice and other vermin.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We expect £1000 or so dependent upon who you get to do the work; quotations required.



Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

#### 5) Timber lintels

We noted timber lintels to the rear French doors and also to the outbuilding and maybe other timber lintels, bearing in mind the dampness that is getting into the rear of the property we would suggest that these are checked once you have stopped the dampness to this area.



Timber lintels

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Bearing in mind that the dampness is getting into the rear of the property we suggest that you check once you have stopped the dampness in this area.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Repair and replace timber lintels would be a few hundred pounds per lintel; quotations required.

Please see the Windows Section of this Report.



## 6) Airflow under the property

The property has a suspended timber floor and therefore it should have airbricks allowing an airflow underneath it.

The airflow under the property is essential to stop wet rot and general damage.

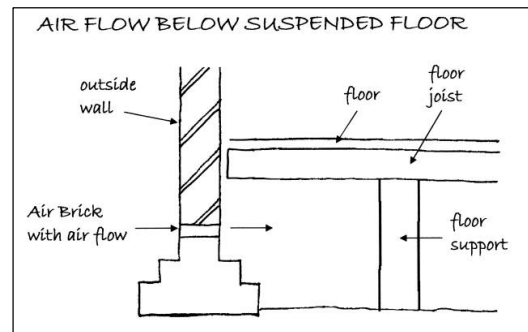
**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that airbricks are added.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds; quotations required.

You should ideally also examine underneath the floor to see if there is any damage.



You can just see the airbrick in this photo



## 7) Services

### Safe access to the boiler and cylinder

The boiler and cylinder have been placed in the roof which we always think is a good space saving idea, however you do legally have to give safe access to any workmen which requires, in this case, a suitable ladder and floorboards in the roof.

Whilst the roof is boarded we would add further boarding and we would also add a ladder.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We noted there is a ladder in the roof space although it is obviously not fixed it should be fixed next to the water tank!



Safe access to get to boiler required



Boiler and cylinder



**ANTICIPATED COST:** Labour to fix the ladder; quotations required.

### **Single panel radiators**

We noted that you have a number of single panelled radiators, these may not warm the building as much as you would like or as quickly as you would like. You may wish to replace these with double panelled radiators.



Single panel radiator

Please see the Heating Section of this Report.

### 8) **Other bits and pieces**

#### **Garden fence needs repair**

Establish first whose fence it is.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair and re-stain if it is your fence.



Garden fence in need of repair

Please see the Garden Section of this Report.

#### **Kitchen unit needs DIY**

The kitchen unit needs some DIY as the cupboards fell off in my hand.



DIY kitchen unit needing attention

### **Wet rot to garage frame**

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair timber.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds; quotations required.



Garage door frame

### **The Ugly**

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

There is no one item that specifically we would term as ugly however there is more damp than we would expect particularly in the form of lateral dampness (it is coming through the walls) we therefore recommend that you negotiate on a price with regard to this element.

### **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**

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 office/clinic/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 is a lot more dampness getting into the rear of the property, particularly at high level, than we would have expected. There is hairline cracking in the render that is not visible at ground level and we suggest that you have a close inspection and remove any hollow render and redecorate the rear area initially. Additionally look at the alignment of the gutters.

We would recommend external redecoration as soon as possible as this will not only seal the property against dampness it will also add a good marketing image for your business.

One further comment with regard to the lack of airbricks and the floor condition, which we unfortunately were unable to view properly due to the laminate flooring that was down, is that an unscrupulous developer could have added this flooring to stop us seeing the condition of the floor or equally it could have been the previous owner wanting to hide the poor condition of the floor. This is why we would recommend that you do open up the floor to check its condition.

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**

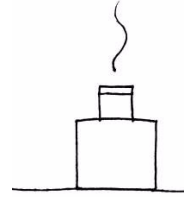
Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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



## EXTERNAL

### CHIMNEYSTACKS



#### Chimneystacks

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

This property has one chimney, which is located centrally on the building.

This chimney is brick finished with small chimney pots and looks to have lead flashings. From what we could see from ground level the chimney looks in average condition.



Chimney

Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunchings we therefore cannot comment upon them.

#### 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 Wall**

The chimney sits on a party wall so any work in relation to this will require the party wall award so here is a bit of general information on this.

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

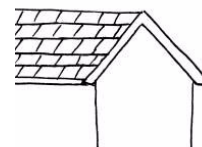
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

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

# **ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS**



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

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

## **Roof**

The roof is pitched and clad in a small nibbed concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying level and true and look in reasonable condition.



Roof tiles – some missing

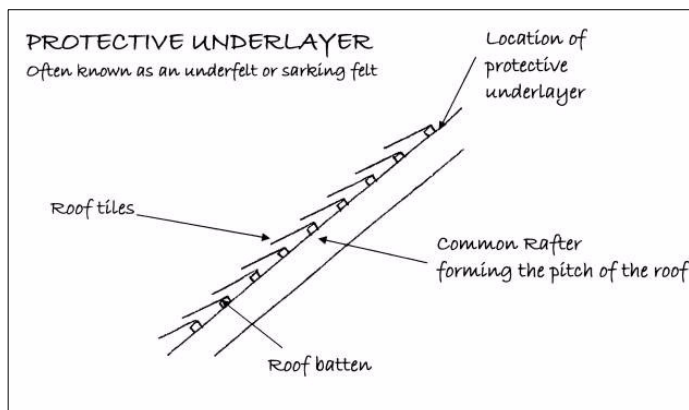
We noted to the rear of the property that there are a few missing tiles which we suggest should be replaced before the winter.

We also noticed that the build up of moss (although not as much as next door) needs the occasional clean to stop it blocking up your gutters.

Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridge and exposed areas such as the perimeter and so you should periodically check these areas.

## **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 there was no underfelt (also known as sarking felt) and it is therefore possible that during periods of heavy and prolonged driving rain some water penetration could take place through the roof coverings.

At the time of our inspection it was not raining, but we could not see any obvious visual signs of dampness.



Underside of nibbed concrete tile

### **Low Level Roofs**

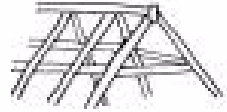
There is a low level roof over the garage which has a pseudo pitch to the front of it please see our comments within the Executive Summary reference the asbestos to the rear of the roof.

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

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

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

## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**



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

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

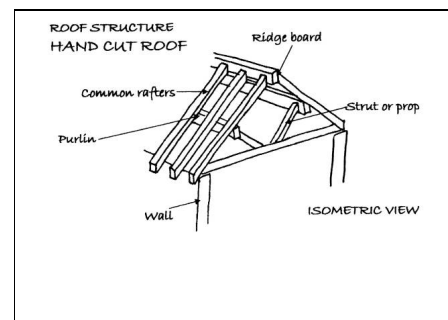
#### **Main Roof**

#### **Roof Access**

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is no loft ladder, but it does have an electric light and boarding throughout. The loft perimeter has been viewed by torchlight which has limited our viewing slightly. We recommend that a loft ladder is added please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

#### **Roof Structure**

This type of roof structure has, what is known as, a cut timber roof, which is roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see.



#### **Roof Timbers**

We found the timbers in average condition, although we had a very limited examination as our examinations were restricted by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and the boarding out of the roof to most of the ceiling joists the pitch of the roof was also hard boarded. What we could see we found in generally average condition, the pitch is shallow which tend to get condensation.

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



General view of the roof – the hardboard is covering our view of most of the timbers

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

### **Fire Walls**

In this instance the firewall is built in brickwork.

Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

### **Water Tanks**

The water tanks are formed in plastic (without insulation) and we therefore assume they are relatively new (in surveying terms, in this instance, that is the last 30 years). The water tank has no lid, which stops anything getting in it, particularly important if you clean your teeth with the water.

The boiler is also in the roof which we always find is a good space saving idea.



Water tanks

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Clean and add lid

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**

The way roofs were built appropriately a 100 years ago allows ventilation under and around the roof covering, as technology improved we introduced under layers which prevented wind driven rain and snow from coming into the roof. This underlay effectively reduced ventilation by sealing the roof from the outer elements.

### **Insulation**

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

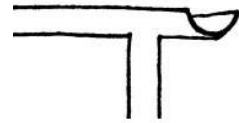
### **Electrical Cables**

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 boarding out we were unable to see the electric cables so we cannot comment on them.

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 newer style profile plastic (profile means shape), which does get brittle with age and sun light, at present it is in reasonable condition. There may be some minor leaks, but we feel that most people could live with these.

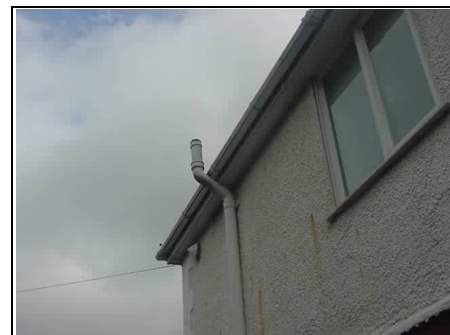


Gutters and downpipes

**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

A mixture of plastic and cast iron which looked in reasonable condition.

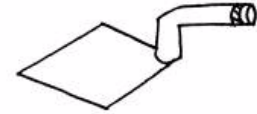


Soil and vent pipe

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.*

## Render / Brickwork

The property has brickwork to the lower section and painted render to the upper section.

### Render

The walls to this property are finished in a painted pebbledash. We have carried out a tap test to the render at low level (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer) to try to establish if there are any hollow areas and found the render to be in average condition.

We noted areas of rust staining, this is normally due to ironstone within the pebbledash render mix.

We were surprised the amount of dampness coming through the rear section render and we therefore suspect hairline cracking. This could be a problem throughout the render given its age, you could do temporary repairs with materials such as mastic but ultimately you will need to re-render. The difficulty will be getting your render to match.



Pebbledash

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Before the winter of 2010 we would suggest that you carry out a render check to the rear of the property and in particular all over ideally looking at hairline cracks and loose render.

## **Brickwork**

The brickwork consists of painted brick and a soft red brick, this is to the right hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the property).

We noted that it suffered from water damage over the years and has been partly repointed. You can see from the colour of the cement mortar that has been used to repoint there should have ideally been more of a lime mix in it.



Brickwork repointed

There has been some minor movement around the windows which we believe relates to the new plastic windows being added.

## **Painted brickwork**

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary where dampness is getting in particularly where concrete repair has taken place.



Further minor movement to the rear outbuilding against the main building.

## **Timber lintels**

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding timber lintels, which given the dampness in the property may have some rot in them.



Timber lintels

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

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

# **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. There has been some minor movement in the main building and the rear lean to and also where the plastic windows have been put in. Bear in mind there could equally be minor movement higher up the property in the render area.

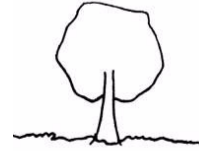
## **Building Insurance Policy**

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

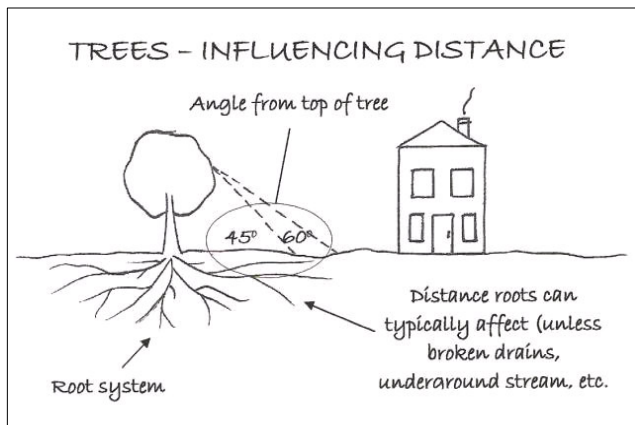
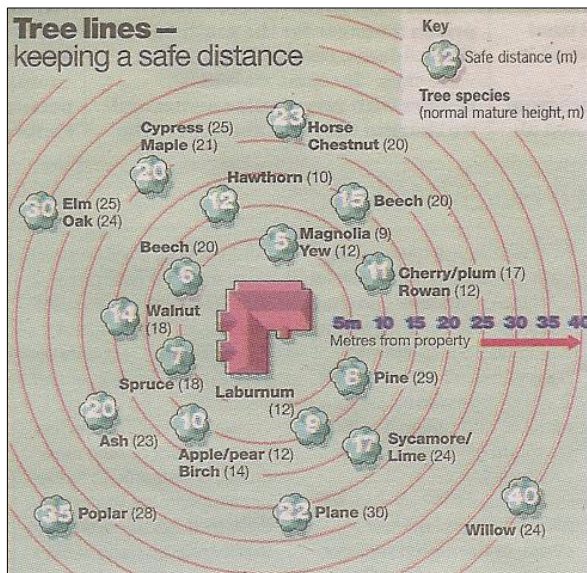


*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There are no trees within your garden that are within influencing distance of the main house.



Poplar tree to rear of the property can have very long roots

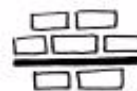


## Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

## **DAMP PROOF COURSE**



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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels.

In this case, unfortunately we can't see a DPC to the property because of the render.

We did find dampness, please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Please see our further comments in the Dampness section of this report

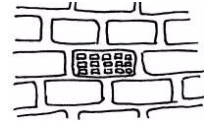


Render plinth forms effectively a damp proof course, there may well be slate behind this. Ironically the newly added paving slabs etc undermined the original DPC by allowing dampness to bypass it

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 you have airbricks at high level and should have airbricks at low level!

## High level airbricks

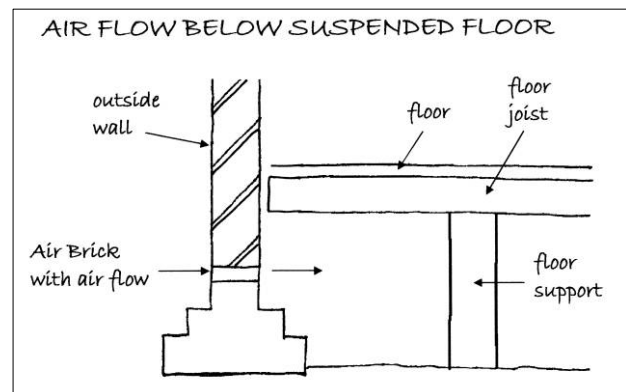
High level airbricks were used to help reduce condensation and were, we believe, a building regulation requirement of the time (although we are far too young to have been around).



Decorative air brick

## Low level airbricks

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about adding additional airbricks.



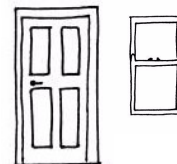
#### Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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, 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 property has painted timber fascias and soffits; these are in average condition.



Fascias and soffits

## **Windows and Doors**

The property has plastic, double glazed windows, which generally look to be of an average quality for the year made. We did not see any trickle vents. Indicating the windows are pre 1990s as they tend to be a fairly standard part of modern double glazed windows.



Plastic double glazed windows

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution. In this case they are in average condition.

Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable

guarantees. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years

#### Trickle Vents Defined

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

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.*

We would comment that, the painted render acts as a protective coat to the property. When you redecorate in a few years time it will be fairly expensive, however you should not under estimate the importance and cost of re-decorating the render. This will also make the building much more brighter and attract people to the building.

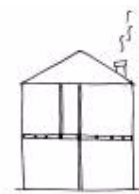
**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend redecorating before the winter of 2010.

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**

## **CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES**



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

### **Ceilings**

Where we inspected the ceiling from within the roof we found plasterboard. However, from our general knowledge of this age and type of construction, we would expect originally to find lath and plaster

#### Plasterboard Defined

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

### **Internal Walls and Partitions**

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

### **Perimeter Walls**

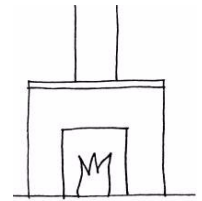
We believe that the perimeter walls have had a skim coat of gypsum plaster over the original plaster/render.

Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by

yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

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

# CHIMNEYBREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



You have some decorative fireplaces.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to ask the previous owners when they were last used, whether they have been swept and if they have been relined.



Fireplaces



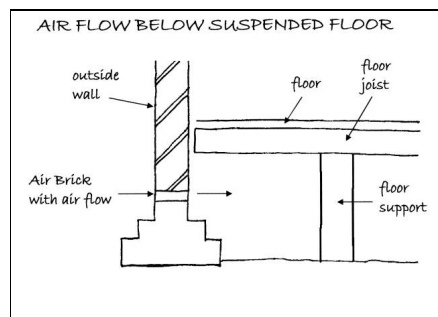
# **FLOORS**



*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 our knowledge of this age of construction we believe that the ground floor construction is predominantly a suspended timber floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections.



The remainder of the floor, kitchen onwards, is solid underfoot and assumed to be concrete. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

### Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

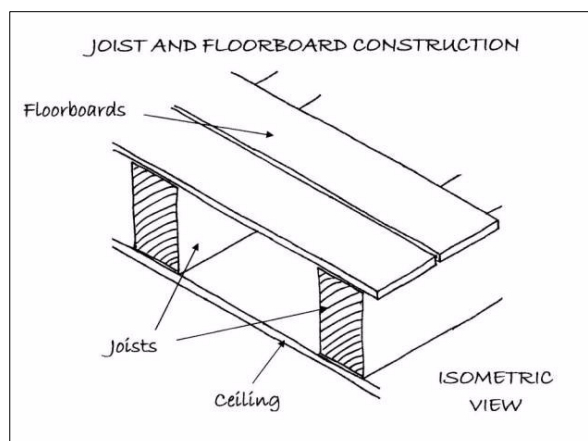
*A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via airbricks within the walls.*

## **First Floor**

The first floor deflects more than we typically find, and this can be for many reasons, from under sized timbers, to wet rot and woodworm or a wall being removed. In this instance it is likely to be due to embedded timbers deteriorating slightly when they are into the damp wall.

### 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.



Laminate floor covering

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



# DAMPNESS

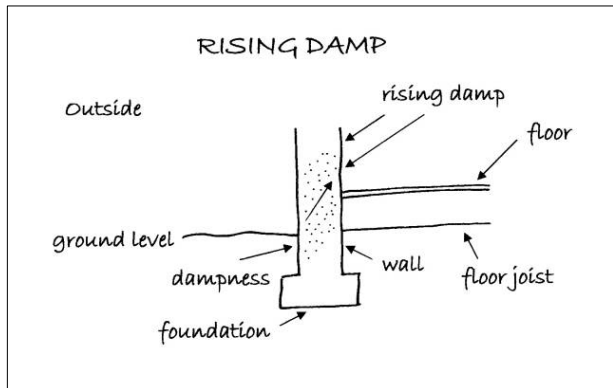


*In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.*

## Rising Damp

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

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

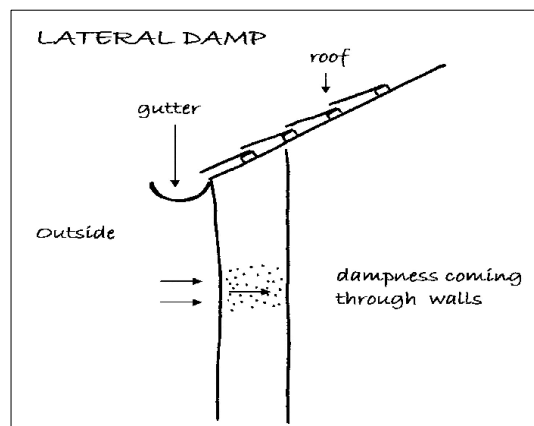


The readings we obtained indicated that there is some dampness in the property. It is located in to the kitchen side and the rear. But check all the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our recommendations in the Executive Summary

## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



We have carried out checks at high level and found lateral dampness this is likely to be from leaking gutters and defective render. Please see also the Executive Summary.

## **Condensation**

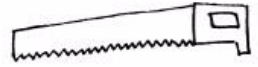
*This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.*

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.

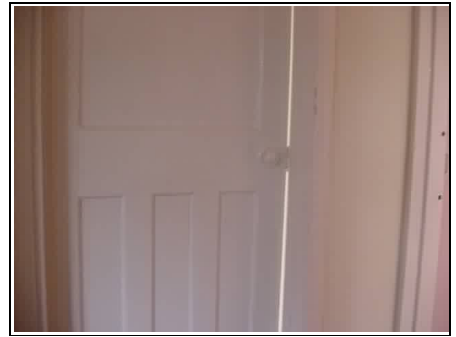
## **INTERNAL JOINERY**



*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 property has what looks to be the original doors, you may like to keep them as a feature of the house or not!



Internal door

### **Kitchen**

The kitchen is basic, please note our comments about some of the units literally coming apart as we tried to open them!

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 inspected no evidence was found of any dry rot although please note we have not opened up the floors and have had limited access 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 a chance of wet rot to the joist floor ends and we have lateral damp to the walls which will affect the floor timbers

### **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, in this instance we had a very limited view due to the boarding out. We also normally look at the floors but again a view was very limited due to laminate flooring being present. However the small amounts of timber we could see showed no obvious signs of any 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 all the boarding has been removed in the roof and also the floors have been opened up.

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 as new, our concern here is what defects are being hidden by the paint work. We would term this property as painted to sell.

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 are making general comments. You will be provided with a HIP Report that should be more specific with regard to the thermal efficiency of the property. We have not seen the HIP Report on this property so cannot comment further.

### **Roof Insulation**

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

### **Walls**

The walls to this property are 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 double glazed and therefore have reasonable thermal properties.

## Services

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

## Summary

What we typically see with properties of this age, type and category we believe the property to be in average condition.

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

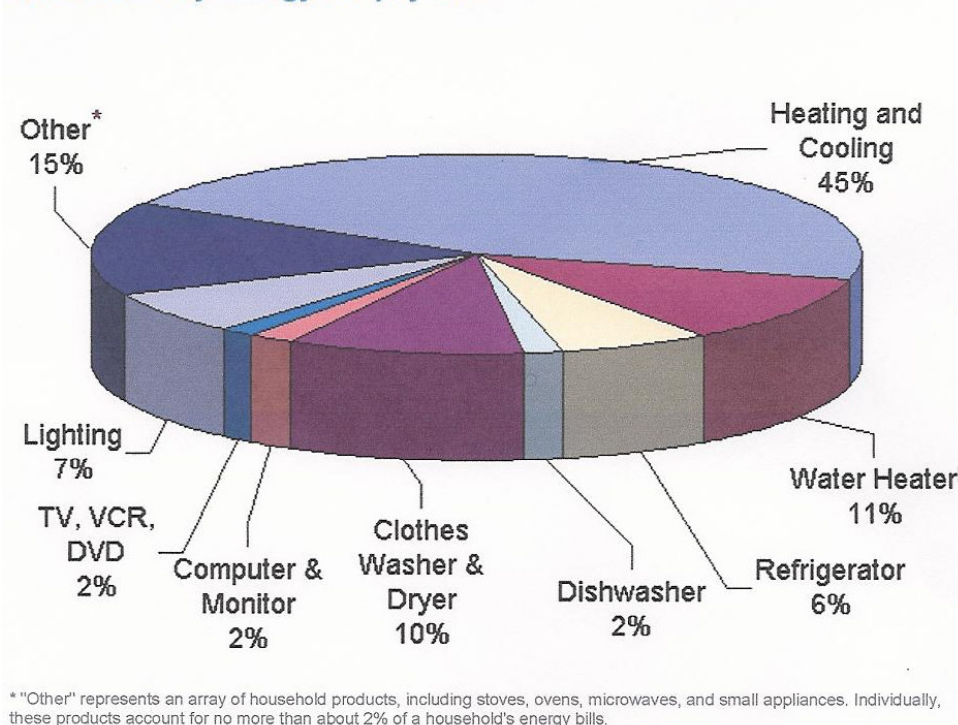
*[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.*

*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?



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## **OTHER MATTERS**



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

It has been noted that the driveway slopes towards the house which will cause dampness particularly during the wetter months.

We would advise in a worst case scenario you can flood the garage.

### **Security System**

It is a personal choice, you already have an alarm system you may wish to add to this.

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

We would recommend that a hardwired fire and smoke alarm system is added to the building. Approximate cost £500.

### **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 as you are aware from reading the report there is asbestos to the garage, it may be elsewhere. 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



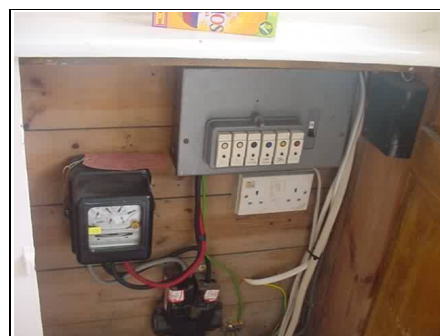
*It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.*

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 under the Lounge. 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 (Institute of Electrical engineers) inspection test and all recommendations to be actioned. A new fuse board is recommended.



Fuse board

## Earth Test

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



Earth Test PAT test can be seen

**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 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.

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 have assumed it is a Mains water supply.

## **Water Pressure**

We have checked this by putting our thumb over the water coming out of the tap and it is typical of what we would normally find.

## **Cold Water Cistern**

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

## **Hot Water Cylinder**

This is also located in the roof section.

## **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**

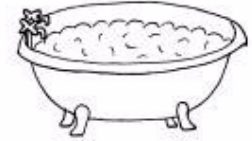
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present. So the heating has not been tested

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

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

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

## **BATHROOM**



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

The property has a dated bathroom suite you may wish to ultimately replace this.

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 not found any man holes/ inspection chambers or rodding eyes, this is unusual.

**ACTION REQUIRED** Often the manhole covers have been hidden so we would recommend you ask the existing owners where they are located.

### Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal in this age of property it is often into a shared drain, known as a combined drain.



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

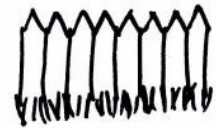
### GARAGES/OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING



Please see our comments below regarding parking and garage.



### EXTERNAL AREAS



#### Front Garden

This has been given over to parking at the front of the property including access to a garage.

#### Rear Garden

There is a slightly overgrown mature rear garden with some defects to the fence, you need to establish who owns what.

**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 and no one responded.

### **Right Hand Neighbours**

Also knocked on the door and no one responded. From the material stored on the roof and in the back garden that we could see it looks like it is owned by a builder.



Right hand neighbour

### **Other Neighbours**

Had a brief chat with a passing neighbour who however was not from this end of the road.

## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

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

mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the [www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

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

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

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

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

For and on Behalf of  
GEM Associates Limited  
Independent Chartered Surveyors

## **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 a warm summer's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
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.

## **NOT LOCAL**

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

## **EMPTY PROPERTY**

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

## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as we have not had access to the ground floor or even sight of the timbers, we have not opened up the first floor however we have had very limited access in the roof due to it being boarded up. We have not had the benefit of interviewing the existing owner or them carrying out a question and answer sheet.

## **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.