

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Buckinghamshire



Marketing by:
www.1stAssociated.co.uk
0800 298 5424

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES, 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

PARKING
EXTERNAL AREAS

POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET
CONDENSATION AND COLD BRIDGING ARTICLE

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.

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 semi-detached property which has been extended and altered over the years. There is a parking area to the front and gardens to the rear. The property is in a residential area on a relatively busy road.

We believe that the property was built after the War Years when there was a rationing of materials and limited skilled labour available which can mean that sometimes there are unusual constructions hidden beneath what appears to be a typical construction.

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:

1930	Amy Johnson flies 11,000 miles solo from England to Australia
1935	Cats Eyes first used on British roads
1936	Edward VIII abdicates and George VI takes over the throne
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)
1952	Colour TV first introduced.

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



Street view



Front parking area



Rear garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway area
- 2) Dining room
- 3) Kitchen
- 4) Lounge to the rear
- 5) Breakfast room
- 6) Cloakroom

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Small Bathroom to the front left hand side
- 2) Bedroom to the right hand side
- 3) Study (walk through to rear bedroom)
- 4) Second rear bedroom

Top Floor

The top floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Semi-converted roof space

Outside Areas

There is a parking area to the front and a garden to the rear.

Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

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 lounge/dining room



Rear lounge



Cloakroom



Kitchen



Breakfast room to the rear

First Floor



Small bathroom to the front left hand side



Bedroom to the right hand side



Rear bedroom



Study with walkway to main bedroom on rear left hand side



Main bedroom on rear left hand side

Top Floor



Steep steps into roof



Semi-converted roof space

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Hipped pitched roof, clad with original clay tiles with nibs onto a close boarded roof
Flat Roof:	Flat roof to the rear
Main Roof Structure:	Hipped cut timber roof with amendments for roof lights
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic / Cast iron
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic with a swan neck
Walls:	Smooth and pebbledash render with no drip details Stretcher Bond Brickwork
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed aluminium with a protective coating, some with and some without trickle vents

Internal

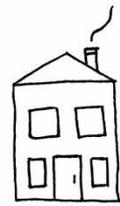
Ceilings:	Possibly lath and plaster (assumed)
Walls:	Mixture of solid and hollow (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Part suspended timber floor, part concrete (assumed)
	First Floor: Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed)
	Top Floor: Ceiling joists and floorboard sheets (assumed)

Services

We are advised that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The boiler is located in the kitchen and is a wall mounted Halstead model. The electrics are also located in the kitchen and are 1980/1990's.

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report.
We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 250 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!

- 1.0) It is a detached property with off road parking and convenient for Marlow town centre.
- 2.0) The property has been extended although the arrangement of the space is unusual as it is at present.

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.

1.0)Older style roof

The property has an original clay tiled roof which is nibbed, sitting onto a tapered close boarded roof. In our experience whilst these roofs are very strong, which is important with a hipped roof as this is, we have come across problems with spalling to the nibs and spalling in general. We could see in this instance that adjoining roofs have been replaced and we feel that this roof is a risk. Unfortunately we cannot see the underside of it properly due to it being insulated and lined although we did open up a small section of approximately 1% of the roof and of course we have experience of these types of roof problems.



Roof – be aware of problems



Part of the insulation removed to see the close boarding

Valley Gutter

We can see staining to the valley gutters, particularly in the roof conversion. Although we didn't obtain excessive damp meter readings we did find some in the rear right hand bedroom (all directions given as you face the front of the property).



Dampness in rear right hand bedroom

ACTION REQUIRED: We wouldn't advise buying this property unless you are happy to carry out future repairs, possibly re-roofing in the not too distant future. The number of years is very difficult to estimate without opening up the roof, the close boarding beneath it does hide any problems (as well as making it a very strong roof) but it is the water-tightness that is in question in this instance.

ANTICIPATED COST: We feel that you should be looking for a £10,000 - £15,000 reduction in the price of the house to reflect the future risk of the roof repairs or the present owners can open up the roof or re-roof the property (note next door have a new roof). Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

2.0) Condensation

There have been condensation problems in this property and there still are. We believe this to relate to the humidity generating areas such as the bathroom (in particular the bathroom) and the kitchen. This together with a combination of factors of the age of property and the style of construction results in condensation.



Mould in shower

Metal double glazed windows

We would note in particular the metal double glazed windows are not helping with the condensation issues which obviously would be a major expense to replace.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add humidity controlled large extract fans into the bathroom and the kitchen and make sure that the property is adequately aired and vented. We do believe it will be difficult to get rid of the condensation; depending upon your lifestyle and number and age of people in the property, it may prove almost impossible to get rid of.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

3.0) Cold Bridging/condensation

In this era of property Cold Bridging is/can be a problem. Cold Bridging is where an element of the property allows heat to transfer through it quicker than other areas and usually results in mould and dampness. We have already commented on the condensation and higher than average dampness occurring in the property. Unfortunately there is very little you can do about Cold Bridging without major changes in the property construction.

Cold Bridging Defined

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure much quicker when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to consider this as a characteristic of the property and that you are happy to accept the dampness and mould. We currently can see some mould where the wall meets the main roof.

Please see the article on Cold Bridging in the Appendices of this Report.

4.0) Asbestos textured paint to the ceilings

You have an older style textured paint, commonly known as artex, to the ceiling which is said to have an element of asbestos in it. We are aware that we cannot be 100% certain of this from a visual check and we are also aware that we are not asbestos surveyors.



Artex ceiling although it doesn't show up very well in the photo

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the ceilings are either sealed by painting them or that a

smooth plaster is put over them. We wouldn't of course, recommend sanding the area. If you want to be absolutely sure that it is asbestos or not, then you will need to have an asbestos test.

ANTICIPATED COST: Our last experience of an asbestos test was at a cost of £150 which was approximately one year ago; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

5.0) Hairline cracking

There is hairline cracking visible in many of the rooms. We believe this is due to a modern gypsum plaster being used on an old property where we believe the original lime plaster has been skimmed over or it could be a cement based hard render that has been plastered over; either way, it has resulted in hairline cracking occurring. This is combined with general moisture and condensation that is occurring in the property which creates hairline cracks.



Hairline cracking

ACTION REQUIRED: As previously, we would recommend that you reduce the moisture in the property and better vent it, fill the hairline cracks and redecorate with lining paper.

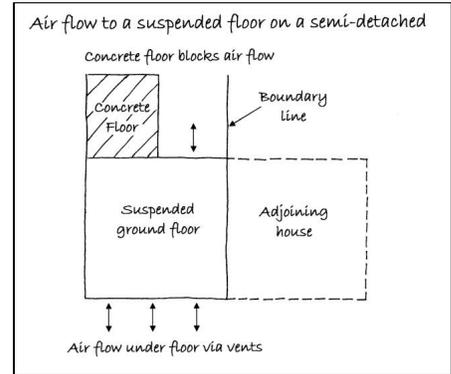
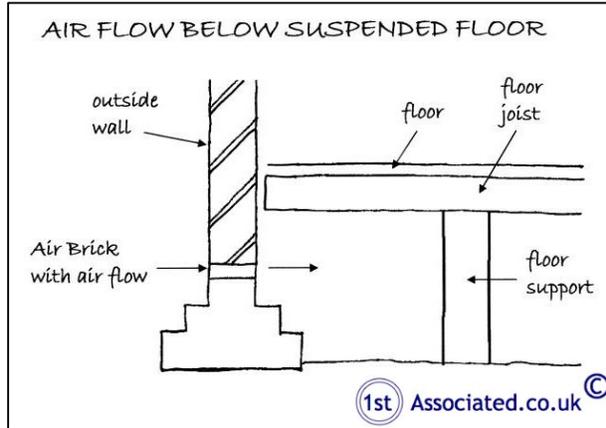
There is an outside chance that there is movement in the property over and above the normal differential settlement we would expect when a property is extended. It is very difficult/impossible to identify this from a one-off inspection. If you wish to be 100% certain the property will need to be monitored. An alternative would be for the existing owners to put in an insurance claim which you then take over.

ANTICIPATED COST: For general redecoration and filling of hairline cracks, a few hundred pounds; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Ceilings and Walls Section of this Report.

6.0) Ventilation under the floor

The floor is part suspended timber and part solid. Often with this type of flooring it blocks up the airflow which is needed underneath the original suspended timber floor to prevent woodworm, wet rot and dry rot. In this case there may well have been vents under the new floor, although we cannot be certain.



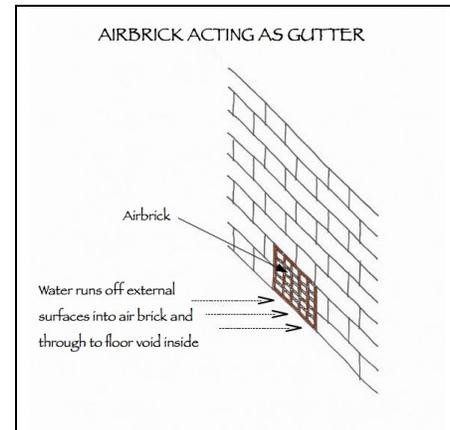
Original plan view of the property. Where the rear arrow is, there has now been a single storey extension which means the airbricks are blocked in theory.

6.1) Airbricks acting as gutters

The airbricks that we can see to the side of the property are relatively low and may be acting as gutters, allowing water in.



Airbrick acting as a gutter



ACTION REQUIRED: Present owners to provide sets of drawings for the extensions to check if air vents were put underneath the floor. Either way, we would recommend you open up the floors to check there is an air ventilation underneath the floors and we would recommend adding additional airbricks.

ANTICIPATED COST: Assuming the floor is not damaged or deteriorated then we would expect costs to be in the region of a few hundred pounds for adding additional airbricks, possibly more if you have to replace some timber; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Airbricks Section of this Report.

7.0) Top floor extension- does it have Planning Permission and Building Regulations Approval?

We ask this question because as far as we can see there are not the required fire regulations on the second storey extension.

For example we would expect to see:

1. A fire door at the top of the stairs.
2. A fire alarm system throughout the entirety of the property that is hardwired into the mains and is interlinked so you know if there is a fire on the bottom floor when you are on the top floor.
3. A strong hand rail!

We also query whether this has planning permission because the overlapping steps that have been used are relatively commonly used in properties where planning permission has been obtained as it passes Building Regulations.

Planning Permission Defined

This relates to the aesthetics of how a building looks and how it fits in with the environment.

Building Regulations Defined

This looks at the way the building is built ensuring that good practice occurs, setting out a minimum standard of building and also Health and Safety.

ACTION REQUIRED: If it is not classed as a habitable room then you shouldn't be paying for it to be anything other than a boarded out roof space.

ANTICIPATED COST: Assuming everything is in order in reference to Local Authority approvals, we would expect costs to be in the region of £500 - £1,000 to upgrade the fire side of things plus redecoration; please obtain quotations. Please note we are not experts in the area of fire alarm systems.

Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

8.0) Services

We found what looks like a pump in the office adjacent to the rear left hand bedroom surrounded by foam which indicates that it is noisy. It wasn't switched on at the time of our inspection.



Pump hidden behind insulation in study

No manhole found

During the course of the survey we didn't find a manhole. We would expect one to be either at the side or the rear of the property in this age of construction. This can be an area where leaking drains cause movement and deterioration in a property. The original manhole may have been built over in the course of extending the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a close circuit TV camera report to check the condition of the drains as a safety measure and in particular in relation to the movement of the property.

Please see the Mains Drains Section of this Report.

The Ugly

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

This property is a higher risk than acceptable to some people due to the roof issues, condensation issues and the potential, albeit an outside change, of problems with movement in the property.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

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.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services.

Electrics

For the electrics we would recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent carries out an inspection, test and report to Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE), which is recommended whenever a property changes occupancy.

Heating

We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Drainage

Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.

Water Supply

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used

in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

ACTION REQUIRED – SERVICES: We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating to turn the property into your home. 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 and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. 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 usually be best to have work supervised 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 strongly recommend negotiating on the price, we would be more than happy to discuss this further. We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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 in full 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.

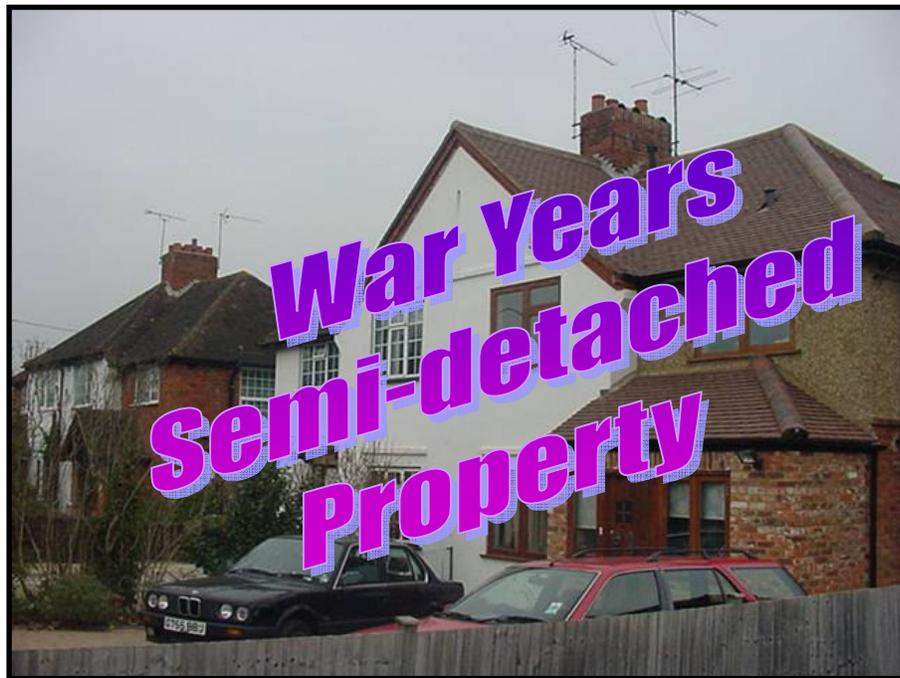
TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

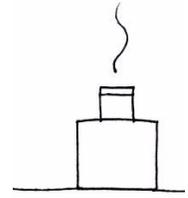
Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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



EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES 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.

There is one chimney remaining to this property located to the front right hand side and it sits on the Party Wall (all directions given as you face the property). We believe there were probably more chimneys originally.

Chimney One – located to the front right hand side

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and four chimney pots (on your side). From what we could see from ground level and via the roof windows it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style. Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.



Front chimney

We noted that there are aerials on this chimney which can cause damage and cut into it like a cheese wire into cheese.

ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney.

Chimney Two

We haven't been able to find another chimney; we suspect there would originally have been one to the rear of the property to help with the fire that warmed the rear rooms.

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.

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flues

Flues offer ventilation to things like boilers and soil and vent pipes and usually come through the roof covering, which can often also be a weak area.

We can see that the boiler in the kitchen is vented to outside air.



Flue

Roof Windows

(Known as roof lights or

Velux windows which is the trade or generic name)

The property has manufactured roof lights to the main roof and to the single storey extension, which looked in average condition.

The roof windows to the flat roof extension were slightly different to usual as it has a fibreglass surround which means it is at a slight angle, which we were pleased to see, although there is ponding on the roof itself which is covered later on in this report.

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



Roof window to main roof



Roof window to rear flat roof

Party Wall

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimney. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

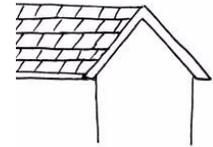
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, 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, flues, and roof windows from the parts we could see above roof level. 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 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.

Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in two areas, the main pitched roof and the low level single storey rear flat roof extension.

Main Roof

The main roof is hipped, pitched and clad with a clay tile. The clay tiles will likely have nibs onto a close boarded roof.

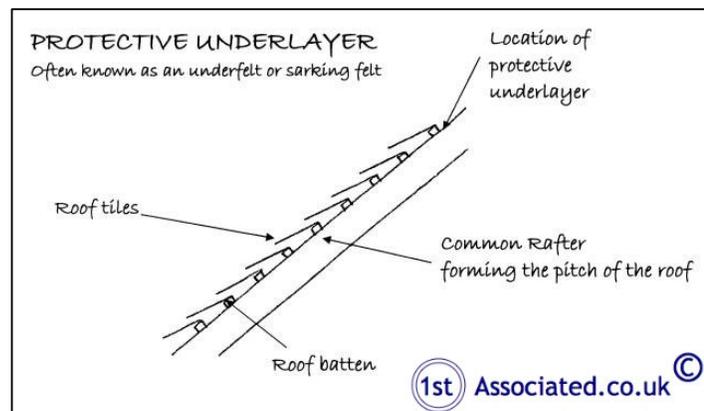


ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. Carry out periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.

Main roof

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.



Usually we would find an underfelt/sarking felt or underlayer, or indeed nothing. In this instance the property is close boarded, which we feel is the best way to construct a hipped roof, as they are integrally unstable and close boarding makes them more stable.



Close boarding with insulation beneath it

The tiles are nibbed tiles with no protective under layer. This means that wind driven rain can get underneath the tiles and indeed we can see that this is happening from the staining within the roof. We are always in a Catch- 22 with regard to this type of roof as although it is letting in some rain water it is not letting in that much. We have taken guidance from the adjoining roofs which show that the majority haven't been replaced; some have such as the next door roof. We would comment that looking specifically at this property that we could see some undulations in the tiles which is why we have made the comments we have in the Executive Summary.

ACTION REQUIRED: A roofer for half a day to reposition the displaced tiles. You also need to have a supply of tiles for when the roof next causes a problem. The way to see how much rainwater is coming through is to board out the roof space with an insulated roof board (insulated to give you insulation and no other reason). This would then show any new water staining onto the boarding. We would be more than happy to return and comment further once you have been in the property for a while assuming this is a risk that you are happy to take and a cost that you are happy to pay.

Finally we would not store any valuables in this area.

Single storey rear roofs

Flat Roof with a sudo-pitch

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.

Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

The flat roof is hidden behind the pitched roof. This flat roof is fairly unusual in that has a fibreglass covering. Our experience of fibreglass has not been that good, we have come across new extensions which have had fibreglass used on them, where there has been movement within them and bulging.

Guarantees on fibreglass roofs

Often we find that one of the selling points is that they have a guarantee. In our experience and one expert witness case, the guarantee was worthless.

Unfortunately with this roof we can see ponding on it (this is where water is sitting on it), which does tend to deteriorate roofs quicker. Having said all of that, it is still a relatively new fibreglass roof, therefore should have some life left in it. You may live perfectly well underneath it for many years to come.

It could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.



Sudo-pitched roof to extension



Rear flat roof



Ponding to flat roof



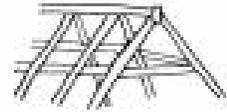
Pre-forming around the roof window

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 ground level and the upper floor windows.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately eighty percent of the main roof and eighty percent of the flat 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. With regards to the flat roof, we were particularly concerned that the outlet may get blocked.

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

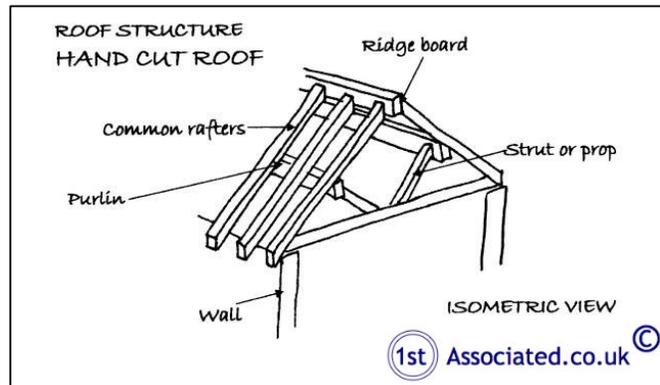
The main roof is accessed via a small hatch to the side of the building located to the rear of the room in the roof. From within this area we could see the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the insulation between them. It has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.



Roof access is via small hatch in side of the building

Roof Structure

We had a limited view of the roof structure. From what we know of this type of construction it is a hipped cut timber roof. There may have been amendments to it and the removal of struts or props to allow the forming of the room in the roof. This may be partly contributing to the movement that we could see although a close boarded roof such as this is extremely strong.



Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



Roof timbers

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the room in the roof and the insulation. We could see approximately five percent of the roof structure. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style. It is, however, 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

Although we couldn't see it, we believe there is one firewall hidden behind the decoration.

Fire Walls Defined

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

Water Tanks

We didn't see a water tank.

Ventilation

In a close boarded roof such as this, there tends to be little ventilation and there can be timber rot, particularly when the dampness starts to get in. Unfortunately the close boarding has the good effect of hiding the dampness but this in turn is bad because it allows the dampness to sit on the timber.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

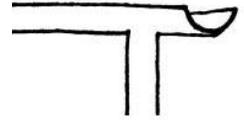
Electrical Cables

We would normally look for electric cables in a roof. In this case as the room has been formed in the roof we were unable to do so.

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has a mixture of the original cast iron and plastic gutters and downpipes. They are fairly typical of what we see and are in average condition for their age, type and style. Cast iron of this age will need maintenance. If regularly maintained it lasts longer than plastic, in our experience.



Cast iron gutters and downpipe

Valley gutters

To the roofs are various valley gutters which appear to have leaked in the past. There may be some minor leaks but most people would be happy to live with these providing repairs are carried out within the next six to twelve months.

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

The property has plastic soil and vent pipes with a swan neck which can cause problems. We couldn't see any excessive leaks in this instance.



Bend in 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.

The walls are constructed of Stretcher Bond Brickwork (both painted and unpainted) with areas also in a pebbledash and smooth render.

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". This pattern would repeat throughout.

Cavity Walls

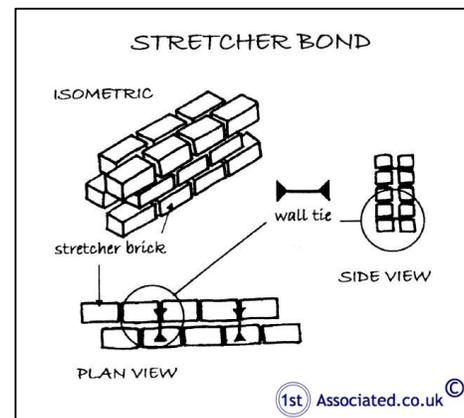
Cavity walls were first used in Victorian times. It originates from solid walls not always being waterproof against driving rain and not providing a good degree of heat insulation. The design of cavity walls makes them relatively unstable and they depend upon the wall ties.

Wall Ties

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. We would typically see horizontal cracking where there are problems. In this case we have not noted any cracking however wall tie failure is a progressive problem. We would add as there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties. As such we cannot be hundred per cent certain with regard to this problem unless we open up the structure. From what we can see externally it appears not to have any



Unpainted brickwork



problems, we would normally see horizontal cracking, however we do need to warn that wall tie failure is a progressive problem.

Render

Quite a lot of the property has a painted render finish, some pebbledash and some smooth. We are always wary when we see rendered properties as it usually means they have been rendered for a particular reason.

In this particular case we believe from looking at the surrounding buildings it is part of the original aesthetics.



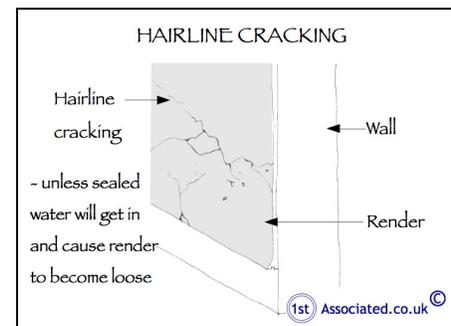
Smooth render to the front



Pebbledash render

Cracking

We would remind you that any hairline cracks that appear need to be sealed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in and causing blisters and hollow areas.

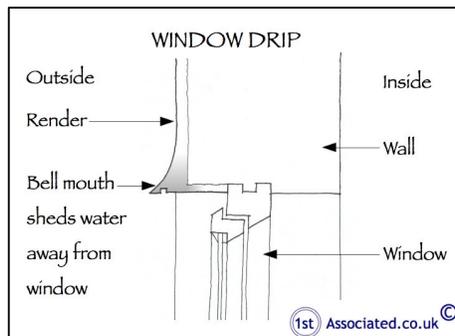


Render Detailing

You can normally tell whether the render is good or not by the drip detail over the window and the bell mouth to the base of the property.

Window drip detail

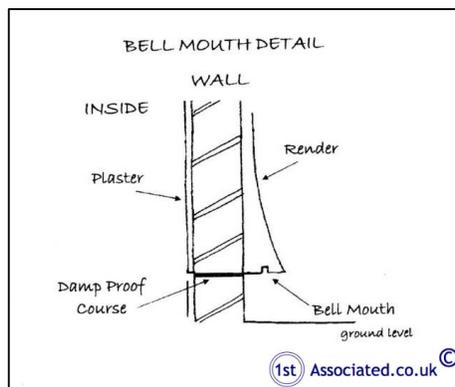
In this case we found no drip detail to the windows.



No Drip detail to windows

Bell mouth to base of property

To the base of the render there was no bell mouth detail.



No bell mouth to the base of the property

Painted render/painted walls

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive.



Painted brickwork

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

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

FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation, with the new extension being a concrete foundation which is likely to be deeper. The two different foundations can cause differential movement.

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.

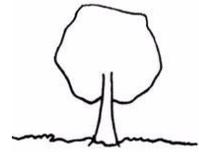
It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection - the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property. We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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.

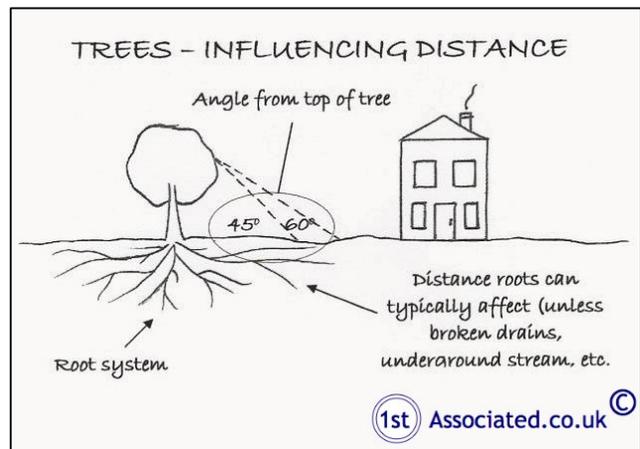
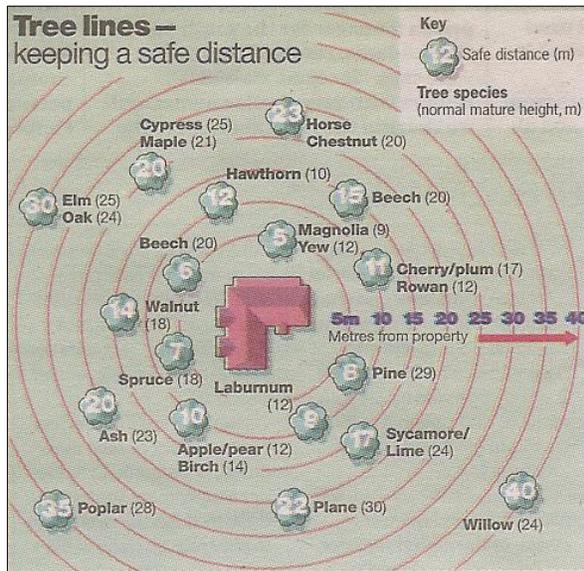
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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 influencing distance of the property.



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 can see a DPC to the newer part of the property. In the older part of the property we cannot see one due to the render; there may be a slate brick behind the render plinth.

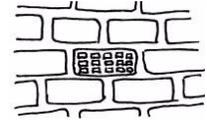


Damp proof course

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

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.

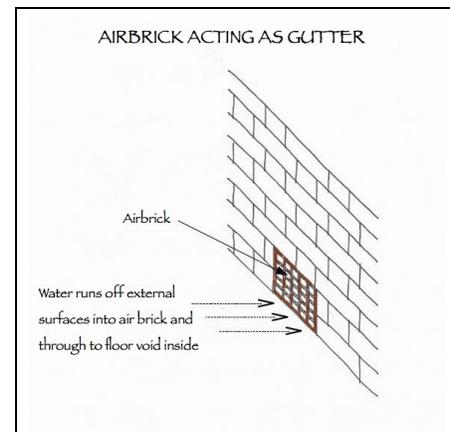
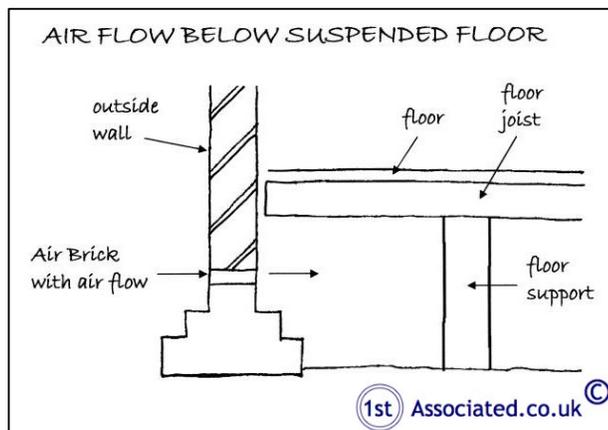
Low Level Air Bricks

Air bricks are essential to have a through flow of air as this helps to reduce the chances of wet rot, dry rot and woodworm. In this case they appear partially blocked.

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

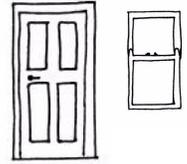


Air brick acting as a gutter



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 walls/floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



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

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

Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are timber. They are painted and we would comment they are in average condition for their age, type and style.

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out periodic inspections.



Fascias and soffits

Windows and Doors

The property predominantly has aluminium windows with a protective coating, which are set within a timber frame. This type of aluminium window was common in the 1970's to 1990's, but now tends to be less fashionable partly because of condensation problems with them. Some of the windows have trickle vents and some do not.



Double glazed aluminium windows

Trickle vents defined

Trickle vents allow a trickle of air through, therefore stopping/reducing the likelihood of condensation occurring within the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: There may be a Conservation Area requirement to keep metal windows in this instance. Bearing in mind the problems with condensation we recommend your Legal Advisor checks this and advises us if there a requirement to have metal framed windows.

Generally they look to be of an average quality for their age, type and style.

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.

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

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. 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 external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



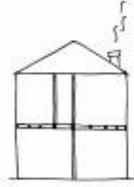
The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

There are areas of painted brickwork and areas of painted render (both smooth and pebbledash) to this property. We would expect redecoration to be required by the summer of 2014 and the sealing of any cracks as soon as they are seen. Redecoration can be expensive particularly with the need for scaffolding.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

The ceilings are finished in a textured paint commonly known as artex, some of the newer areas such as the extension will be a gypsum plaster. Artex was commonly used in the 1960's/1970's and often used to hide defects on lath and plaster ceilings. Unfortunately we haven't been able to see the back of the ceilings so we cannot confirm they are lath and plaster.

We would comment textured paint/artex of this age is likely to contain an element of asbestos.

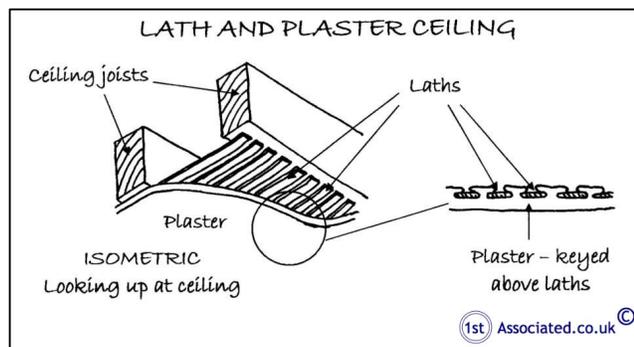
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regards to asbestos in the Executive Summary. Please note we are not asbestos surveyors.

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.

Lath and Plaster Defined

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



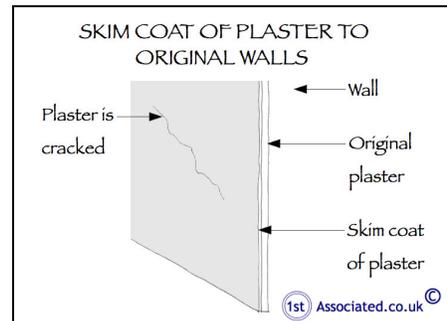
Internal Walls and Partitions

These are, we believe a mixture of solid and studwork construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

Perimeter Walls

Originally these would have been constructed with a wet plaster, possibly a lime plaster. We believe they have had a skim coat of gypsum plaster which is now cracking.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the hairline cracking that was found in many walls. This relates to a combination of things from the humidity and condensation in the property to the difficulty of skimming a lime plaster wall not prepared properly.

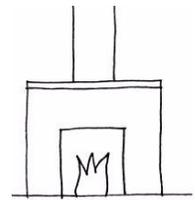


We cannot be 100% certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.

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.

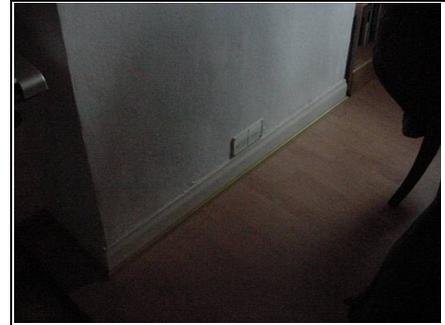
CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts are located to the right hand side and are visible to the ground floor and first floor (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

We were pleased to see that the chimneys not in use were vented, although we would much prefer larger vents.



Vented chimney

The problem with chimneys that are not vented properly is that the dampness within the chimney causes the lining to deteriorate as well as the possibility of dampness coming through the walls.

Finally, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden particularly when plastered over.

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained.

It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues Section of this report.

FLOORS



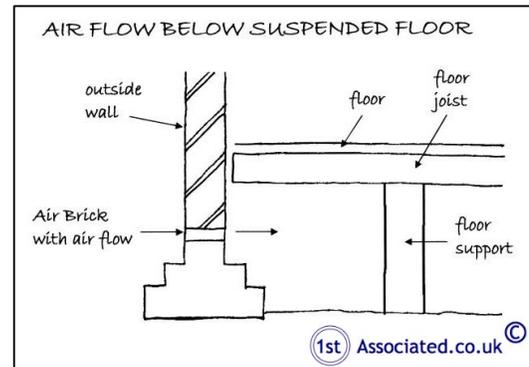
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

There is a mixture of a suspended timber floor to the front of the property and a solid floor to the rear.

Suspended Timber Floor

The floors to the front of the property are suspended timber floors and require air movement underneath to minimise wet rot, dry rot and woodworm.



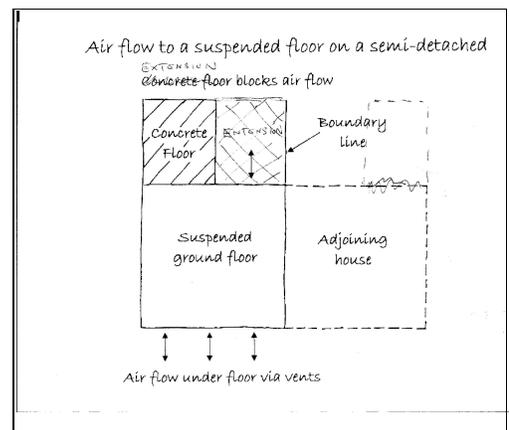
Solid Floor

The floors to the rear felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete.

Extensions

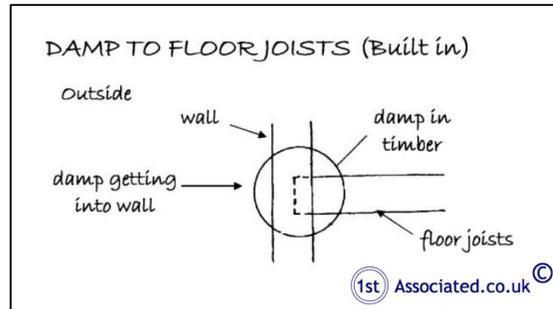
Where extensions are added, they can often block the air movement. From our investigation we were unable to establish if there were vents underneath the concrete sections of the floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you open up a section of the floor. Please note we have not opened up the floor or lifted the carpets or floor coverings.



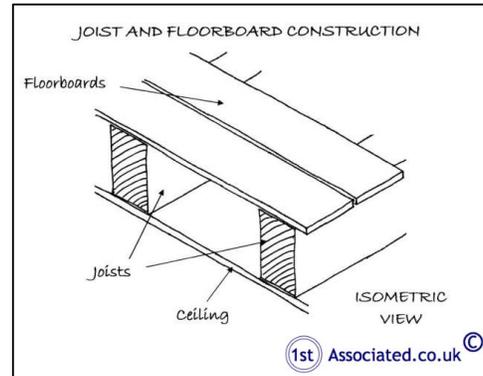
First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards with embedded timbers, as this is typical in this age of property.



Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

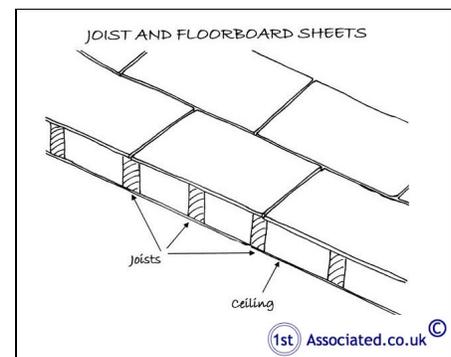
These are usually at first floor level consisting of a joist supported from the external walls, either built in or, in more modern times, sitting upon joist hangers, sometimes taking additional support from internal walls, with floorboards fixed down upon it.



Room in the Roof

We believe the first floor construction is ceiling joists and floorboard sheets.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments and concerns in the Executive Summary with regards to whether this is a legal building regulation extension/alteration or not.



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

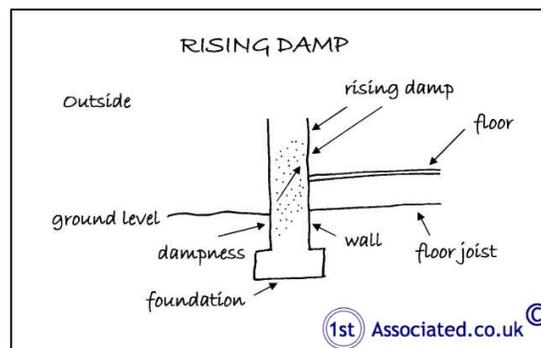


DAMPNESS

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

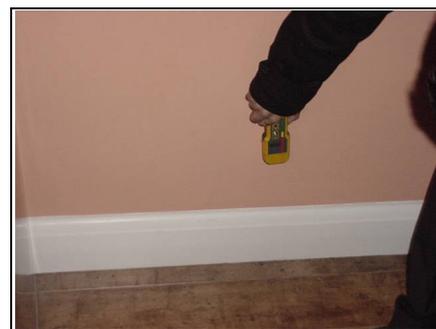
Rising Damp

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



A visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls.

In this particular case we have found some minor areas of rising damp to the front of the property which we believe relate to dampness getting in via the hairline cracking in the render and a slightly higher ground level.



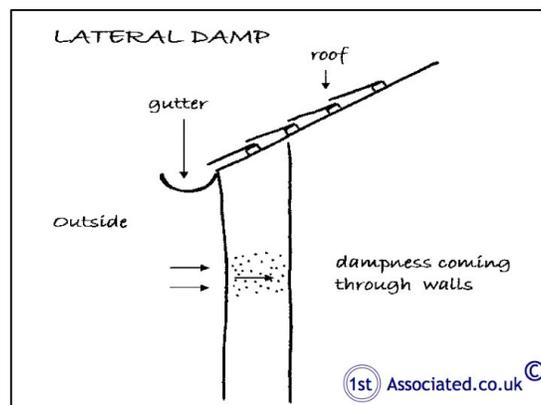
Testing for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see 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 used a damp meter on the external walls. We have found lateral dampness in the rear bedroom which we believe relates to roof problems.



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



Lateral dampness found in rear right hand bedroom

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were signs of condensation. We have concerns with regards to the condensation in this property as a whole. To some extent it does depend on how you utilise the property, there are various factors in this property which mean, we believe, it is more difficult than most to avoid 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, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

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

Extract fans in kitchens and bathrooms

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans within the kitchens and bathrooms which are moisture generating areas.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens and bathrooms. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The doors looked to be the original panel doors? Although often people add these to get the original look.



Panel door

Staircase

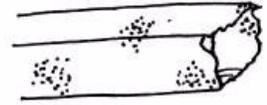
We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor in a worse case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.

Kitchen

We found the kitchen in average condition although it was slightly unusual in that it was a galley style kitchen which you walked through to gain access to half of the house. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof due to the room formed within it.

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.*

Again, we have not visually seen any wet rot during the course of our inspection however we noted that there may be problems with the floor joists due to the dampness that we have reported earlier. Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof due to the room formed within it.

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 and the floors are the main areas that we look for woodworm. Within the floors our view was very limited and within the roof it was also limited due to the room formed within the roof. We could see approximately ten percent of the timbers. There were no visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term ‘structurally significant’ damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

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

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

Internal decorations are in average to dated condition. We did note the cracking which is not ideal in many of the walls. We would recommend redecoration in the summer of 2012.

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

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs

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

Roofs

We could see some insulation between the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) which is not an ideal location for it. We would much prefer it to be between the ceiling joists as this doesn't cause condensation in the same way. The other problem with insulation between the common rafters is that it hides any dampness that is coming through from the roof above.



Insulation board in roof space

Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction. In this age of property they were often built without insulation which has been added at a later date.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Adviser to check and confirm if there is insulation within the walls and advise us by return before the legal completion of the purchase to comment further, as often where insulation has been added at a later date it can cause damage to the wall ties.

Windows

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

Services

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

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see.

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.

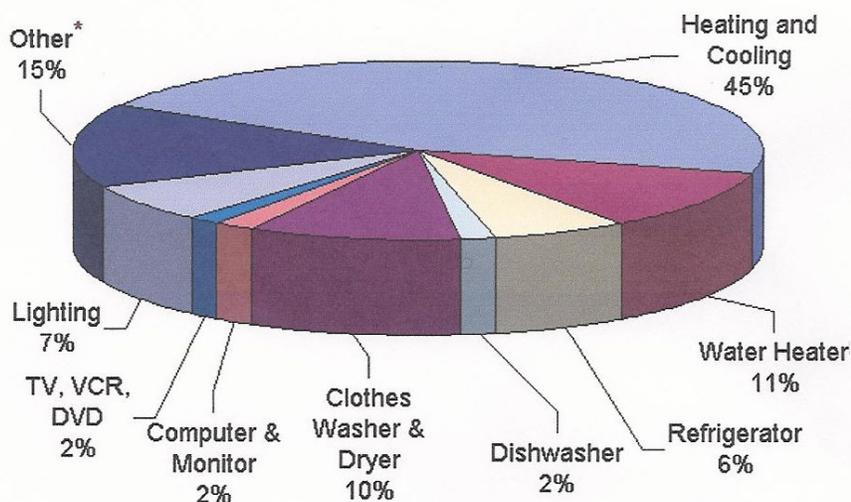
or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
[HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html](http://www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html) to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay
[HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs)*

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency.

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

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

Fire / Smoke Alarms

Some smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

Extension

As the property has been extended we would recommend that Smoke Alarms are hardwired into the extended areas. By hardwiring we mean to the electricity system, therefore no batteries are needed which can always be a problem when they run down as no-one ever remembers to change them!

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

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.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have noted asbestos in the textured paint, often known as artex. Artex 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.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the kitchen and are 1980/1990's. The fuse board looked newish but better systems are now available.



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

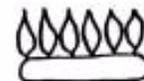
ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried

out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

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

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

GAS



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

We are advised that the property has mains gas. We were advised by the owner that the consumer unit is located in the kitchen although we didn't actually see it.

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

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

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

We were advised by the owner that the controlling stopcock is located in the kitchen although we didn't actually see it. It is important that its presence is established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners to show you where it is.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage test we checked the pressure literally by putting a finger over the tap and this seemed average. The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

Cold Water Cistern

We have not found a water tank. We can only assume that the water is directly fed to the taps. The original idea behind a water tank was to help water pressure and to give an emergency supply of water.

Hot Water Cylinder

The hot water cylinder is factory insulated, which indicates that it is relatively new (in this case we mean in the last 30 years). This cylinder will therefore have a good thermal efficiency, although not as good as the more modern hot water cylinders.



Hot water cylinder

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the kitchen and is a wall mounted Halstead model. As far as we are aware this isn't a modern energy efficient boiler.



Boiler

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

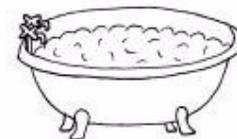
Ten Minute Heating Test

The heating was switched on at the time of the inspection and seemed satisfactory.

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 property has a four piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, shower, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in below average condition due to its size and also due to the mould that we could see that did look to be cleaned fairly regularly but nevertheless was still present.



Mould to bathroom



Cold bridging – please refer to our article on cold bridging at the end of the report and also our comments in the Executive Summary

Downstairs cloakroom

The property has a downstairs cloakroom consisting of a wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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.

No Manholes Found

In older properties often there were no manholes however in this age of property we would expect to find one. The manhole is possibly hidden underneath the extension. During our question and answer session with the owner they were unable to advise further.

Manholes are used where there is a change in direction of pipes or new pipes join the main run. It is therefore a good location for clearing any blockages. In this case we were unable to see any manholes.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Manholes Defined

Access areas which usually fit a man (or woman) into them and are put in where the drains change direction.

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

Drains are normally shared in a property of this age as this was common practice in this era of property.

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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

In this era of property they are likely to be combined drains which is where the foul water and the surface water combines. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING



The front garden has been given over to parking.



Front driveway and parking area

EXTERNAL AREAS

Front Garden

The front garden has been given over to parking as above.

Rear Garden

The rear garden is a level grassed area.



Rear garden

Marketing by: www.1stAssociated.co.uk
0800 298 5424

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

We knocked but no-one answered.

Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked but no-one answered although they did look to be in by the number of cars on the driveway.

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) 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) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - ix) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - x) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other

Designated Planning Area.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

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 cold winter's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

NOT LOCAL

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

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as we did not have full access to the roof due to the room formed within it and as we were not able to open up the ground floor or the first floor.

As the property was empty we did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers and we didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property to talk about your specific requirements.

BUILDING INSURANCE

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

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.

APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. Condensation and Cold Bridging Article

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

www.hometrack.co.uk

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

www.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.

www.rightmove.co.uk

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

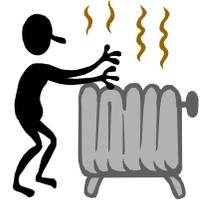
www.zoopla.co.uk

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

Condensation and Cold Bridging – What is Cold Bridging?

What is cold bridging and does it always cause condensation?

We often find cold bridging on certain types of property which unfortunately means that condensation is more likely. Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure much quicker when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element.



Certain types of buildings are more susceptible to condensation and cold bridging

You often see condensation in properties, for example on a mirror in a bathroom when you have had a shower or a bath. Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure which you can do very little to change without great expense.

Typically this will be a lintel. Problems can occur with concrete lintels that were commonly used in the 1970's, and also in more modern, better insulated properties, cold bridging has been known to occur on metal lintels. The problem is what to do about it.



Example of a concrete lintel – can you notice where the cold bridging would be in this photo?



A close up view of the concrete lintel

When is Cold Bridging Most Likely?



In our experience cold bridging is most likely on properties built in the 1930's to 1980's, most commonly in the 1970's. This is the era when we were just starting to think about insulation and we added insulation into our structures for example with cavity wall insulation or double glazed windows. This meant they were warmer which in effect has meant the significance of a lintel over a door or window being colder and allowing the transfer of coldness becomes much more important. This results in condensation that we commonly see above windows in this age and era of property.



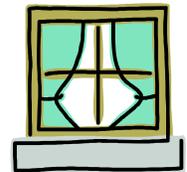
Typical 1970's house



Typical 1970's houses

So what can you do about Cold Bridging?

The difficulty is resolving cold bridging. Normally where condensation is involved if you get the balance of warm and coolness of the air, the air ventilation and movement you can reduce considerably the chances of condensation. Airing the room which seems to have gone out of fashion where you literally open the windows in the morning to air the room is a big step forward.



Where do we most commonly see cold bridging?

We would answer this in two ways. Firstly, we see as mentioned cold bridging is common in 1970's houses. It's also more common to various other factors.



The main other factor is large families or families with young children where there is a lot of washing going on and often during the winter months this washing is then dried on radiators. This is generally known as the lifestyle of the occupants.

Expert witness cases

We have seen some terrible examples of this. We have been involved in several court cases as expert witnesses where landlords are being taken to court over the condensation being caused by cold bridging. The discussions that then take place in court with us as expert witnesses are, is it a design characteristic or is it a lifestyle characteristic that is causing problems.

Is Cold Bridging a design problem?

We have been involved in many reports on condensation and cold bridging and some legal cases where we have been asked to act as expert witness. Really it's down to the design of the property. There are cold elements in it such as a concrete frame or concrete lintels. You have a disadvantage although, not impossible to stop the condensation it's very hard. It could also be argued that where cold bridging is occurring in a modern property you are getting interstitial condensation which is condensation within the structure which you literally can't see.



1960's concrete frame



Concrete lintel visible externally
but they are not always visible



Dampness and condensation around
the concrete window lintel

Do lifestyle issues cause condensation?

By lifestyle issues we mean the way the building is being used. We have come across quite a few instances where it is how the property is being used that's causing the problems. This may be due to showers being taken without extractor fans being put on or it may be due to clothes being dried internally, particularly during the winter months. It could be steamy kitchens. Some things can be helped by airing the home by opening the windows and in bathrooms and kitchens you can have extractor fans that are controlled by humidity controls on the fans. So it really is an individual answer in most cases to the problems with the property.

