

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

OF

New Malden, Surrey KT3



FOR

Mr J

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey semi detached property that we are advised has been empty and on the market for nine months and prior to this was let out.

There is a garden to the front, a shared driveway to the left hand side, and a garden to the rear together with a garage.

We are believe that the property was built in the 1920s / 1930s, when materials were not readily available as they were rationed and labour was also in short supply. 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:

1903-1928	The Campaign for Women's Suffrage
1912	The Beginning of the Motoring Age
1914-1918	World War I
1920s	Television Invented
1927	Charles Lindbergh flies across the Atlantic
1928	Vote for Women aged over 21
1928	Alexander Fleming develops penicillin
1939-1945	World War II (6 June 1944 D-Day)
1948	Olympic Games held in London

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Rear View



Driveway



Rear Garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance Hall
- Through Lounge
- Kitchen
- Cloakroom

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Rear Bedroom
- Two front bedrooms (one of which is a box bedroom)
- Bathroom

Outside Areas

There is a shared driveway. From our past experience these can be a problem, if you park on them it blocks the access to the garage for your neighbour. The neighbour has already advised us that this has been a problem in the past.

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



Entrance Hall



Kitchen



Front of through Lounge



Rear of through Lounge



Cloakroom

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First Floor



Front Left Hand Bedroom



Front Right Hand Bedroom



Rear Left Hand Bedroom



Bathroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	A pitched hipped roof, clad with small concrete tiles
Gutters and Downpipes:	A mixture of the original cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron
Walls:	Finished in stretcher bond brickwork with vent
External Joinery:	Metal windows (often known as Crittal windows) with timber fascias and soffits

INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Either plasterboard or fibreboard (assumed)
Walls:	Predominantly solid (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Solid underfoot with air vents, so we assume it is a suspended concrete floor (assumed). First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

SERVICES

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

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

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

Generally we found the property to be in average condition considering the property's age, type and style with a few exceptions. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

- The rooms and the garden are a good size.
- The property has good natural light, partly due to the bay window at the front.
- There is off road parking with a garage, albeit that there is a shared driveway that if parked on blocks the access to your neighbours. In our experience this is a very common issue in neighbourhood disputes. There is however room if you are happy to take up some of the garden at the front for an additional off-road parking space.

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) **Asbestos Roof to the Garage**

You have a garage that has an asbestos roof, as did many of the pre-fabricated garages of this era.

Products containing asbestos have, until recent years, been widely used in domestic construction and the mere presence of asbestos does not, in itself, necessarily constitute a health hazard.



Removing undamaged material may release more dust than leaving it in place and it is only when asbestos materials are in a damaged or friable condition, or during installation, modification, removal or demolition, that there is likely to be a significant health risk. We are not asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ultimately we would recommend removal and replacement of all asbestos, as we would in this case.

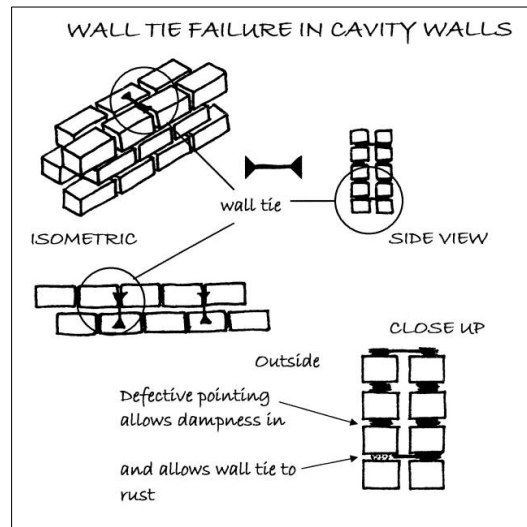
ANTICIPATED COST: Quotations are required from a specialist company. We have seen quotes in the region of £1,000 - £2,000, even for this small amount of asbestos.

Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

2) Early Cavity Wall Construction

The 1920s were one of the earliest times that stretcher bond / cavity wall construction was used in England and as such we did not have much experience of it. They system that this property has was used by lots of Local Authorities in their house buildings and have airbricks that vent the cavity. The idea of this was that the outer brick would allow some rainwater dampness through to the cavity, which would need drying out and the flow of air through the airbricks was meant to do this.

One problem that has come to light over the years is that the cavity ties that tied the outer layer of brickwork and the inner wall together have rusted. Tell tale signs for this are horizontal cracking. In this case we could not see any, but it is a progressive problem and you do need to periodically inspect for problems of this nature.



If you do have wall tie problems it is a serious problem as what it means is that the outer and inner wall are no longer tied together. We do see a few examples of this each year and it means that you have to add in replacement wall ties. If you wish to have any further information with regard to this please do not hesitate to contact us.

3) External Joinery and Metal Windows

The timber work to the windows and the metal windows and doors need repair, easing and adjusting and redecoration.

ACTION REQUIRED: We believe that it would be more economical in the long term to replace the windows, as metal windows often warp and rust and become almost impossible to shut.



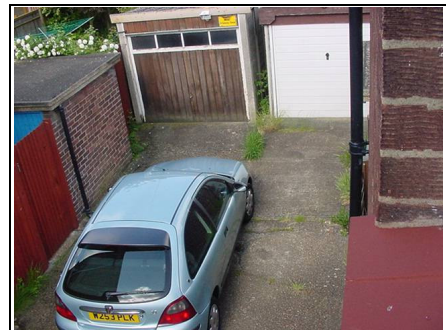
ANTICIPATED COST: This really depends upon the quality of the window system used. We would recommend a double glazed system, which we would expect to be in the thousands of pounds.

Please see the External Joinery Section of this Report.



4) **Shared Driveway**

Whilst it is an advantage having off road parking you would also need to be considerate to your neighbours. When we spoke to your neighbours they mentioned problems they have had in the past with tenants from the house you are buying parking on the shared driveway, which stops access to the garage.



Shared driveway

ACTION REQUIRED: You do have the opportunity to have additional off road parking by using part of your front garden, which we think would work well.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 plus for a basic hard standing.

Please see the External Areas Section of this report.

5) Fences

The fences surrounding the property require realigning, straightening, repair and re-staining. The neighbour was very keen for this to be carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: Realign, straighten, repair and re-stain the fences.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: In the region of £200 - £1,000.



Fence falling down

Please see the External Areas Section of this Report.

6) Services

Internal Radiators

We noticed throughout the property that there are internal radiators, most of which are single panelled. This system is often used as a cheaper heating system, as it means the plumber does not have to cut the joists to run the pipes as far. It can mean that the rooms do not warm up as quickly as they would do under a window where the radiated heat circulates around the room. This can cause condensation.



ACTION REQUIRED: You need to live with the existing heating system to check to see if you are happy with this; if you are not then the radiators will need to be repositioned underneath the windows and increased and improved to double panel convection radiators.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £2,000 - £4,000; quotations required.

Please see the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

No Lid to Water Tank

We noted that there was no lid to the water tank in the roof space.

We would always recommend that water tanks be drained down and cleared of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks). As you are cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!



ACTION REQUIRED: Add a lid.

ANTICIPATED COST: The problem will be finding a lid; often a cut piece of timber will suffice.

Please see the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

7) Condensation

We noted some condensation in the bathroom. This can often occur where a property has been let out and the tenants do not open the windows sufficiently; or it may actually be a need for a good extract fan.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally add an extract fan.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £150 - £200 to add a good quality large extraction fan. Please make sure that a ceiling unit is not added, as these often just discharge into the roof space rather than outside.

Please see the Dampness Section and the Bathroom Section of this Report.

8) Polystyrene Tiles to the Ceiling

In several of the rooms, for example the kitchen and cloakroom, there are polystyrene tiles to the ceilings. These are considered to be a risk if there is a fire as it can drip down onto you.



ACTION REQUIRED: Remove and repair the ceilings. We would add that often these tiles were added to ceilings because of the ceilings being defective.

ANTICIPATED COST: This depends upon how well the ceiling tiles are fixed and the condition of the ceilings beneath them. We would expect costs in the region of several hundred pounds and an additional amount to repair and make good the ceiling.

Please see the Ceilings Section of this Report.

9) Security

Rear Door

We believe the rear door should have additional security and possibly should be replaced as the glass could easily be broken to gain access. We do appreciate that there are bolts to the top and bottom of this door, but it is a very poor quality door.



Front Door

The front door sticks and needs easy and adjusting.

Outside Shed Doors

The outside shed doors have come off. Whether someone has broken into these sheds is not clear. We spoke to the neighbour who believes that they have come off due to wind damage.



ACTION REQUIRED: Re-secure doors.

Please see the External Joinery Section of this Report.

The Ugly

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

There are no items that we feel would fall into this category.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you of the following:

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor carry out an inspection, test and report.

Maintenance

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as making good and painting the skirtings that have been poorly fitted and also the floor we believe will need some work and attention fairly imminently. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

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

materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We would refer you to our earlier comments.

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



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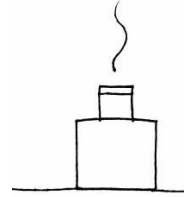
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



Chimneystacks

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

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

This chimney is brick finished with one chimney pot and lead flashings. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition. Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunchings we therefore cannot comment upon them.



Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

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

Party Wall

The chimney sits on the party wall. Here is some more information about party walls.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

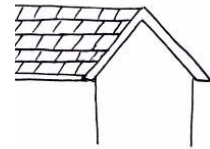
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

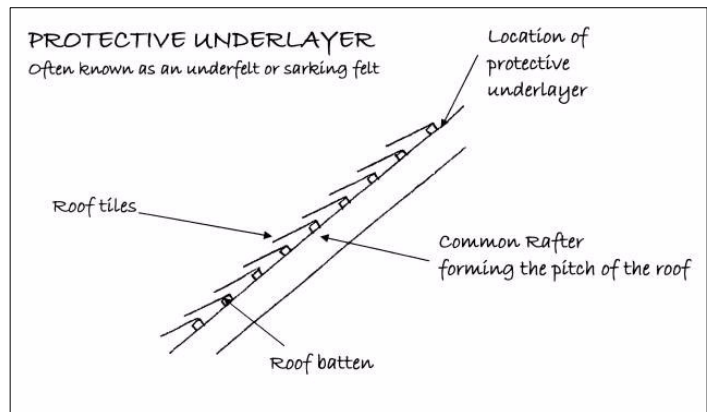
Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad in a small nibbed concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying level and true and look in reasonable condition. Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridge and exposed areas such as the perimeter and so you should periodically check these areas.



Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, it's damaged in a few more places than we normally find.



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

Low Level Roofs

Garage Roof

The garage roof is asbestos.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and the Other Matters Section of this report.



Outside Shed

As is common in this age of property the outside shed has a concrete roof. It is not completely watertight but were acceptable in their day because this was often used for a cold store.

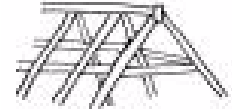


Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and/or ground level.

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately 70 percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

Main Roof

Roof Access

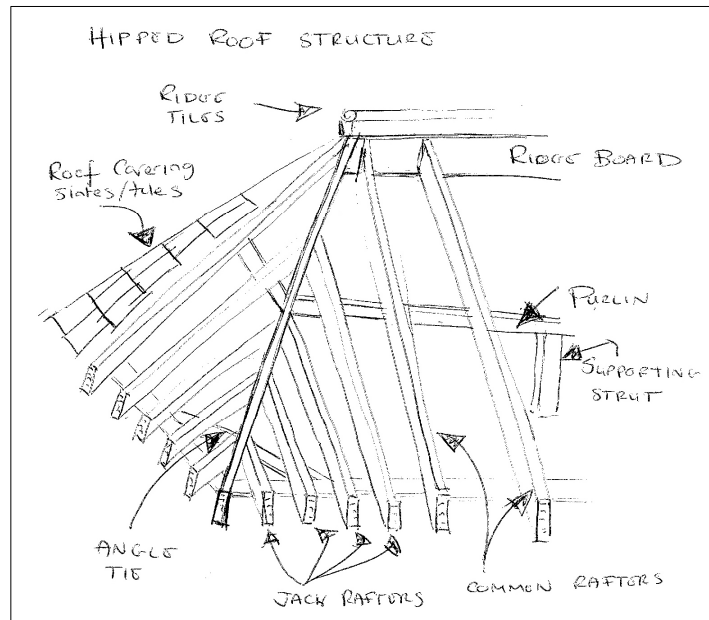
The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.



Roof Structure

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

Hipped roofs are known for slippage / movement which can occur in the structure. In this case we feel it is within acceptable limits.



Roof Timbers

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

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



Looking at the hip for movement

Our examination is limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items, as mentioned what we could see was generally found to be in an average condition considering its age. 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

In this instance the firewall is built in brickwork.

Fire walls Defined

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

Water Tanks

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Clean and add lid. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Ventilation

We did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add vents.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

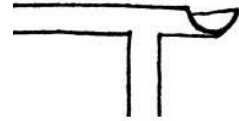
Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case there was an insufficient amount to comment.

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has a mixture of the original cast iron gutters and downpipes and the more modern plastic gutters and downpipes.

The cast iron is in below average condition, all things considered, and we could see areas where the cast iron gutters and down pipes are rusting and damaged. On the down pipes, for example, the cast iron rusts from the inside out.



Rusting downpipe

ACTION REQUIRED: Next time it rains hard you need to watch the gutters and down pipes for leaks, make a note and repair them. This process will need to be repeated several times until you have repaired all the leaking areas.

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 soil and vent pipe is cast iron too and you may wish to consider replacing it. They usually start deteriorating with cracks to the rear, which are difficult to see without literally unscrewing it from the wall.

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.

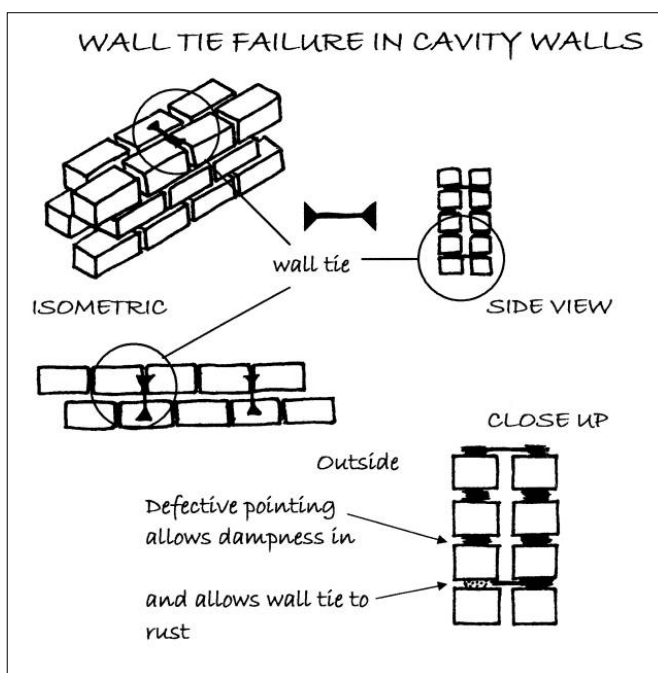
The property is constructed of brickwork and some vertical tiling.

Brickwork

This property is brick finished and laid in a lime mortar originally and repointed in cement mortar. This is all bedded in what is known as stretcher bond. This is an early form of stretcher bond and does have some inherent problems with it.



In this property we have an early form of cavity brick wall built before insulation was commonly added and also before we had a full understanding of this type of construction. Problems have been known to occur with the wall ties, although in this instance there are no obvious signs of this (horizontal cracking).



Wall tie failure occurs on pre 1970s properties, the wall ties used can rust. It is possible to replace defective ties and a specialist contractor should be engaged to investigate further to establish the extent of the problem and the cost of replacement.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Airbricks

In the 1920s it was common to vent cavities, the idea being in early cavity walls that the inner brick would get wet by the rain and dry out via the cavity.

Vertical Tiling

The roof detailing with the small concrete tiles has been extended to the front of the property over the front door area.



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

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork, vertical tiling and plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork, vertical tiling and 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 original property, we would expect to find a shallow stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar to this area.

London Clay

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

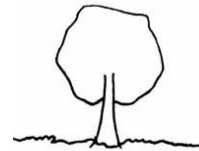
Building Insurance Policy

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

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

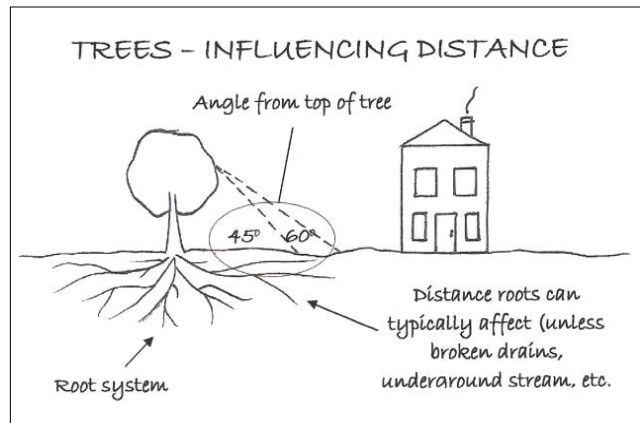
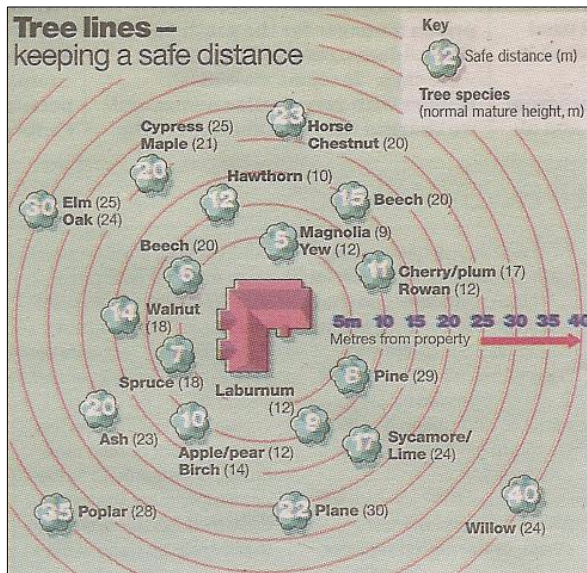
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



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

We do not believe that there are any trees within influencing distance of the main house. There is a tree to the rear, but we believe this sort of tree has quite a small root ball and therefore will not be affecting the house at present, but all trees do need to be maintained.

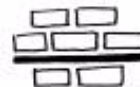


Influencing Distance Defined

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

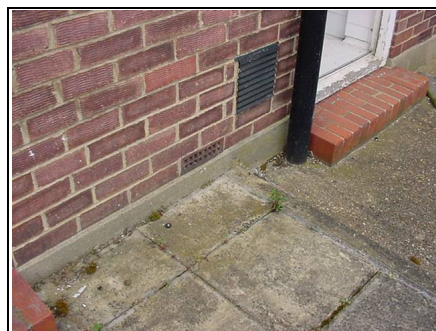
Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE



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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, unfortunately, we can't see a damp proof course because of the render plinth. In this particular property it's possible it will have a slate damp proof course behind the render.



Render plinth

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.

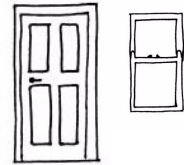
We noted air bricks to the property at both high and low levels; in this age of property it's likely to be to vent the cavity. This is an early cavity wall construction and with it possible problems can occur.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and Brickwork Section of this report.



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

EXTERNAL JOINERY



The external joinery part of this section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards, windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

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

Fascias and Soffits

The property has painted timber fascias and soffits and these are in average condition, (which means there is likely to be some rot) although much of the fascia is hidden by the guttering.



Windows and Doors

Metal windows are often known as Crittal windows. Typically these windows warp and rust and become difficult to close which, in turn, makes them draughty. In this instance some are in below average condition.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



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.

Generally the windows and doors are in a poor condition; they do need redecorating, however it is probably more economical to replace them.

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

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



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

Ceilings

In the area that we inspected we found plasterboard, sometimes in this age of property there is also fibreboard (assumed).

We noted a number of ceilings have polystyrene tiles. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Plasterboard Defined

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

Internal Walls and Partitions

We have carried out a tap test to the internal walls (this is not rocket science, it is literally tapping the walls and listening for the sound made) and found them to be a mixture of solid walls and hollow/studwork walls.

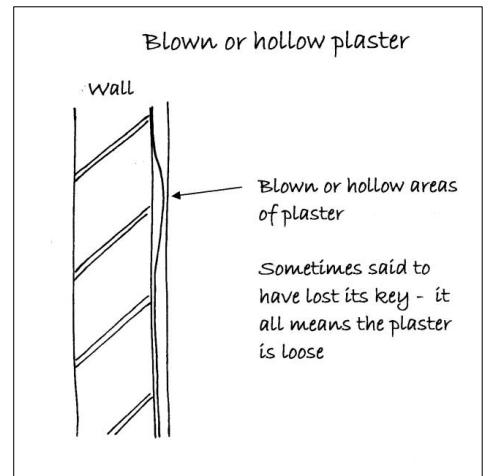
Generally it is a reasonable assumption that the solid walls are likely to be made from brickwork and will be the structural walls, with the studwork walls being purely to divide the rooms.

Perimeter Walls

To the perimeter walls we found what we believe to be the original plaster; with plaster of this age we would expect some blown plaster. This is not uncommon in properties of this age, particularly around the window and door openings and around the chimney area. When redecorating you may have to do some, or possibly a lot, of replastering!

Blown Plaster Defined

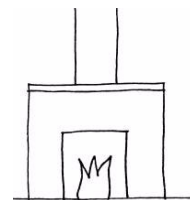
This is where the plaster has come away from its base leaving a hollow area.



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 on the right hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

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

Finally, it is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstruction prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

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

The floor covering is fitted very poorly.

Under the stairs we could see a concrete covered with a pitch, which is like an asphalt covering that is used for roads today. It was quite common in years gone by to finish the floors in this way.



Laminated flooring – fitted badly



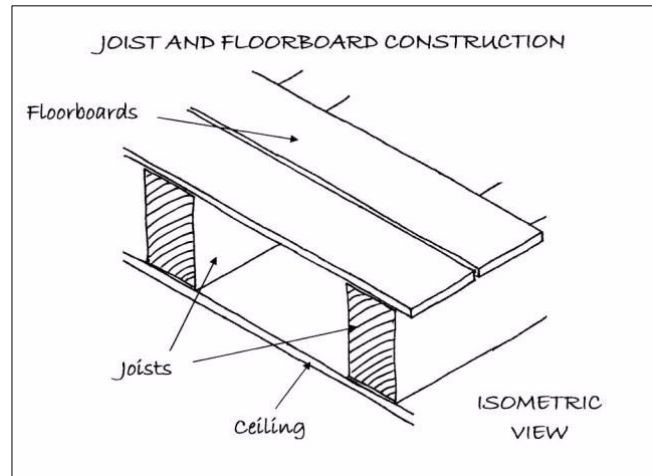
Under the stairs we could see the pitch, which was often applied to the concrete floor finish.

First Floor

We believe the first floor construction to be joist and floorboards.

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

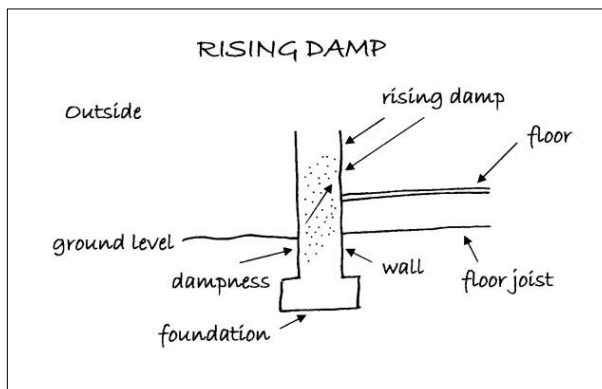
DAMPNESS



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

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.



No evidence of any significant rising dampness was detected in the random areas checked. It's not usual in a property of this type and age to have minor damp particularly to the rear. We believe most people will be happy to live with this.



We would add that to the rear of the property we noted a small concrete step, which may cause some dampness to the rear French door areas.

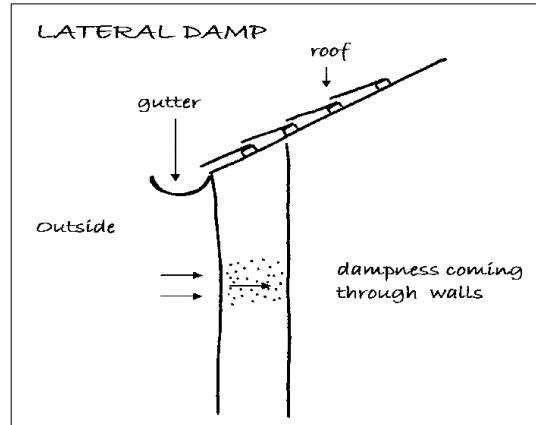
ACTION REQUIRED: This would simply mean that you have to cut back a small amount of the step.



Checking for rising damp

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected.



Checking for lateral damp

Condensation

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

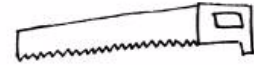
We could see condensation in the bathroom; the bathroom requires increased ventilation.

Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add extract fan. 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 property has traditional panel doors with, we believe, metal frames, which is rarely seen today.

Staircase

We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Skirtings

The skirtings are not finished very well even for DIY!

ACTION REQUIRED: Make good skirtings and redecorate.

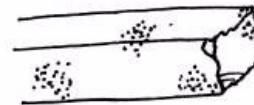


Kitchen

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

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot.

Wet Rot

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

Generally no evidence was found of any wet rot, with the exception of to the window surrounds and possibly to the fascias and soffits.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

Recent research has shown that many woodworm chemicals do not actually work and it should be remembered that the chemicals are poisons. Also, unless great care is taken, the people applying the treatment can cause significant damage. The woodworm can only really be seen in action during the breeding season, which runs from April to July. We have therefore tried to take a pragmatic view on this matter.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of significant woodworm activity or, indeed, signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term

‘structurally significant’ damage.

In many properties of this age, there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted in the roof by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property (for example the floors) by general fixtures and fittings.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 percent certain get the property checked when it is empty of fixtures, fittings and furniture, 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.

The decoration is average to poor, with minor marks as you would expect in a property that's been lived in, particularly one that has been rented out, as tenants do tend to give a property its fair share of use and abuse.

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

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

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

Roof Insulation

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

Walls

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

Windows

The windows are single glazed and metal, so they often don't shut properly, thermal properties will not be that good.

Services

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

Summary

The property's thermal efficiency 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:

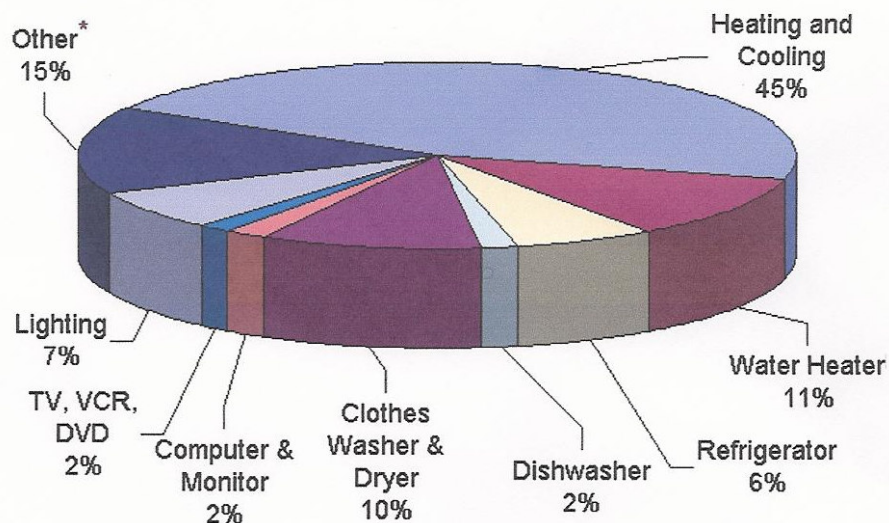
[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

or www.ecocentre.org.uk for an alternative technological view.

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



* "Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

OTHER MATTERS



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

Security System

We noted an alarm box on the outside of the property. 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 Systems and Smoke Alarms

No smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in an existing property that is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on (providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year). We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out.

We also like the radio activated fire/smoke alarms. If one goes off they all go off.

We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

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

Asbestos

You have asbestos to the garage. In this case it appears in reasonable condition, although we would add that we are not asbestos surveyors.

You should note that work involving products containing asbestos is covered by Health and Safety legislation and you are recommended to seek the advice of the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer before proceeding with any such work.

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. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1980s / 1990s and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.



Earth Test

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



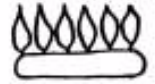
ACTION REQUIRED: We are advised the property has had tenants and it should therefore have had the services regularly checked, both legally and for insurance. Your solicitor to investigate and provide a copy of the certificates to us (scanned via email please) for comment.

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

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

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

GAS



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

We assume that the property has mains gas. All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e. a member of CORGI (the Council of Registered Gas Installers); 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 CORGI registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

The controlling stopcock was not located. It is important that its presence be established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

Water Pressure

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

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

Hot Water Cylinder

No hot water cylinder was found so we assume the property has a combination boiler. We did note that the cupboard to the rear bedroom was where the cylinder was once located, as it still had the pipes present.

Plumbing

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

We have not used a listening stick to check for water leaks.

There is a lot of pipework within the roof space and we are not sure what it is for; and it is quite unusual.

Heating

The boiler was located under the stairs; it is wall mounted and manufactured by Vaillant.

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



ACTION REQUIRED: To ensure the boiler runs efficiently the boiler needs to be regularly serviced.

Poor quality repairs where the external boiler was removed.

Internal Radiators

We noted that there are a fair number of internal radiators. The radiators would normally be positioned under the window, which helps circulation of the warm air. These radiators may not warm the property to the heat that you desire.

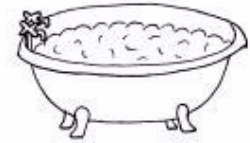
Internal radiators are generally used by plumbers to reduce costs (less pipe work) and save time (less pipe work). Sometimes dampness (what's known as cold bridging) occurs; we have personally had this problem and ended up moving the radiators to the traditional location under the window.

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

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects, however we would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer. Finally, it should be noted that the supply pipe from the Water Company stopcock to the internal stop tap is the responsibility of the property owner.

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

BATHROOM



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

The bathroom suite looks in below average condition; this is because of condensation.

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

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We assume that the property has the benefit of mains drainage, although this should be confirmed by your legal advisor's enquiries.

We have identified two inspection chambers / manholes.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One – Located to the Front

We duly lifted the man hole / inspection chamber cover and found the drain to be clear, we noted it was finished in concrete.



Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two – Located to the Rear

The man hole cover was duly lifted, the drain run is dry and does not look to be used; it is possibly a rain drainage pipe or has been bypassed.

The manhole is finished in concrete.



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.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal. In this age of property it is likely to be into the main drains, but we cannot be certain.

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES / PARKING / OUTBUILDINGS



Garage

We have not accessed the garage but we did note it has an asbestos roof.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Parking

There is a problem with the shared access, which your neighbours have already advised us about. We do think you have the opportunity to have off-road parking to the front of the property if you are prepared to sacrifice some of the garden.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



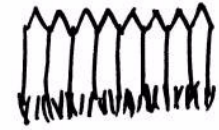
Outbuilding

The doors have come off this building.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

The front garden is presently overgrown but is a reasonable size.



Rear Garden

The rear garden is overgrown and level, laid mainly to lawn with a few trees.

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

The fencing needs attention. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

The left hand neighbour was very friendly. We had a good chat; she had been disappointed in the past that the property had been rented out and tenanted. From what we could gather the tenants, in some instances, had not been very neighbourly.

Right Hand Neighbours

No one was in at the time of our inspection.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this 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) Roof and similar renewals.
 - v) Central heating installation.
 - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

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

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please read: www.1stAssociated.co.uk/leaderboard.asp

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

In this instance we have not carried out any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Solicitor should carry out any Local Authority checks and any additional enquiries he/she feels necessary, advising us if they feel that we can have further input.

Finally, an extract from the book “Sold”!

“When you receive your full structural survey (now known as a Building Survey) or House Buyers Report, do remember that you have requested a list of the property’s faults so it is unlikely to make cheerful reading. Every property has its faults but what you are looking for are the serious ones. If your Report does reveal a serious problem that you had not anticipated when making your offer, the first thing to do is to decide whether you want to take on the repairs if an adjustment is made to the price. If you do, then get quotes for the work as quickly as possible and present your case in a fair manner. Most people are reasonable under such circumstances and will compromise but inevitably there are those who are sufficiently confident of their position to say take it or leave it. In a very active market, prices may have moved up sufficiently to cover the extra expenditure in theory and the vendor will not hasten to point this out but remember that he has probably got a vendor pressing him to proceed quickly and starting with a new purchaser will cause him delay”

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

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

Independent Chartered Surveyors

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www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was a warm day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

We would add that some defects only become apparent upon physical occupation or are only present as a result of the extremes of weather (which are becoming a more frequent occurrence). As you may be aware 2006 was the warmest year in Britain since records began, we believe, in the 1700s; with July 2006 being the hottest July on record in Britain. 2005 was the third driest year on record in Britain with 2003 being the driest. The year 2000 was the wettest year on record and August 2004 was the wettest August on record in Britain. This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

NOT LOCAL

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

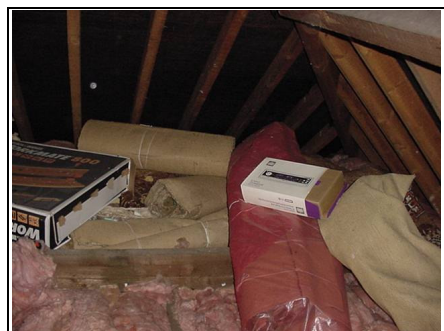
EMPTY PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to the amount of stored items within the roof space. Also, ideally, with this age of property, we would like to open up or view the cavity wall.

In addition to this we did not have the benefit of speaking to the present owners and / or the benefit of them answering our question and answer sheet.



Stored items within the roof space

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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

www.globrix.com

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