

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Powys  
LD8



FOR

**Mr X**

Prepared by:

**XXXXX**

Marketing by:

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

0800 298 5424

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

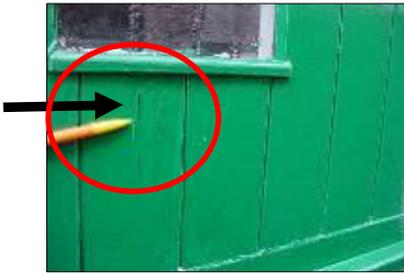
## ***GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION***

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

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

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



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow 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**

The property is a two bedroom park home/static caravan, located at XXXXX in Mid-Wales.

YYY Manor House is partially derelict but overlooks the site, which comprises 64 static caravans set in idyllic rural settings surrounding a lake. The homes are well spaced out and for residents over 50 years of age only.

There was a small enclosed rear garden to the left hand side of the home and a parking area providing off road parking for three/four vehicles.

The building comprises two trailers with left and right hand sides joined under the ridge line of the roof construction. We understand the caravans have a metal chassis with C-section cross beams overlaid with timber floor joists, on to which the plywood floor surfaces are laid. The outdoor walls are a timber frame construction, being 50 x 50mm timbers, faced with plywood to either face and quilt insulation between (as advised by the vendor).

We are unsure when the caravan was first built, however the caravan was completely refurbished and newly positioned when the vendors acquired it 11/12 years ago, but we cannot confirm to what extent it was refurbished and modernised and what year it originally dates from.

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front elevation



Left elevation and garden



Rear elevation



Rear elevation (alternate view)



Right elevation



General view of property and surrounding areas

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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

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

The accommodation consists of:

- 1) Reception One (larger left hand room)
- 2) Reception Two
- 3) Kitchen
- 4) Utility Room
- 5) Family Bathroom
- 6) Bedroom One (left hand side)
- 7) Bedroom Two (right hand side)

### **Outside Areas**

There is a small enclosed garden with attractive decorative paving and perimeters and a graded stone parking area.

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

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## 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.



Reception Room One



Reception Room Two



Kitchen



Utility Room



Family Bathroom



Bedroom One



Bedroom Two

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## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Main Roof:	Dual pitched timber framed roof, covered externally with Decra tile effect roofing panels
Main Roof Structure:	Square cut timber frame (as advised by vendor – no access)
Gutters and Downpipes:	Square line UVPC
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Direct drainage connection under caravan floor
Walls:	Approximately 100mm thick timber frame walls comprising 50 x 50mm soft wood timber studs with fibreglass quilt insulation between and plywood boarding internally and externally (assumed and as advised by the vendor)  The external walls are finished with a textured treatment and painted to finish
Fascias and Soffits:	Texture finished and painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed UVPC windows

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Plywood
Walls:	Plywood stud with rigid PUR insulation boards (assumed)
Floors:	Suspended timber floor with marine ply boarding over timber joists over metal sub-frame/chassis to caravan (assumed)

## **Services**

The following information has been provided by the vendor and must therefore be confirmed by your legal adviser and the park owners/management company.

**Water:** We understand water is taken from the natural springs and stored in an underground tank in the forest to the north of the property.

A mains water connection is also used to supplement the spring water when supplies are low or inadequate.

**Drainage:** A private drainage system is provided for all the homes on the park, the private sewerage works is located on the opposite side of the rear boundary fence, and all waste from the site and caravans is discharged via a subterranean drainage system and pipes.

**Electricity:** Mains electricity is connected to the park. We understand the park owners receive a bill from the utility company and it is then sub-metered to the individual caravans.

**Gas:** LPG is delivered to the park by lorries and stored in the storage vessels by the sewerage treatment works and then piped to the individual caravans and sub-metered by the park owners.

All of the above services comments have been advised to us by the vendor and cannot therefore be confirmed. Your solicitors should make the usual checks and you should satisfy yourself that you are happy with the services arrangement prior to proceeding.

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## **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 145 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.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

### **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!*



Attractive enclosed rear garden



View from front step

## **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) Sewerage treatment works for the site**

The sewerage treatment works for the site is just beyond the rear fence of the property, hence it was quite badly affected by unpleasant odours. We expect this would be changeable depending on the temperature, time of day/year and wind direction.



Sewerage treatment works

### **2.0) Large tree adjacent to the caravan**

The caravan is situated adjacent to a particularly large tree and whilst the building does not have traditional foundations there is of course a raft foundation underneath which could be disrupted by the tree roots in the future and we can give no guarantees as to the long term stability of the ground.



Large tree

### **3.0) Windows and doors**

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The front door, and the windows generally, do not have external sill details and the door does not have a drip rail. This means that water does not discharge away from the face of the building. This is of particular importance as the building is of timber frame construction which may be prone to decay if dampness penetrates. Although by no means urgent, we recommend the detailing is improved.



No drip rail to door

#### 4.0) Hairline cracking around windows and door

There is minor cracking in the finishes around the door and also some of the window openings may lead towards penetration in the future. Whilst only hairline in width at present ideally this should be raked out and filled with colour match flexible mastic in the future.



Hairline cracking around door

#### 5.0) Failure of windows

Two of the sealed double glazed units have failed on the outward projecting oriel bay windows.



Failed window

## 6.0) Dampness generally

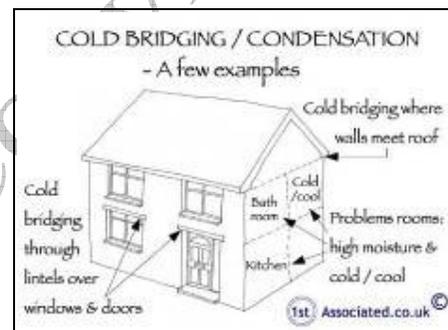
We noticed a general level of background dampness to the majority of the wall and floor panels. The level of dampness would usually indicate that decay is inevitable in natural timber but we do believe this to be marine ply which is much more robust.

The level of dampness is likely to be due to cold bridging, incomplete insulation details and the general low standard of thermal insulation and this will be difficult to remedy without undertaking significant upgrading to the construction.

We cannot rule out the occurrence of decay, particularly to the concealed timbers where we have been unable to gain access and we cannot confirm the presence or otherwise of a vapour barrier in the wall or floor construction, which modern buildings should be provided with.



Taking damp meter readings



Cold bridging

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend the wall structure is opened up to confirm the presence or otherwise of a vapour control layer and also to ascertain the quality and condition of the concealed timbers.

**7.0) Movement between walls panels**

Various areas of rucking to the paper finishes were noted. This will be difficult to eradicate and avoid going forwards and it is simply minor movement between the plywood panels of the walls.



Movement between wall panels

**8.0) Patio doors out of square**

The patio door aperture has distorted since it was installed and when the door is closed there is an uneven gap at the base, whilst the top hits the frame. At present this still locks and operated correctly, however we cannot confirm whether the caravan will move further and it must be considered a risk that some future repairs will be required.



Patio doors out of square

**9.0) Sealant to sanitary fittings**

The sealant to the sanitary fittings and the sealant to the perimeter of the bath is a self-adhesive strip and this has become detached and loose. No sealant is provided to the rear of the kitchen worktops and the sealant to the shower also looks as though it could leak.



Sealant to sanitary fittings

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It is imperative that these are kept in a watertight condition with this style of construction, since any water which does penetrate could cause decay to the timber frame and failure of the structure and significant decay could occur before visible signs become apparent on the surface.

**ANTICIPATE COST:** £100 plus VAT; please obtain quotations.

### 10.0) Drainage

Whilst we do not believe there is a requirement for the building to comply to Building Regulations for permanent structures, the foul drainage to the rear has a chamber which is covered by a loose laid timber panel. Not only could this become detached it is poorly sealed and does not comply with regulations.



Timber cover over drainage chamber to rear

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We must recommend this is upgraded in accordance with Building Regulations.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £250 plus VAT; please obtain quotations.

### 11.0) Mortgageability

There are many different types of non traditional buildings. One of the interesting facts is that many mortgage companies won't lend on them. We would add further that their lending criteria changes from time to time which does mean they will lend on them some of the time and then not lend on them.

## 12.0) Is the structural frame sound?

The risk with buying any timber frame property is that the concealed timbers are decaying and suffering from defect. The only way to see this is by opening up the structure to inspect the timbers first hand. We would of course be happy to do this but we need to get permission from the owners and we are sure that you have a builder who can put back the construction to a satisfactory standard.

Older timber frame structures did not typically have a vapour control layer within the wall construction and were therefore prone to the transfer of dampness internally. We cannot confirm whether a vapour control barrier is provided in the wall construction and therefore must recommend exposure to confirm this and also assess the condition of concealed timbers.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be 100% certain as to the condition of this structural frame is to open up the structure. As mentioned you will need to obtain permission from the owners to carry out this work but we are more than happy to return and inspect once the structure has been opened up and you need to have a builder close it up satisfactorily.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** This varies; please obtain quotations.

## 13.0) Thermal/cold bridging

This property is far more likely to have thermal/cold bridging problems than a traditional property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** There are things you can do to help such as add large humidity controlled extract fans in the bathroom and the kitchen and any rooms that you use for drying.



Cold bridging

Upgrading insulation and providing background ventilation and heating generally.

## **The Ugly**

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this section providing you are prepared to deal with the characteristics and associated costs of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report.

## **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**

The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

## **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**

We believe the responsibility for the drainage rests with the park via the management company, however your solicitor should be instructed to confirm this and the exact extent of maintenance which is your responsibility.

### **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 in your own style to turn the property into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body 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 Building 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 £125 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.

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## **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:

Our general views on the property have not changed since the time of inspection. Provided you are prepared to apply regular maintenance to the property in accordance with good practice it should remain in sound condition.

It is imperative that water is not allowed to penetrate the structure, therefore external roof coverings, the junction between windows and walls, and other details where water can penetrate the property, including the sealants around the sanitary fittings and worktops, are relative weak points and must be maintained in good condition.

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 are employed as Independent Chartered Surveyors and offer an independent point of view.

### **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**

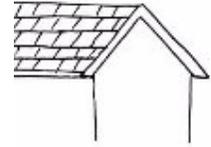


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## EXTERNAL

### 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:*

There is a small roof void formed by the flat ceilings and pitched roofs but there is no access hatch so we cannot comment upon the standard of construction or its condition other than what we have been told by the vendors.

#### Main Roof

We understand from the vendor, that the roof is of square cut timber frame construction, formed in two halves since the caravan itself is in two halves under the ridge line, therefore there are two mono-pitched roofs which abut to form the main roof.



Main roof

The outer roof coverings are finished with Decra metal panels with a pressed mock roof tile pattern, finished with a Santex finish.

Minor impact damage to the roof finish was noted in some areas, presumably as the result of foot traffic. Decra panels are particularly lightweight and crawl boards should be provided for access of the roof's surface for any reason. The impact damage does not appear to be detrimental to the weatherproofing of the roof at this time but future problems cannot be ruled out.

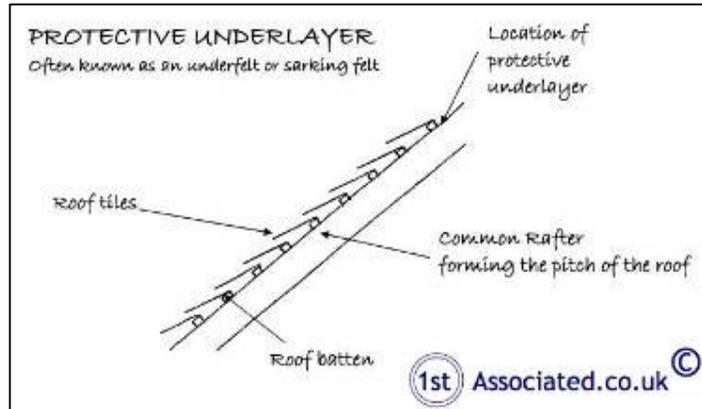


Minor impact damage to roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Carry out periodic visual inspections and maintenance of the roof as necessary and ensure it remains watertight.

## **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.*



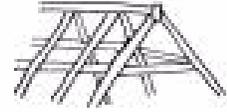
Protective Underlayer

As we were unable to access the roof void we cannot comment upon whether there is a protective underlayer.

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

Finally, 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**

As mentioned previously, we did not have access to the roof void. We are advised by the vendor that it is a square cut timber frame. Your legal adviser needs to confirm this.

## **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 gutters and downpipes are plastic and are generally in good condition, although to the front elevation they are quite congested and will need to be regularly cleaned out because of the overhanging trees. This is, again, particularly important with a timber framed structure. To the rear one of the downpipes has been replaced in a non matching colour.



Gutters and downpipe

There may be some minor leaks evident 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 you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints.

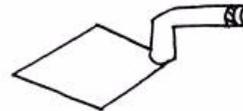
We also recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

### **Soil and Vent Pipe**

There is a direct drainage connection under the caravan comprised in 100mm UVPC where visible discharging into the chamber to the rear of the property.

Finally, gutters and downpipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

## WALLS



*External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.*

The property has approximately 100mm thick timber frame walls comprising 50 x 50mm softwood timber studs with fibreglass quilt insulation between and plywood boarding internally and externally (assumed and as advised by the vendor).



Timber frame wall – external textured finish

We have mentioned previously the importance of the vapour control layer within the wall construction but we cannot confirm whether one is provided. We assume that the plywood sheets are butt jointed together and then applied with the textured finish externally. It is always likely that there will be some minor movement between the plywood sheets due to seasonable moisture and temperature variations and you should periodically check the walls for any evidence of cracking around the part of the board joints and you should ensure these are maintained watertight to prevent water penetration into the structure, causing decayed timber framing.

We cannot comment on the type of plywood used but it should be either external grade WBP plywood or marine plywood. These two are subtly different, marine plywood being a more robust and expensive product. It is not possible to confirm the materials without opening up the construction.

## **Render**

The external walls are finished in a textured brush applied finish similar to Artex. We cannot confirm the exact product type but can confirm it is commonly used for this type of construction and appears to remain in sound condition for the time being, although some evidence of hairline cracking was apparent between the plywood sheets and future repairs may be required.

At the base the textured finish finishes up to a painted timber batten, secured to the outside of the construction. Again it is imperative that the junction between the textured finish and batten remains watertight and that the paint finishes are regularly reapplied and any areas of flaking or blistering paintwork are thoroughly sanded down and removed and any subsequent areas of decay that are found are treated and repaired immediately.

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the structural timbers are concealed from view (in all cases) we cannot comment on their construction or condition. We would hope that canalised or impregnated timbers have been used to prevent decay but we cannot confirm this without opening up the structure, and even then it may be difficult to confirm.

Our comments have been based upon a conversation with the vendor, our knowledge of this type of construction and the parts of the building that we could see, namely the outer walls, under side of the floor, by tap testing and measuring the thickness of the wall 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 raft foundation.

### **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.

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.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

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

# TREES



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

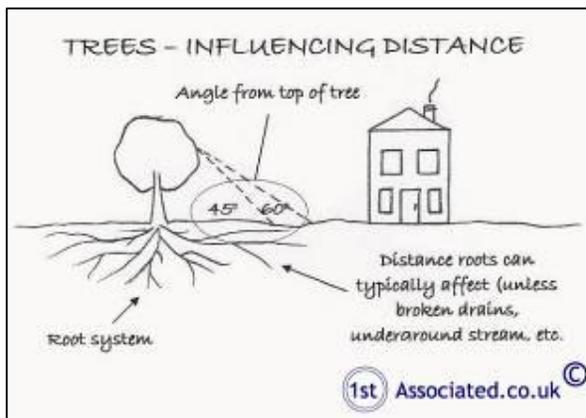
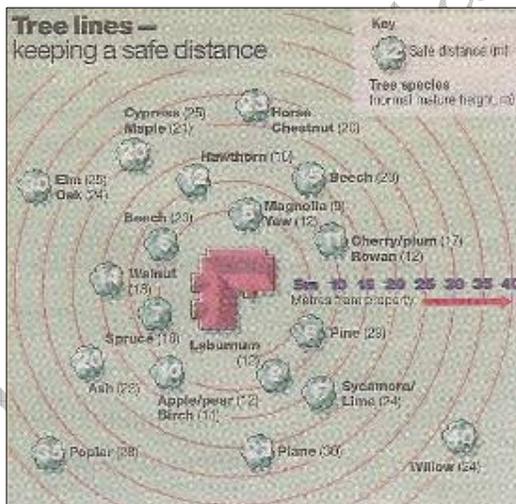
There is large tree within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.

We believe it likely that trees maintenance is the responsibility of the park owners and that any foundations that have been installed should have taken adequate account of the proximity of the trees.



Large tree

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend you instruct your legal adviser to confirm who would be responsible for any damage to the property as a result of the adjacent tree and the design of the foundations. Although not traditionally constructed there is a foundation with tripods supporting the caravan at various intervals and clearly any substantial ground movement could have a negative impact on the construction.



Influencing distance of trees to a 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.*

We would expect there to be a damp proof course provided somewhere between the metal chassis and timber under the sole plate of the wall but of course cannot confirm this without opening up the structure. The requirement for a traditional damp proof course is to prevent rising dampness in the wall structure which is not likely to be problematic in this case, given that the structure is suspended above ground level by the metal and timber chassis of the trailer.

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

Whilst it is not a traditionally constructed property it is important to maintain ventilation below the timber floor structure and around the chassis. This is enclosed on all sides with a UVPC shiplap cladding provided for decorative effect. Generally speaking it is not possible to see the floorboards, although there are a number of holes and ventilation grills so through ventilation should be adequate and the chance of timber defects occurring as a result of inadequate ventilation is considered unlikely.



A ventilator to UVPC perimeter cladding to floor void

### High Level Air Bricks

Ventilation grills are provided to give natural background ventilation to the caravan in a number of rooms and these are both high level and low level and should be kept clear and open at all times.

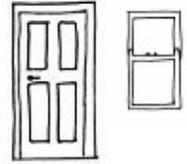
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ensure the air bricks are clear.



High level air brick to front elevation in lounge

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 texture finished and painted timber. We would comment they are in average condition for their age, type and style.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The fascias and soffits are formed in a similar manner to the walls, presumably with plywood sheeting. Some evidence of joint line cracking was noted around the plywood sheet abutments. These should be checked regularly to make sure they do not allow the penetration of water.



Textured finish fascias and soffits  
(with bird's nest underneath)

## Windows and Doors

The property has double glazed UVPC windows without trickle vents which generally look to be of a average quality. 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.



UVPC window

In this case two of the windows to the oriel bay windows on the front and rear of the premises are affected, where it is believed they receive most extremes of temperature and exposure to sunlight.

We would also comment that the windows and doors sit flush with the face of the walls, due to the thickness of the walls. With more traditional construction the windows and doors are rebated from the outer face of the brickwork or wall and this provides additional weathering to the junction between the windows and doors and reduces the chance of water penetration during driven rain. Because the windows and doors are flush with the wall they do not enjoy this benefit and accordingly it is particularly important that the junction is maintained in weather pike condition.

In some cases minor cracking was noted around the window frames in the textured finish and we recommend this is raked out and filled with flexible mastic and that it is maintained watertight.

The windows are not provided with external sills to discharge water away from the face of the wall below and again this is likely to be a weak point in the construction where water may penetrate. We are not sure why sills were not provided and this is considered to be a negative 'feature' of the property.

To the front door the lack of a drip detail and threshold is beginning to cause evidence of decay to the timber rail below and we recommend consideration be given to upgrading this.



Minor cracking around some of the window reveals



No threshold or drip rails to door beginning to cause damp problems to the timber rail below

#### Trickle Vents Defined

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

#### **Transferable Guarantees**

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.*

The external decorations are in reasonable condition for the time being and it is imperative they are maintained in good order and recommend that a four yearly redecoration cycle is advisable, but the present arrangement will probably be okay for the next one to two years before renewal is recommended.

We do recommend that annual checks are undertaken to the external finishes and that localised repairs are undertaken as necessary to ensure water penetration and resulting defects cannot occur.

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**

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

## **Internal Walls and Partitions**

The walls are plywood stud with rigid PUR insulation boards (assumed).

## **Perimeter Walls**

These are, we believe plywood (assumed).

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.

## **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.*

The floors are suspended timber floor with marine ply boarding over timber joists over metal sub-frame/chassis to caravan (assumed).

Around the rear of the kitchen there are some significant undulations and slopes in the floor and this is around the area where the two caravans join. We also noted this problem in other rooms which spanned the joint between the two caravans, most notably the lounge. This is always likely to be a problem and would be very difficult to remedy and you should ensure you are happy to live with this prior to proceeding.

We cannot confirm how the two caravans are joined or whether this problem will worsen over time but suspect that some variation will inevitably occur.

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

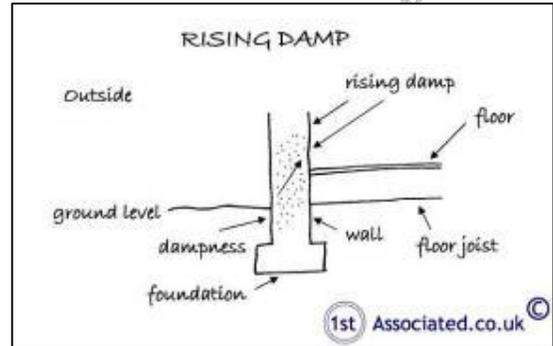


## DAMPNESS

*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. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.*



Rising damp

Rising damp is a problem that can affect buildings of traditional construction and in this case it is considered that rising dampness could not occur because the construction does not touch the ground and the traditional building methods associated with rising damp are not used. Notwithstanding this we did make checks with our moisture meter throughout the premises and did note some dampness which we attribute to other causes.



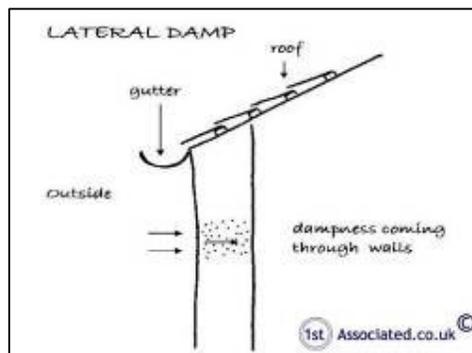
Testing for rising damp

## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

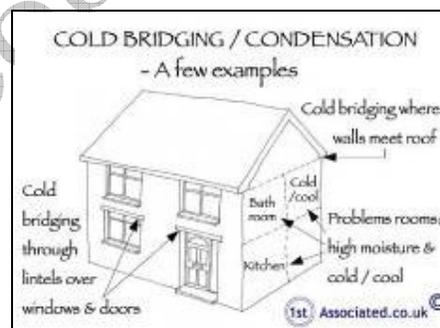
*This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.*

Some localised dampness was noted around the back door and near the cat flap and again the installation of this could have allowed some localised dampness to occur and we expect penetrating dampness to be an issue around the window and door openings and other details in the wall construction which were difficult to weather with this style of construction and a watchful eye should be kept on them and regular maintenance regimes employed.

Otherwise we do not believe there to be lateral or penetrating damp issues caused as a result of external building defects. We have found dampness to the internal finishes but these generally are consistent throughout and are more likely to be the result of condensation from poor ventilation, heating, insulating and cold bridging.



Cold bridging



Lateral dampness

## Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no visible signs of condensation, usually characterised by peeling wallpaper finishes, black mould growth and condensation pattern staining around the corners of rooms, often the result of cold bridging.

Notwithstanding this, the majority of the outer walls and floor did provide a reading of approximately 18 to 20% on our electronic moisture meter and we do believe this to be the result of general residual condensation and dampness due to the poor standards of thermal insulation, which must inevitably be expected for a park home.

However, the levels of dampness do not give rise for significant concern given that the readings were taken from plywood which we assume to be external grade or marine ply and therefore quite robust in terms of its resistance to minor dampness.

The concern is with the concealed timber framing and floor construction and must therefore recommend further investigation and minor opening up of the structure to confirm it remains in a satisfactory condition, prior to exchange of contracts.

### **Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas**

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans with humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens and bathrooms and also in any areas where you intend to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas.

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

## **INTERNAL JOINERY**



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

### **Doors**

The doors are hollow core doors, which were matched throughout and are generally fitted with roll catches and knob handles.



Hollow core door

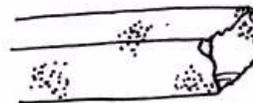
### **Kitchen**

We found the kitchen in above average condition, but of a rather basic quality.

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.*

As this is a steel framed building it doesn't rely on timber in the usual way and as such the likelihood of dry rot and wet rot that causes structurally significant damage is considerably reduced, some would argue almost eliminated altogether. However we still do check for dry rot and wet rot.

### **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 significant dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we did not have a view of the roof void.

### **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.*

Most of the timber elements have been removed with the metal frame structure or been replaced with plastic.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we did not have a view of the roof void.



## **Woodworm**

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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm although the main timber is the common rafters as the roof truss itself is metal. In this case we found no evidence of woodworm. However, we were unable to see into the roof space

In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active.

**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 condition. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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.



Rucking paper noted in bedroom one near the rear window

Because of the construction of the walls and the plywood which is butt jointed together, movement between the panels and rucking of the paper finishes will inevitably occur on an on-going basis and you should ensure you are happy to live with this prior to proceeding.

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.

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## 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.*

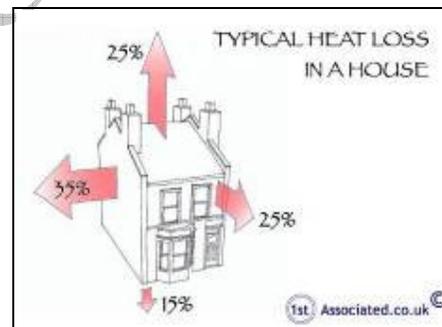
### HIPs

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

### Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this case we could not see into the roof space.

We are advised by the vendor that a fibreglass quilt insulation is installed at ceiling joist level but we cannot confirm this.



Typical heat loss

### Walls

The walls in this property are of timber frame construction with plywood facings. We cannot confirm this but the vendor advises that a fibreglass quilt insulation is installed between the timber studwork.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Adviser to specifically request any information in relation to insulation.

## 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 for the type and size of property, although you should appreciate that it does have four external walls, an external roof and a fairly exposed floor construction so heat losses would be higher than more traditionally constructed buildings and you must therefore expect higher heating bills accordingly.

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

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

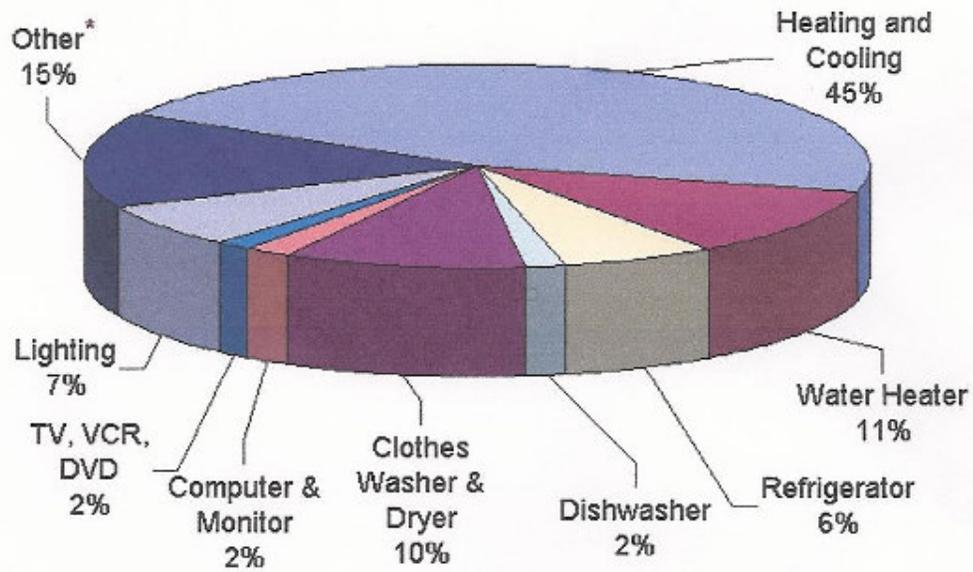
*or alternatively [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)*

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay  
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=UR8wRSp2IXs*

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" 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.

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## 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.

**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 type there was asbestos particularly to the roofs. There may also be other asbestos elements such as fascias and soffits, cladding, internal walls and ceilings and ductwork around services. In this case we have not seen any suspect asbestos containing materials and would not expect to given the caravan was refurbished 11 to 12 years ago.

Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the UK in the last ten years or so. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

Our insurance company requires us to advise that 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.

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## **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.

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# ELECTRICITY



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

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

Mains electricity is connected to the park. We understand the park owners receive a bill from the utility company and it is then sub-metered to the individual caravans.

## Fuse Board

The incoming electricity and main breaker for the home is located in the external meter cupboard on the right hand wall. This looked relatively modern.

The consumer unit containing miniature circuit breakers for the individual circuits was located on the front wall of the dining room at low level behind the patio door curtains. This appeared to be of a relatively modern pattern and should perform adequately, although we have not undertaken any testing and cannot confirm this.



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.

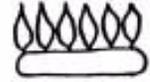
**ACTION REQUIRED:** As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

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 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

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

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## LPG 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.*

The property has LPG Gas. It is LPG is delivered to the park by lorries and stored in the storage vessels by the sewerage treatment works and then piped to the individual caravans and sub-metered by the park owners.

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.



Gas meter on right hand side wall

**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 understand water is taken from the natural springs and stored in an underground tank in the forest to the north of the property.

A mains water connection is also used to supplement the spring water when supplies are low or inadequate.

The controlling stopcock is located in the metal inspection chamber to the right elevation, adjacent to the water meter and the internal stopcock is located under the sink.

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.

### **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 did not).

### **Plumbing**

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper piping where visible. 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. It is manufactured by Jaguar, but there were no model number or types.

It was noted to be a combination boiler with integral programmer for the central heating operation.



Wall mounted 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.

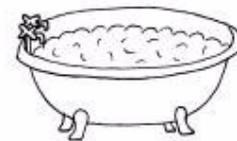
### **Ten Minute Heating Test**

The owner / occupier turned at our request turned on the heating for approximately ten minutes. We checked the radiators in all rooms and they achieved a good level of background warmth.

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

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

## **BATHROOM**



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

The property has a four piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin, WC and shower unit, which looks in average condition, subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect.

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.

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## DRAINAGE

*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.*

A private drainage system is provided for all the homes on the park which is just the opposite side of the rear fence and all waste from the site and caravans is discharged via a subterranean drainage system and pipes.

There is a single inspection chamber to the property which was noted to be clear and free flowing, although it was only covered by a timber lid and this should be upgraded to a proper metal cover and frame, both for safety reasons and to prevent odours.



Sewerage treatment works

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

### Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole.

#### Manholes Defined

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

### Inspection Chamber / Manhole

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

From what we could see it comprises brick and block construction with a cement mortar benching at low level and plastic drainage pipes.



Manhole

The inspection chamber is covered with a loose laid piece of plywood, not a proper manhole cover and frame. This should be upgraded.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments in the summary section.

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.

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## OUTSIDE AREAS

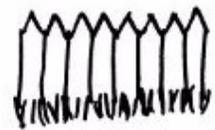
The main focus of this report has been on the main building. If you wish us to do a specific report on the other buildings then you need to instruct us for this separately. We are offering here a brief overview.

### PARKING



Parking is provided for approximately three to four vehicles to the right elevation.

### EXTERNAL AREAS



#### Rear Patio Area

##### Decking

We are finding decking is becoming slippery over the years when not regularly maintained and can be an ideal space for living under for wildlife.



Rear Garden

**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.

## **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) Wall insulation
  - ii) Asbestos test
  - iii) Double glazing or replacement windows
  - iv) Roof and similar renewals
  - v) Central heating installation
  - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals
  - vii) Removal of any walls in part or whole
  - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property
  - ix) Responsibility for maintenance of the site, foundations, structure, trees, boundary fences, drainage and other services, etc.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases,

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

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

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

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

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

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

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

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

## 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*

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## **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 dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013 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 an overcast autumn day with intermittent sunshine 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 the surveyors may not be local 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 limited:

We did not have access to the roof

We were not able to open up the floors.

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.

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## APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market

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## **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 - NICEIC Electrical Contractor or equivalent trades body.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

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

### **Work You Cannot do Yourself**

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

## **INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET**

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

[www.landreg.org.uk](http://www.landreg.org.uk)

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

[www.rics.org.uk](http://www.rics.org.uk)

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

[www.halifax.co.uk](http://www.halifax.co.uk) and [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://www.nationwide.co.uk)

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

[www.hometrack.co.uk](http://www.hometrack.co.uk)

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

[www.motleyfool.co.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.zoopla.co.uk)

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

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