

**RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY
OF
Richmond TW10**



**FOR
Mr S & Miss D**

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you once again for using our services and for 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 house 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 house 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:

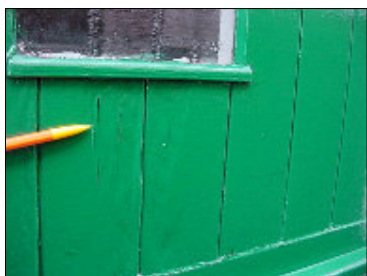
GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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 three-storey property with rooms into the roof making a fourth floor. The apartment is set on the second and third floor. There is a communal access, corridor and stairway.

We would term this a multi-occupied property with neighbours being below you and beside of you, the latter being in adjoining buildings. Your legal adviser needs to investigate where the boundaries of the property are and also establish what your liabilities, responsibilities and costs are.

We believe that the property was built in the mid 1800s. If the 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:

1823	MacIntosh invents waterproof fabric.
1825	Railway transportation was born in England when Stephenson's 'Locomotion' ran from Darlington to Stockton, carrying 450 persons at 15 miles per hour (24km/h).
1833	Start of Government funded schooling (1881 – it became compulsory up to the age of 11).
1837	Victoria becomes Queen of Great Britain.
1840	The First Postage Stamp
1851	First World Exhibition held in London
1854	Florence Nightingale pioneers modern nursing in the Crimea
1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front elevation



Rear elevation



Close-up of rear elevation

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

The shared communal areas are the access, corridor and stairway.

Second (lower) Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Master bedroom with en-suite
- Second bedroom / reception room
- An internal bathroom

Third (upper) Floor

The second floor accommodation consists of:

- Lounge
- Kitchenette

Outside Areas

The area for parking is limited. There is a permit parking scheme. We managed to park around the corner at an exorbitant rate!

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.

Second (lower) Floor



Second bedroom / reception
room



En-suite shower room



Internal bathroom

Third (upper) Floor



Kitchen



Lounge

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	A pitched roof, clad with clay tiles to the front and concrete tiles to the rear and one dormer roof
Roof Lights:	Three roof lights
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Please see main report
Walls:	Finished in Flemish bond brickwork (assumed) with a yellow London Stock brick
External Joinery:	Modern sliding sash windows and painted timber fascias and soffits

INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Predominantly studwork (assumed)
Floors:	First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed) Second Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

SERVICES

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, drains, electricity, gas, etc. (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 a comment has not been discussed that you are interested in/concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it. If we have not we will happily go back.

Generally we found the flat/apartment in average condition externally and internally we found it in good 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 property is newly decorated.

The property also has some of the original features, which add to the overall character of the property.

We personally like the arrangement of the rooms and the roundness of the property! and the view.

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) High-level Work

The question is how will high-level work be carried out and who will pay for it? For example, there are tiles missing and slipped into the gutter, there is a part of the gutter missing (found at the base of the staircase), there is a piece of flashing missing to the chimney and some of the fascias and soffits would benefit from redecoration. All of these are at high level and, therefore, access is difficult without scaffolding or a cherry picker lift hoist, which, in turn, means it is expensive.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that your legal advisers investigate the responsibilities and liabilities in relation to these issues. As you are directly under the roof any problems will affect you first. In the long term it may be better to change some of the details, such as a deep flow gutter to ensure a better flow of rainwater without it getting blocked and, also, catch any bits of tile that may slip off (and saving them from hitting someone on the head on the pavement below – and who would be liable for that?). We also suggest that the hopper head is made larger too. There will no doubt be other things once you have a close up inspection.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.



Missing gutter



Rear dormer fascia requiring redecoration, due to their being no gutter. Also showing vent, please see item 2 below.



A close up of the rear dormer fascia requiring redecoration.

2) Flat roof above you

We were unable to view the flat roof to this property other than the very edge. At the front the edge looks to be lead and at the rear it is felt. However, as we could only see the edge, we unfortunately cannot comment further.

3) Vent to the rear

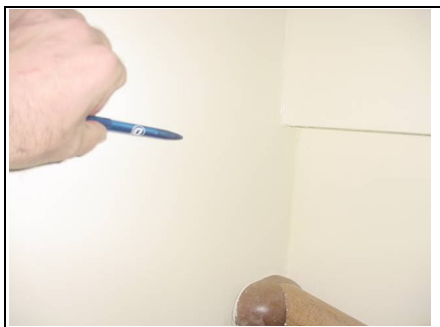
Further to the survey and having given this some thought the vent to the rear might be a problem. We returned to the property to re-check, but we are still uncertain whom this vent belongs to. It is certainly positioned very close to your window. Please see the photograph of the dormer above. The vent is to the right hand side.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser needs to investigate whom the vent belongs to and see if it can be removed if it is not active or relocated if it is active.

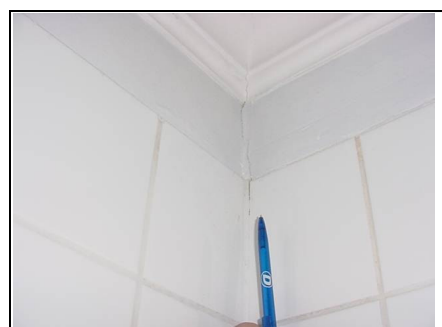
4) Drying out cracks

In a property such as this where there is a mixture of old and new materials and construction techniques there will be movement and this means that there will be cracks almost for ever and a day. These will need to be filled with a putty/mastic that allows for movement. We noted hairline cracking in the corner of the shower and, obviously, if this leaks it will not be the best way to meet your neighbours!

ACTION REQUIRED: Fill all cracks and redecorate.



Cracks identified by a pen



Hairline cracking in the en-suite shower room

Please see the Internal Walls Section of this Report.

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5) **Fire alarm system**

As mentioned and discussed, we strongly recommend installing a fire alarm system that identifies where the source of the fire is within the surrounding properties. We know of a wireless system that works well.

Please see the Internal Section of this Report.

6) **Modern sliding sash windows**

These never seem to work as good as the traditional ones. They are slightly stiff and, in our experience, they never seem to improve with age either!

7) **Heating**

Unfortunately we were unable to get the heating to work.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need reassurance from the existing owner that the heating works or that they will pay for it to be re-commissioned and left in working order.

8) **Who owns what**

Just to reiterate, your legal adviser does need to specify and establish who owns what and who is responsible and liable for what.

ACTION REQUIRED: Solicitor to investigate.

9) **Noise**

The aeroplanes do fly awfully close to the property. You need to check and ensure you are happy to live with this noise, particularly bearing in mind the previous property.



Aeroplane (left of photo) flying closely over the property.

The Ugly

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

In this instance there are no items for this section, although you do need to establish and confirm certain items, particularly the high-level work, ownership and responsibility issues, and the fire alarm system.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Living in Multi-Occupied Shared Freehold Properties

This is more a statement of information. There can be problems living in multi occupied properties with anything from noisy neighbours to non-contribution to the 'sinking fund'. The property is shared freehold, which is very different to having a Freehold property, where you can almost literally do as you like (within the scope of the Law!).

Sinking Fund / Planned Maintenance - Future Work

With properties such as this there should be a planned maintenance program. We would expect this to be looking at and considering any anticipated works and associated costs at least ten years in advance – this may not have been carried out at present, as the refurbishment, we believe, is relatively new.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to confirm future planned maintenance costs and expenditure.

ANTICIPATED COST: Your Legal Advisor to confirm.

Reactive / Day-to-Day Maintenance and Cyclical Maintenance

By reactive / day-to-day maintenance we mean work of a more immediate nature, such as replacing tiles that have slipped off the roof! By cyclical maintenance we mean maintenance carried out on a regular basis such as to the fire alarm system and the lifts and the garden maintenance.

Dependent upon the terms of your shared freehold agreement some of this may come under your responsibility but be managed for you and re-charged back to you by the Management Company.

ACTION REQUIRED: Typically there is a Service Charge for day-to-day maintenance / reactive maintenance and also cyclical maintenance. Your Legal Advisor to confirm costs.

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There is very little DIY work to carry out other than the sealing of the hairline cracks (particularly to the shower room) and, no doubt, putting up of shelves, etc. and, we suspect, a possible rearrangement of the kitchen area.

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 £50 and £75 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:

In a multi-occupied property such as this we would always recommend that you try to get to know your neighbours before you move in to the property together with future liabilities for repair work, etc. Please read our comments with regard to responsibilities and liabilities for shared items.

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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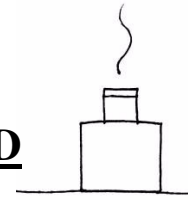
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, DORMER WINDOWS AND ROOF LIGHTS



Chimney Stacks

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

This chimney is brick finished, with numerous chimney pots, and looks to be newly repointed. There is a metal flashing, which we believe to be lead, and, although one section of it is missing and there is a bit of a ledge to the rear we would say that, overall, the chimney is in an average condition for this size of chimney.

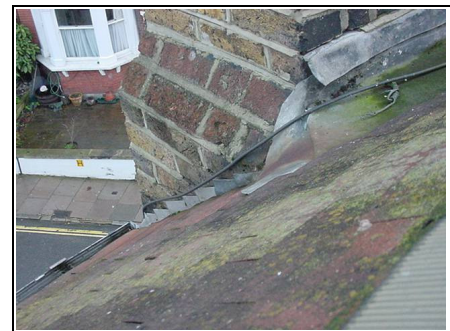
Unfortunately we were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunchings, we therefore cannot comment upon them.

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.



This is a close-up of the side of the chimney and you can see where the cable runs that there looks to be a flashing missing in this area. You can also see in the on the top corner where the mortar pointing is coming out of the lead – this is because it has been incorrectly bedded in to the chimney.

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Dormer Windows

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

There is one dormer windows to this property, to the rear, of which our view is very limited. We could see the sides are clad in a vertical red tile with a painted fascia board, although the paint is peeling off, and we could just about see the edge of a felt roof. Due to our limited view we have no way of knowing what condition this is in. It forms the roof directly over the kitchen area. There may be access to the roof from adjoining properties (we did try the neighbours to investigate this further, but no-one was in). At the soonest opportunity you need to check the condition of this flat roof and take appropriate action.

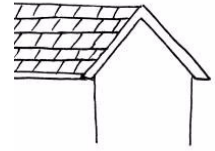


Finally, Dormer windows have been viewed from ground level and literally from the dormer windows themselves.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimneystacks, dormer windows and roof lights 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 Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

The main roof is pitched and clad with a small clay tile to the front and some larger concrete tiles to the rear. Both the clay and concrete tiles are likely to be nibbed tiles. Overall we believe the roof to be in average condition, however, its location and our recent windy weather may be the reason for the slipped tiles (that have luckily been caught in the gutter).

Periodic inspections will be needed with this roof. Please see our comments on having a deep flow gutter in the Executive Summary.



The roof tiles



Checking under the tiles

Upstand

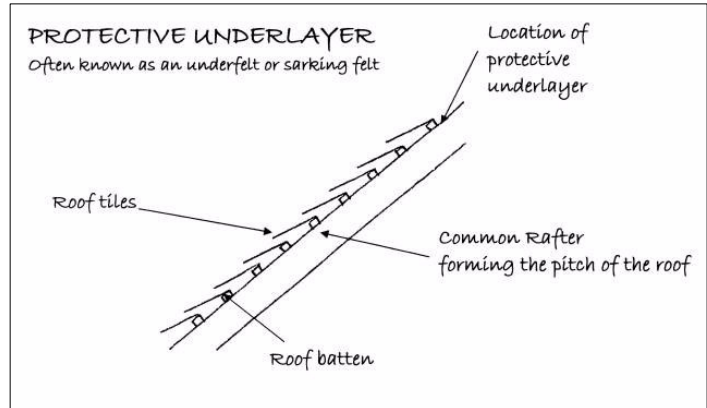
We noted that the adjoining roof has a different roof covering, this means there is a small lip, or upstand, between the roofs, which unfortunately can be a weak area allowing dampness in.



On this photo you can see the missing tiles and also the upstand, or lip, on the right hand side of the photo.

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.



Unfortunately we were only able to see a very small area of the underside of the roof. The small bit that we did see was a Hessian based bitumen, which has been used since the 1960s, and it generally seems to be in an average condition. However, we were surprised to see it rather than the more modern breathable felts that are now used (they have been used for about the past five years) to help reduce the chance of condensation, which can be quite high in a roof such as this.



There maybe other roofs to the property that you have a responsibility for, we simply don't know where the property starts and stops!

Flat Roofs to the main roof

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

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

There appear to be two flat roof areas to the main roof; one of them is over the dormer, which, from the edging we could see, looks to be felt and the other is over the rear of your main reception room, which, from the edge that we could see, looks to be lead, although we could not guarantee this. As we



mentioned earlier, you need to take the first opportunity possible to inspect this roof. It may be accessible via the neighbouring properties.

The latest Building Regulations require flat roofs to be ventilated. Building Regulations are not retrospective but the reason for the requirement is to make sure that any moisture that enters the roof construction is dispelled by way of ventilation. We would suggest that if the opportunity arises ventilation should be provided. This will stop the possibility of fungal growth above the ceiling in the flat roof area.

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

Rooms formed within roofs

You can get heat gain during the summer and heat loss during the winter with this type of room. However, if this is a modern installation that has been installed to building regulation standards, there should be insulation present, but, without opening up the structure, we have got no way of being certain of this.

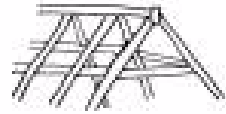
ACTION REUIRED: We would recommend that your solicitor pays particular attention to checking that this property has met and been signed off as passing the local authority approvals, such as building regulations.

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 fifty 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

As there was no access available to the roof structure we cannot comment on its construction or condition.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you check with your neighbours to see if access is available to the roof. If not, you need to consider putting an access hatch in. The small area of the roof that we were able to access, literally consisted of three common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof), insulation to one side and brickwork to the other. These looked typical of what we normally see, but certainly cannot be relied on as a comment on the condition of the roof as a whole.



Finally, we would ask you to note that our view of the roof has been very limited and we cannot offer a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the roof from what we have seen.

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.

We would recommend you consider replacement of the present gutters with a deep flow gutter. Deep flow gutters have several advantages, because they are wider, they do not tend to block as quickly. They will also catch any slipped tiled particularly when three storeys high.

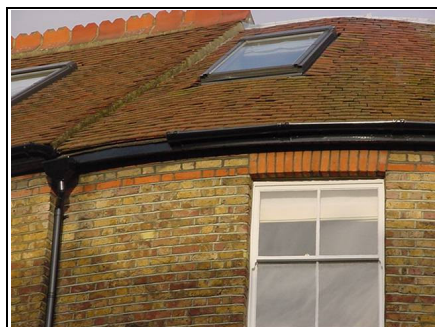


Hopper Heads

The Hopper heads may not be able to cope with heavy rainfall. We also recommend a lead flashing around them.

Due to the height of the property it will be difficult to gain access to the roof. You will need to get to know local builders who have access to the right equipment to carry out work

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.



To the right hand side – again we are not certain that the guttering will catch all the rainwater. The last thing you want it to do is spill all down the property.

Soil and Vent Pipe

We didn't see a soil and vent pipe to your property. We assume that it is internal. We will, however, comment on the other property's soil and vent pipes.



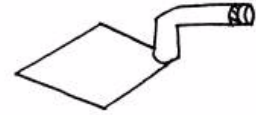
To this picture you can see that the soil and vent pipe has been cut off short; It is normal to terminate soil and vent pipes above the roof level.



To the rear of the property, there is a soil and vent pipe that they have done everything to move it above roof level. We noted that your waste pipe from the kitchen feeds into this.

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. During the course of the survey it rained on and off and we could see that the missing section of pipework would cause damp to get into your property if left unfixed.

WALLS

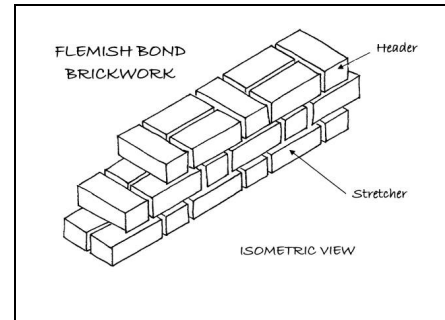


External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

Brickwork

The property is brick built in a Yellow London Stock brick originally in a lime mortar in, what is known as, Flemish Bond brickwork, which has been repointed in a cement mortar.

We are not normally that keen on repointing in a cement mortar, but, as this property has a fairly hard yellow London Stock brick, and it has only just been repointed, we do not recommend removing the cement mortar to replace it with a lime mortar as we would normally.



The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.

The solid external walls may be liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon their condition and their exposure to the weather. External faces should be kept in good condition.

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. It is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

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

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

FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

Given the age of the original property, we would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar to this area.

This property stands on London Clay, as with the majority of properties in London! It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

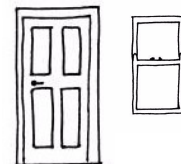
Building Insurance Policy

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.

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

In the majority of instances on this property the fascia is hidden behind the guttering and so we could only see a limited amount. What we can see looks in reasonable condition. The exception that we need to mention is the fascia and soffit to the rear of the property and the dormer roof, which is in need of redecoration. The problem is 'how do you get to it?' - you would need several storeys of scaffolding, which is no doubt why it is in the condition it is.



A close up of the fascia and soffit.

ACTION REQUIRED: You really do need to establish if you can gain access on to the roof via the adjoining building or any future high-level work is going to be very expensive. The painting of this fascia and soffit is already overdue.

Windows and Doors

This property predominantly has modern sliding sash windows and the roof lights, which are double-glazed. The windows themselves have a painted finish and are in a reasonable condition. We did note that the window sills have been painted and we think these will need regular redecoration as water was sitting on them.

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 overall the external decorations are in average condition (with the exception of the high-level fascias and soffits that we have mentioned) and we would expect some redecoration to be required within the next three to five years.

Interestingly with a shared freehold the cost is usually shared (this does depend on the terms of the shared freehold). Initially, the big cost factor with this property is the scaffolding to gain access to the high-level areas.

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

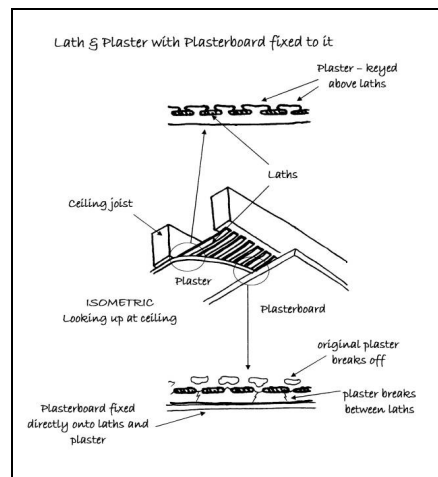
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions. The concept of internal finishes is relatively modern. Partitioning developed originally to separate the livestock from the human occupants. Finishes have developed from this very functional beginning to their decorative nature of today.

Ceilings

From the smoothness of the ceilings we believe them to have been replaced with gypsum plasterboard; this may have been tacked over the original lath and plaster. We did note some hairline cracking to the ceiling, which is quite common in this type of construction.

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 / blockwork and will be the structural walls, with the studwork walls being purely to divide the rooms.

Generally internal walls are finished with a modern plaster believed to be carlite / gypsum plaster and decorated. Without the removal of the decorative finish we cannot be 100 per cent certain, this type of older property would original have had lime plaster some may remain.

Often the mixture of old and new materials will result in hairline movement cracks, as we can see as an example in the bathroom and under the window.

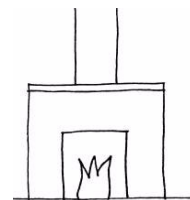
Perimeter Walls

The perimeter walls feel and look to have been re-plastered in gypsum plaster, the result of which will be a small amount of minor movement that will again result in hairline cracking; this will need to be filled and redecorated periodically.

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 large chimneybreast is located to the front of the property and is a feature. It may well be possible to use one of the flues for a 'real' fire, although there are now other ways of doing this without using a flue.

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 section of this Report.

FLOORS



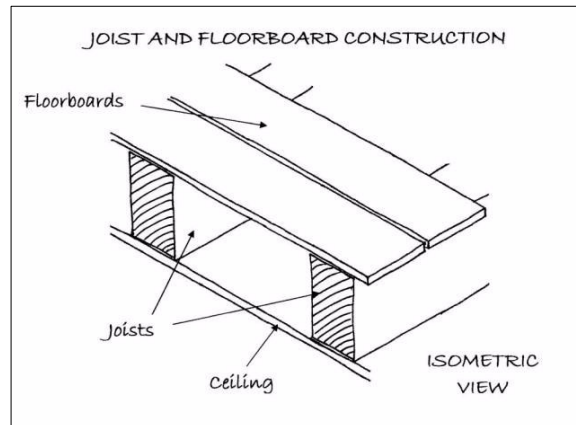
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Second Floor

We have assumed that the second floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property.

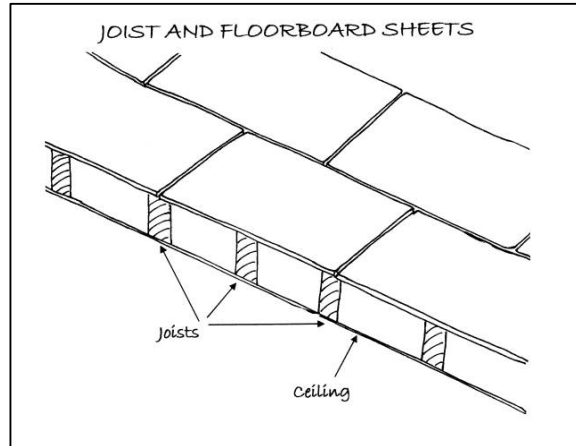
Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



Top Floor

We have assumed that the top floor construction is joist and floorboard sheets, as this is typical in this age of property.



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

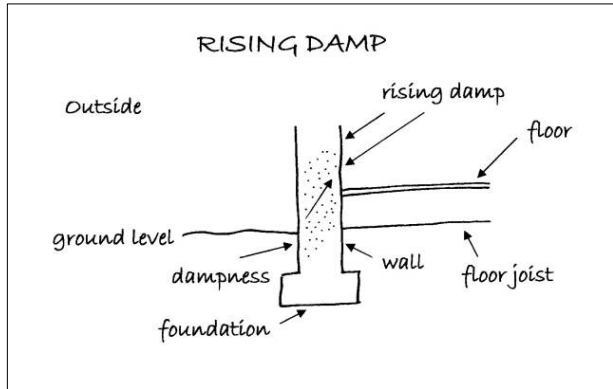
DAMPNESS



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.



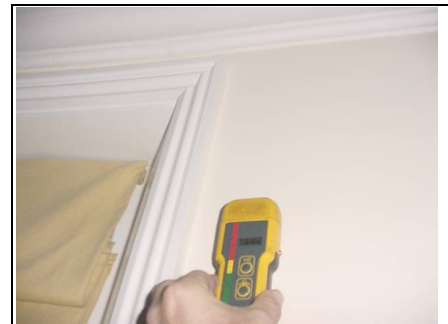
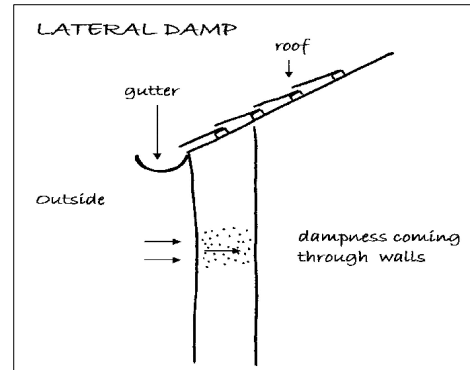
As you are not on the ground floor, rising damp really should not affect you as, typically, it only rises to approximately a metre, although, ironically, you are likely to have a part responsibility for the cost of rectifying any dampness!

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to carry out further investigation including checking the lease agreement

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, floors and other surfaces. No evidence of any significant penetrating/lateral dampness was detected.



Condensation

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

We can see no obvious signs of condensation, however, it depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in good condition, although we do appreciate your comments with regards to the green tiles. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

We would comment on the kitchen being small! When you move this may put some purchasers off.

Doors

Within this property there should be fire doors throughout. Fire doors are generally half hour resistant for this type of layout and, in addition, they should have door closers, which in this instance they have Perco (trade name) door closers, these are positioned in the middle of the door.



Purco door closer

Please see our comments in the executive summary.

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 inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot and we feel it is unlikely that it is occurring, given the conditions found.

Wet Rot

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

In the areas inspected no evidence was found of any wet rot, however our view was very limited, as no access was available to the roof structure.

Woodworm



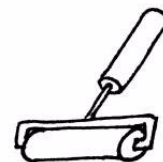
Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part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

The best place to normally check for woodworm is the roof structure, however, in this case, the reception room is formed within the roof structure and so none of the timbers are visible, with the exception of the small area close to the stairs. The timbers in here look relatively new and we could not see any flight holes (as left by woodworm).

Finally, when you move into the property and in future years when you remove the carpet, you should examine the floors for any woodworm (look for the flight holes). We would be more than happy to return and give a further opinion when you do lift the carpets. We would add that care does have to be taken if you discover woodworm and you get a specialist company in to look at it as they have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

We would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The decoration is average, with a typical magnolia developer's finish. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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.

Roof

The roof area cannot be viewed as rooms have been formed in the roof area! In this age of conversion we would expect insulation to have been added (assuming it has been built to building regulations approval which your Solicitor should check). Therefore in the summer months you may get solar gain and in the winter months the rooms will get cold.

Windows

The windows are mainly double-glazed with some single glazed. The thermal properties should be reasonable.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid and will have a relatively poor thermal efficiency. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in solid wall construction without major alterations, which will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space.

Services

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

Summary

Overall, considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties.

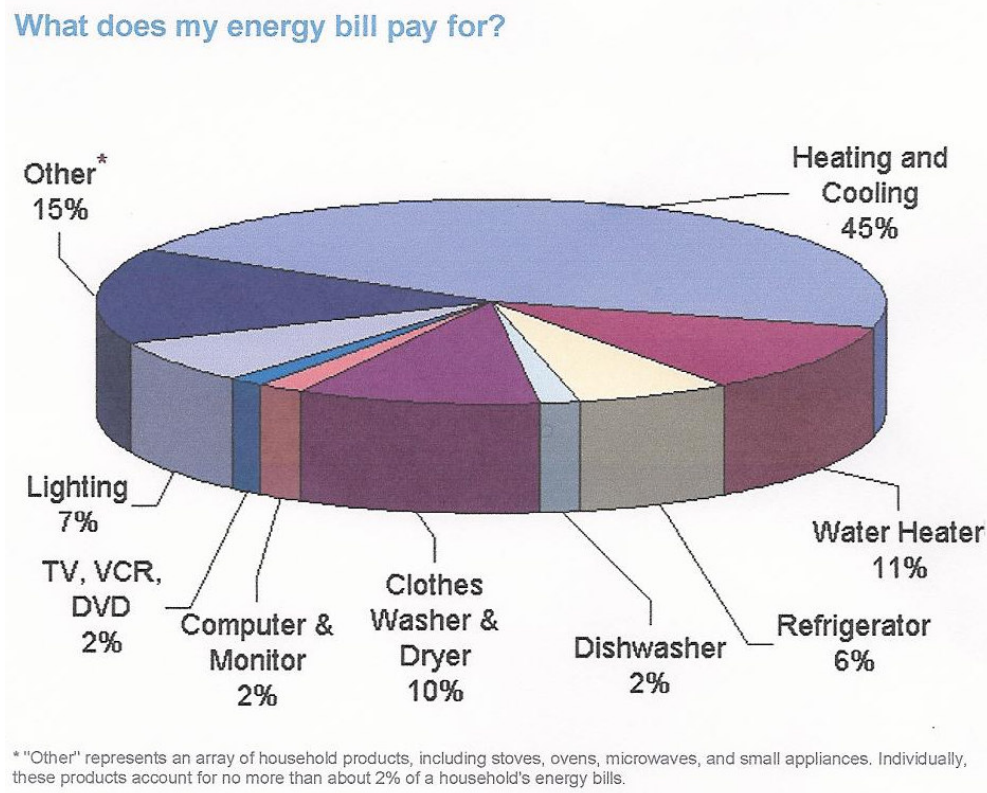
Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

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

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

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



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OTHER MATTERS



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

Security

We were pleased to see a Door entry intercom on the main door, with a video entry system. The amount of security is a personal decision; we always recommend that you talk to the local police force, as they are not trying to sell you any products, which is usually the case if you deal with security companies.



Fire Alarm System

We recommend that interlink radio optical smoke/heat detectors are installed. If one alarm detects a fire, all alarms go off. We would recommend the mains powered units are used (never forget to change batteries again!) Please contact us if you require help with stockists or do an Internet search using "Interlinked radio smoke/heat alarms"

ACTION REQUIRED: We consider this essential.

Insurance

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

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY



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

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the cupboard near the entrance. We would date the fuseboard as being from the 1990s or possibly later and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.

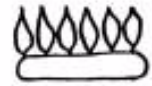
We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle and this proved satisfactory.

ACTION REQUIRED: If there is no record of an electrical test having been undertaken within the last five years, it is recommended that the installation be tested by a competent electrician (NICEIC registered) and all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be re-tested every five years.



Also note that current Building Regulations require certain electrical work to be certified by an approved contractor. Please see the appendices at the end of this survey for further details.

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.

The gas meter cupboard was not located.

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

At the time of our inspection the water supply was turned off. We did not try to turn the water supply back on in case there were problems with it that could lead to water leaking. For the purposes of this report we have assumed that it has a mains water connection, but your solicitor should check this. We would normally do a pressure check but have been able to do this for obvious reasons.

We would also add that problems often occur when water is turned back on.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would advise that you ask the present owners to turn the water back on or, if you have to turn it on, ensure that a plumber is handy.

Controlling Stopcock

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.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the Owners

Water Heating

We noted a Mega flow unit, these are modern heat efficient hot water cylinder. In this instance we were not able to turn it on.

ACTION REQUIRED: The owner needs to ensure that the heating is working or make an allowance for you to commission the heating.

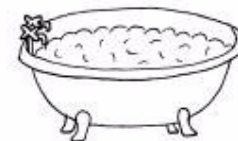
Boiler

The boiler is located on the second floor and is a Potterton Supreme. There is also a Megaflo Cylinder there. Please note that we did not get the boiler to work.

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.

Family Bathroom

The bathroom suite, looks in average condition, however it is internal, and therefore could be prone to condensation.

En-suite Bathroom

This consists of a WC, a wash hand basin and a shower. We were pleased to see that the shower has a solid base, however, it has been damaged and will require some work.

We would also refer you to our earlier comments with regards to the hairline cracking within the shower unit, which needs sealing.



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.

We would normally run the cold taps for approximately quarter of an hour in the bathroom and kitchen, however, in this case the water was turned off.

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.

With a multi-occupied property it is very difficult to establish which inspection chambers / manholes relate to which property. In this case, we did not see any manholes; they may be located to the rear of the property which we did not have access to.

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.

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

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

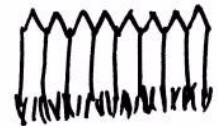
OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING



The area for parking is limited. There is a permit parking scheme. We managed to park around the corner at an exorbitant rate!

EXTERNAL AREAS



As far as we are aware there are no external areas and we did not have access to the rear of the property.

Boundaries: Your legal adviser needs to make enquiries as to where the boundaries are.

Neighbours

We knocked on the adjoining neighbours door, without any answer, and also tried to contact the neighbours to the side without any luck. We also went into the launderette to try and gain access to the rear of the property, but there was no one there either.

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) Double-glazing replacement windows.
 - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Central heating installation.
 - v) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vi) 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.
- h) Adjoining roads and services.
- i) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- j) General development proposals in the locality.
- k) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

When you booked this survey we asked you if you required us to carry out a verbal check on the status of the property with the Local Authority regarding whether it is a Listed Building, in a Conservation area and any history that is available over the phone with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. In this instance you have not requested that we carry out this work.

Finally, your Solicitor should carry out Local Authority enquiries 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

—— Marketing by: ——

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 mixed, unsettled and windy 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 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 not having access to the adjoining properties, the roof space or the rear of the property properly, which would have helped in our investigations.

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.