

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Southwark, London



Victorian mid-terraced
property



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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

A two storey mid terraced property in a residential area of similar properties. There is a small garden to the front and a larger garden to the rear. Roadside parking is on a first come, first served basis with a parking permit in place.

We believe that the property was built in the late Victorian era. 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:

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)
1899-1902	Boer War between Britain and Boers in Southern Africa
1901	Queen Victoria Died
1903	First flight by Wright Brothers
1903-1928	The Campaign for Women's Suffrage
1902	Boer War ends
1903	Edward VII is proclaimed as Emperor of India

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Victorian mid-terraced
property



Front view

Victorian mid-terraced
property



Street view



Rear garden

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Shared entrance
- 2) Front living room
- 3) Rear dining room
- 4) Rear kitchen

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Front bedroom
- 2) Middle bedroom
- 3) Toilet (no wash hand basin)
- 4) Separate bathroom (no toilet)

Outside Areas

Roadside parking is on a first come, first served basis with a parking permit in place.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of). We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Ground Floor



Lounge



Dining room



Kitchen



Hall/stairs area

First Floor



Front bedroom



Middle bedroom



Rear bathroom



Separate toilet (no wash hand basin)

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with concrete tile Cut timber roof which has had additional supports.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Mixture of plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork in a soft red brick Tuck pointed
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Single glazed sliding sash timber windows

Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster (assumed)
Walls:	Mainly solid (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Suspended timber floor (assumed) First Floor: Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The boiler is wall mounted and located in the kitchen, the electrics are located above the main entrance door and are dated 1970's/1980's, the gas meter cupboard is located under the stairs.

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

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



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

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

The Good

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

1. Older properties typically have more space than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms.
2. The property has some of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property.
3. There is a lightwell over the stairs which we always think is a good feature.

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.

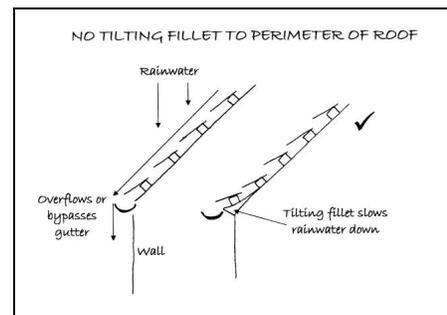
1) **No tilting fillet to roof**

Originally this roof is likely to have been slate covered; it has been replaced with a concrete tile at some point in time (normally the 1970's). We can see that they had difficulty marrying up the thicker concrete tile with the original roof that was made for a slate roof. They look to have missed the tilting fillet at the bottom which may in turn mean that the rainwater misses the gutter.



No tilting fillet

ACTION REQUIRED: Next time it rains you need to stand outside the property and check to see how much rain is actually going into the gutter rather than going down the face of the wall. We can see that the face of the wall is being damaged by rain but this may be due to other factors.



ANTICIPATED COST: We would recommend that you have all the gutters cleaned and any leaking joints checked and sealed. Of course if the rainwater isn't actually being caught by the gutters in the majority of cases you will need to have then realigned as well which will be in the region of a few hundred pounds assuming existing guttering can be re-used; quotations required. Access can be made via long ladders rather than scaffolding.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

2) Additional support added to the roof structure

We can see that work has been carried out to the original roof structure with the addition of new timbers. The original slate roof would have been lighter than the modern heavier concrete tile roof which replaced it. We were pleased to see that props have been added to the main roof however there looks to have been some awkward work where the firewall is to the right hand side which has been formed in plasterboard.



New timbers have been added in the main roof

We would warn that this type of alteration and modification to a roof may put future purchasers off if they don't understand the reason for the additional props in the main roof. It is difficult to comment without seeing the neighbouring roof however from what we can see additional props are needed unless the plasterboard firewall that has been added is structural.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to specifically request information relating to the firewall and any details with regards to how it is constructed and how it supports the purlin.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would set aside the sum of £2,000 - £4,000 for a worse case scenario; quotations required.



Terrible cutting in to the purlin – recommend adding extra struts where this has occurred.

Please see the Roof Structure Section of this Report.

Purlin defined

Horizontal timbers which help give support to the common rafters which form the pitch of the roof.

3) Add an additional loft hatch

In relation to the above work we would recommend that an additional access to the roof is provided (this is because the existing one is located near the bathroom so you have to squeeze by the lightwell and this isn't the easiest thing to do) particularly if work is being carried out in that roof space.



Squeeze through gap to get into main roof

ACTION REQUIRED: Add a loft hatch to the landing area going into the main roof.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of between £300-£500; quotations required.

Please see the Roof Structure and Loft Space Section of this Report.

4) Broken soil and vent pipe

We noted that the soil and vent pipe didn't extend above the roof level, normally it is considered good practice to extend it approximately a metre above the eaves level. It looks like it has broken off which also gives us an indication of the general condition of the soil and vent pipe.



Missing bit of soil and vent pipe – it should be a metre above the roof line

ACTION REQUIRED: We think that work is required to the entirety of the soil and vent pipe using something like a rust stop paint and then an overall redecoration. In a worst case scenario it may be necessary to replace.

ANTICIPATED COST: Set aside the sum of a £100 - £200 to repair and redecorate; quotations required.



Low down it has had a bandage repair

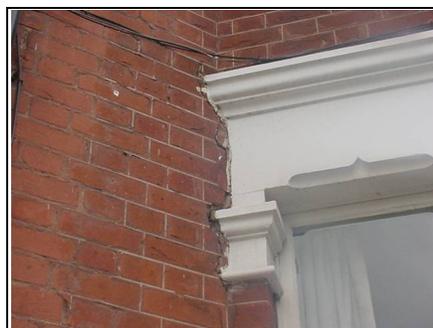
Please see the Gutters, Downpipes and Soil and Vent Pipes Section of this Report.



Spalling to the brickwork being caused by leaking gutters

5) Movement to the front bay

We can see there has been some movement to the front bay. This is not that unusual in this age, type and style of property as the bay area typically doesn't have any foundations or very little and therefore moves. We believe from the movement seen this has moved within acceptable parameters for this property.



Movement to bay

Please see the External Walls Section of this Report.

6) Ad hoc repointing required

Ad hoc repointing is required to the walls. To the rear the property has been repointed in a cement mortar which in our opinion needs to be removed gradually over the years and replaced with a lime based mortar which will help with the general movement of the characteristics of this building. We would add that cement pointing stops the building from breathing and causes dampness so the gradual removal will generally improve the condition of the property.

To the front of the property there is tuck pointing. This is a relatively skilled operation putting a white line into the joints. Originally it was used on poorer quality brickwork so you do need to ensure that you get a skilled bricklayer to carry this out.



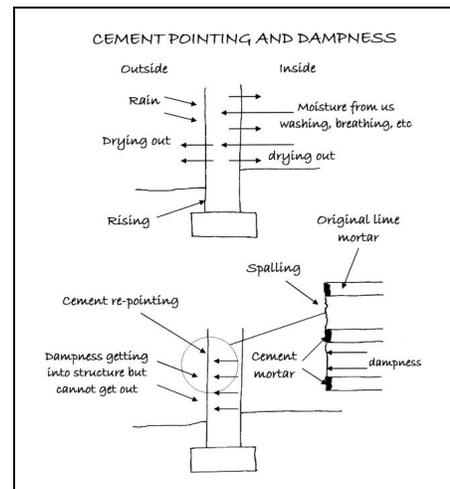
Original lime pointing which has been pointed over with cement



Tucked pointing

ACTION REQUIRED: Generally remove the cement mortar and repoint in a lime mortar, specifically repoint the tuck pointing to the front of the property. We can give you more information on this if you so require.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would recommend that this is carried out over many years where you spend £100 - £200 every year on having the cement mortar removed and repointed; quotations required.



Please see the External Walls Section of this Report.

7) Windows in need of repair

The timber sliding sash windows have started to deteriorate and are in need of repair via redecoration. On the ground floor window that we could see, there wasn't any need for major work however often we find that the most work is required to the upper windows as these are not regularly seen and are more difficult to get to.

ACTION REQUIRED:
Repair/redecorate ideally this summer.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 - £1,500; quotations required.

Please see the Windows and Doors Section of this Report.



Windows in need of repair

8) Trees

There are trees to the front and the rear of the property. The front tree looks to have been replaced, this often occurs with Local Authority trees in our experience where they think it is in danger of causing damage however equally we have found that problems can occur where a large tree is taken out and then the roots no longer take the water out of the area so movement takes place. This may be why there has been some damage to nearby front walls and possibly in addition could be the reason why your bay window has moved.



Tree to front

To the rear there is a larger tree which we would recommend that you have a chat with your neighbour about. The roots will certainly be affecting the property. Our view unfortunately has been limited by the decking but we would add that this decking undulates and doesn't sit level and true.



Tree to rear

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend an arboriculturist comes to have a look at the trees (not a tree surgeon) and that you lift the decking to see what is occurring beneath it.

Please see the Trees Section of this Report.

9) **Timber decking, trees and dampness**

We have already spoken about the timber decking and how it may be hiding problems with regards to the tree. We would add that the timber decking is not level, it could be poor workmanship or the tree is damaging it or old age as we are now tending to find problems with decking; we have found mice, etc living underneath them.



Timber decking

We would add that the decking may be contributing to dampness getting into the property as it abuts the building. We always recommend that there is an air gap left between decking and the building.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add an air gap.



Decking abuts building

Please see the Trees Section of this Report.

10) **Floors**

There would normally be a step between a timber floor and a concrete floor at the back of this style of property however in this case they are level.

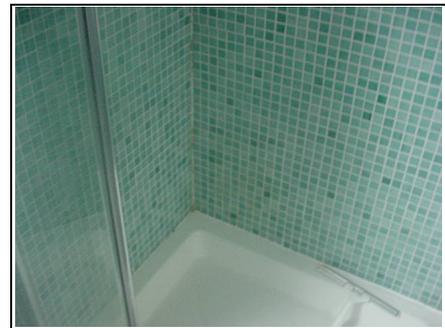
ACTION REQUIRED: We would ideally recommend you take up a section of the floor to check what is happening underneath as this is an unusual floor construction.



Are tiles on a timber decking or a cement decking – it is difficult to tell

11) Condensation

We can see some paint flaking above the shower unit in the rear bathroom (which unfortunately is not visible in the photo we took); we think there will also be some mould to the shower. We believe that the problem relates to excessive humidity/lack of extraction in the area.



Condensation and mould to shower

We would also recommend in the kitchen where a lot of humidity is also created that the vent above the door is changed to an extract system; we would always recommend the largest size you can get which is normally 150mm.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that an extract fan is put in with a controlled humidity thermostat.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £200 - £500; quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

12) **Noise transfer from next door**

Whilst we didn't hear that much noise it was the middle of the day and in our experience there is noise transfer in this age, type and style of building.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you return to the property when they are occupied to check you are happy to listen/live with the noise transfer.

SERVICES

13) **Heating**

Boiler unmarked

As far as we could see the boiler was unmarked, we don't come across this style of boiler that often. We would say it is coming towards the latter quarter of its life.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would budget for a new boiler system which generally costs in the region of £2,000 - £3,000; quotations required.

Radiators

We have also noted that some of the radiators are internal and ideally should be under the windows.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the system is drained down, the radiators repositioned and a service carried out on the unit and an approximate guess given by the heating engineer as to how much longer the boiler has got. Do remember that some plumbers are more salesmen than plumbers (luckily still most are not).



Internal radiator to the dining room

ANTICIPATED COST: Budget for £100 per radiator although this will vary depending upon the way the joists run, etc; quotations required.

Please see the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

The Ugly

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this category; however there are a number of items in the Bad Section. We would expect you to get a reduction in the price based upon these items.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

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

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

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of the property's overall character and style. Such defects are considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report.

This type of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair and a budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating to turn the property into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We would reiterate our earlier comments and we would comment that there may be some dampness coming into the property via the parapet walls. This will become clearer when you have added an access to the front roof and opened it up. We would recommend that you add permanent lighting in there and also board out this area to have a good examination of it.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

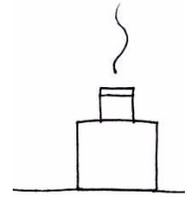
Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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



EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, PARAPET WALL AND ROOF WINDOWS



Chimney Stacks

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

This property has three chimneys, which are located one to the front left hand side and two to the rear (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

Chimney One – located to the front left hand side

This brick chimney was difficult to view, we are not certain if it has a lead flashing although it seems likely as there is one to the parapet wall. The chimney looks to have been repointed; we can see that it has got aerials attached to it using wires that can cut into it like cheese wire. This chimney is brick finished with four chimney pots, possibly more. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition. The top of the chimney is known as the flaunchings, we would comment that we were unable to view the flaunching properly; however what we could see appeared to be in average condition.



Chimney one

We would also comment that within the loft space we could see that there was some dampness getting in via the parapet wall and we believe the chimney area.

Chimney two – main roof rear chimney

This chimney was very difficult to view. Again it looks to be brick built and again we would make the comment with regards to dampness coming in via this or the parapet wall.



Chimney two to the rear

ACTION REQUIRED: Both the above chimneys need a close up inspection via long ladders by the end of the summer.

Chimney three – rear roof chimney

This is probably the most difficult chimney to view. We can see as much inside the roof as we could see outside. There looks to be some dampness.



Rear chimney viewed within the roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a close up view by long ladders by the end of the summer.

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.

Parapet Walls

Parapet walls are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.

The parapet wall is built in a soft red brick which has got a brick coping stone and has been rendered to the side with a lead flashing. This to us indicates that there have been problems with dampness getting through.



Close up of parapet wall

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to form an opening into this front roof and light the area well for a closer examination.

ANTICIPATED COST: Set aside the sum of £1,000 with anticipation to work in this area; quotations required.

Render Defined

A sand and cement external coating applied in two or three coats or layers.

Roof Windows

Over the staircase is an original example of a stair case skylight built to give external light to the staircase.

In this case it has what looks like the original roof window made from metal which means it is like to have deteriorated over the years as they are difficult to access to maintain.



Roof window to lightwell

ACTION REQUIRED: Have a close inspection of the roof window before the end of the summer; this is likely to need long ladders and crawler boards and possibly a scaffold.

APPROXIMATE COST: This all falls within the £1,000 investigation

costs that we mentioned earlier for the chimneys; quotations required.

We would add it seems inevitable with roof windows that they will sooner or later leak. If this doesn't occur then they seem prone to condensation.

Party Wall

The main chimneys to this house and also the parapet walls are what are known as party walls which have legislation relating to them if you wish to carry out work on them. Here is some general information on party walls.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

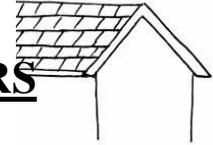
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks and roof windows 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:

We will consider the roof as the main high level roof including the bay window.

High Level Roofs

Main Roof covering

The roof is pitched and clad in a large interlocking concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying level and true and look in reasonable condition considering their age. Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridges and the perimeter, so you should periodically check these areas.



Concrete tiles to roof

We believe originally the roof was slate, if this is the case and a heavy concrete tile has been added, then we would expect additional roof support, in this case additional props have been added.

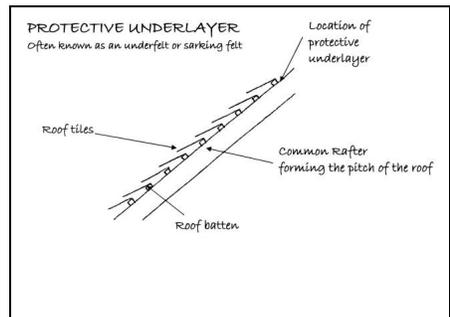
Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Concrete tiles defined

Concrete tiles have been used since the 1950/60s, they are relatively cheap to produce and can be manufactured to a reasonably standard size and quality.

Protective Underlayer

From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, which, in more recent years, have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts, although the name is no longer really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.



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



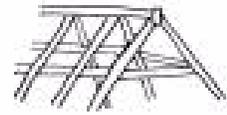
Sarking felt

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

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately forty percent of the main roof although the angle wasn't very good from ground level, via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

Main Roof

Roof Access

The loft hatch is located at the top of the stairs which only gives access to the main part of the roof. This was full of stored items. There is a loft ladder, electric light and some unsecured floorboards. We would recommend adding an additional loft hatch to allow direct access into the main roof.

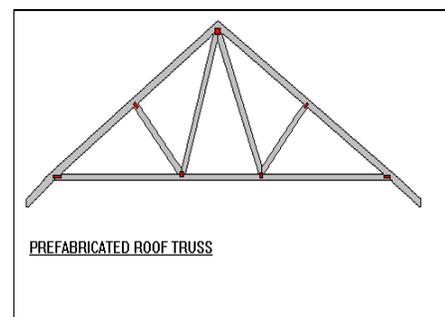
The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing considerably.

Currently it is very difficult to access the main roof properly. This is because the lightwell is in the way. It also means that you can't use the area for storage.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary with regards to adding a loft hatch to the landing area near the main bedroom.

Roof Structure

The roof structure is a pre-fabricated fan trussed roof rafter which looks like "W". These are made in a factory and transported to site and then lifted into place. Without the manufacturer's calculations and installation details we cannot comment categorically on the roof structure.



Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



New timbers have been added in main roof

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items. What we could see was found to be in generally average condition, the pitch is shallow which tend to get condensation.

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

Fire Walls

The property has two firewalls, a brick firewall located to the left hand side and a plasterboard firewall located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property).

The property has a plasterboard firewall dividing it from the adjoining property; this should have a half hour fire resistance, which requires two layers of plasterboard, which is not possible to tell without opening up.



Plasterboard firewall to right hand side

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to request confirmation of construction of the firewall, otherwise you have to assume it is not and rebuild it.

ANTICIPATED COST: For rebuilding we would allow the sum of £1,500 - £2,000 as it is a very awkward job; quotations required. Please see our comments with regards to party walls.



Brick firewall to left hand side

Fire Walls Defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement. It is generally a requirement of any mortgage company lending on.

Water Tanks

We did not see any water tanks within the loft space.

Ventilation

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that ventilation is added to the roof.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

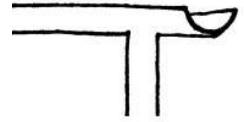
Electrical Cables

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

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be plastic and appeared to be a mixture of different ages of plastic and are in average condition. There are a few repairs.

Much of the plastic gutters and downpipes are the older style which is affected by sun light and loses its colour slightly and does become brittle over the years.



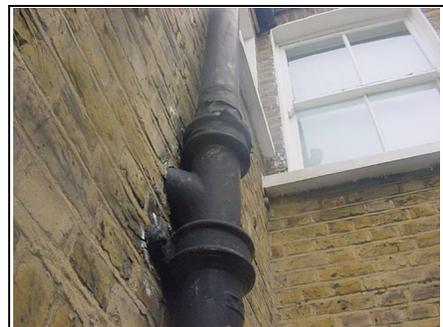
Gutters, downpipes and hopper head

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary with regards to whether the rainwater from the roof discharges into the gutters.

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

Soil and Vent Pipe

There is a cast iron soil and vent pipe that has been repaired and is broken at the top. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Soil and vent pipe repaired and in need of work

Cast iron will need regular maintenance such as repair to any rusting or cracks and painting.

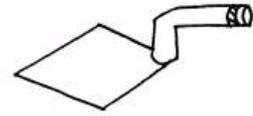
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary



Close up of repair to soil and vent pipe

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

WALLS



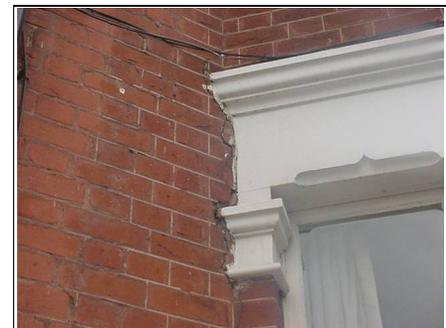
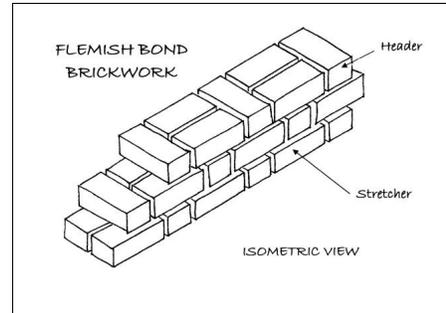
External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

Brickwork

The property is built in a brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork.

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.



Spalling to brickwork

Bonding timbers

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. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

Tuck pointing

The mortar has been finished using a method known as tuck pointing, this method requires a high level of skill, and was used predominately on poorer quality bricks to take the eye away from them and focus on the pointing.



Tuck pointing

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally repoint in a like for like style but only a few bricklayers have the skill to carry out this work properly; let them do a section to check they are good enough.

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

FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

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

London Clay

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

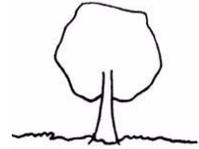
Building Insurance Policy

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

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

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

TREES

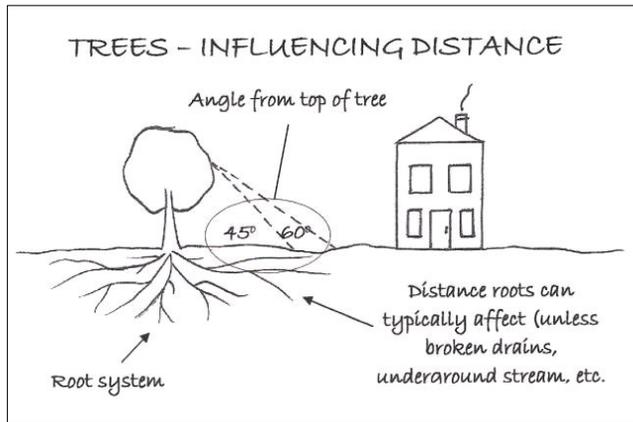
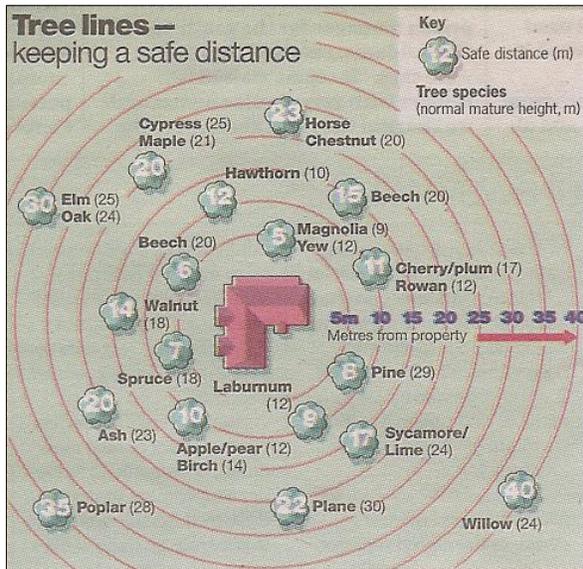


Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary and have a discussion with your next door neighbour over a cup of tea!



Bush in back garden needs cup of tea meeting with next door as it is taking up a lot of garden

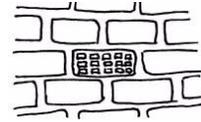


Influencing Distance Defined

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.

AIRBRICKS



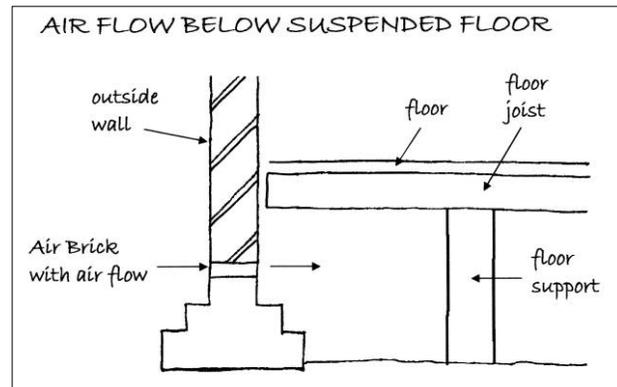
In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of airbricks. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances of the property.

Airbricks are visible to this property, which is usually seen when suspended timber floors have been used and that would be my thoughts in this case. However, without opening up the structure we cannot be certain of the structure or its condition.



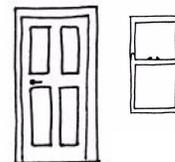
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see Executive Summary.

Airbrick to front of splayed bay



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

FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards 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 property looks to have fascia boards only however we cannot see these as they are effectively hidden by the gutter.

ACTION REQUIRED: Bearing in mind our comments with regard to the roof and possibly water discharging down the wall this will dictate the condition of the fascia boards.



Fascia board just visible to the rear of the property (a white board)

Windows and Doors

The property has single glazed timber sliding sash windows which are in need of repair, in below average condition but saveable. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. The sooner they are redecorated the better.



Windows in need of repair

General Information on Sliding Sash Windows

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case. Horizontal Sliding Sash Windows (sometimes known as York Windows).

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



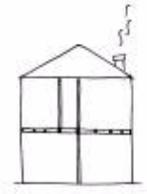
The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

In this case, the windows are the main focus of the redecoration however the fascia boards may also need repairing/repainting.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL

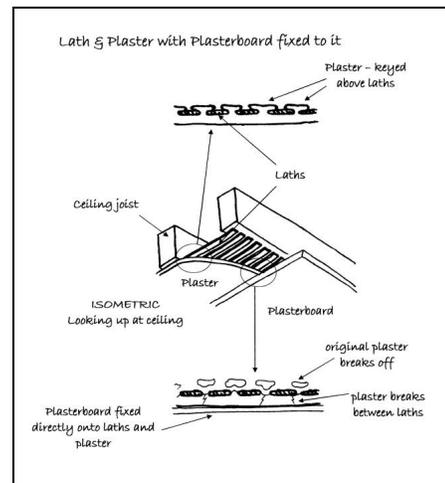


CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are originally lath and plaster, but in some areas have had plasterboard tacked over them possibly with replacement plasterboard. This type of work is normally carried out where the ceilings are in poor condition as removing lath and plaster is very messy, time consuming and expensive as it is labour intensive. As you can see in the photo a lot of the plaster has deteriorated.



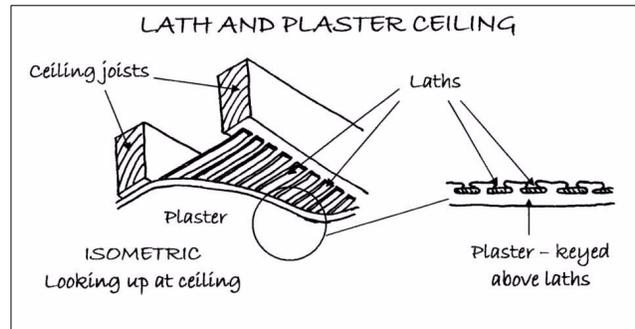
Checking for leaks to bay window ceiling



Lath and plaster ceiling deteriorating – viewed from the loft space

Lath and Plaster Defined

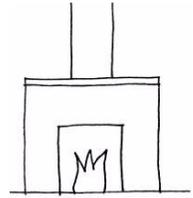
Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.



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.

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts are located on the left hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the front of the property). The chimneys make a nice feature in the various rooms.

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



Feature fireplace

A concern we have is that we believe the rear chimney has been partially removed as it should be visible in the rear bathroom. If this is the case then suitable support should have been added. Unfortunately that part of the roof space was absolutely crammed full of stored items; we had already moved a lot to gain access to the main roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: We therefore feel that when you purchase the property, one of the first things you do before you fill the roof space up! is to check if there is any support to this rear chimney; we would be more than happy to comment on photos that you take to sort this out.

ANTICIPATED COST: Worst case scenario would require the installation of a lintel which would be in the region of £200 - £500; quotations required.

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

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

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

Based on our knowledge of this age of construction we believe that the ground floor construction is predominantly a suspended timber floor. We can see that the floor has been replaced at some time because they have used a thin modern floorboard.



Replacement floorboards on ground floor

This type of floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections and within the Summary upon Reflection.

As mentioned previously in the Executive Summary, the remainder of the floor, kitchen onwards, is solid underfoot and assumed to be concrete. There would normally be a step between a timber floor and a concrete floor at the back of this style of property however in this case they are level.

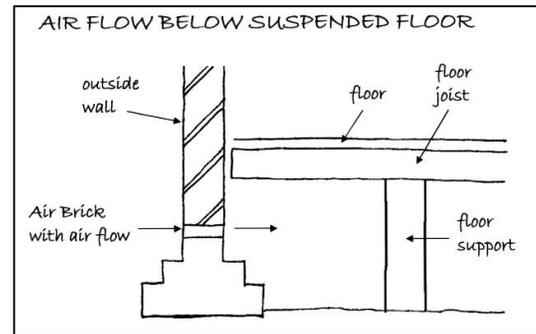


Are tiles on a timber decking or a cement decking – it is difficult to tell

ACTION REQUIRED: We would ideally recommend you take up a section of the floor to check what is happening underneath as this is an unusual floor construction.

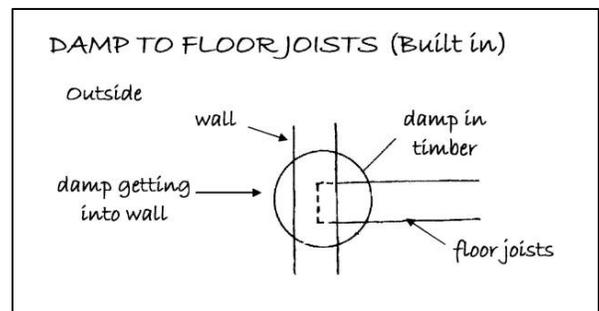
Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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



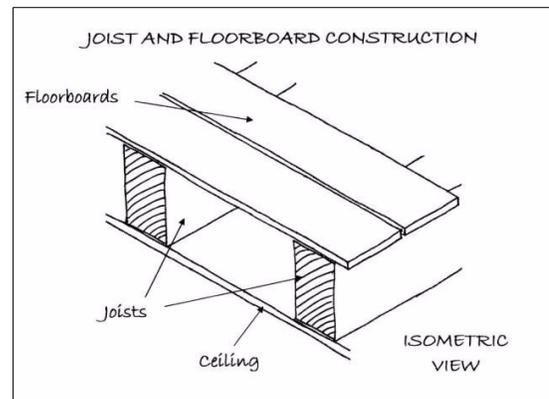
First Floor

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



Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

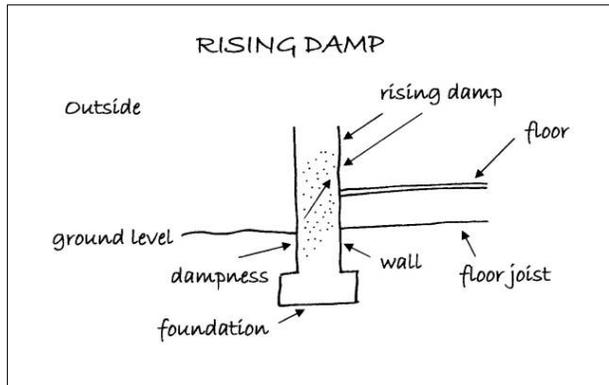


DAMPNESS

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

Rising Damp

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



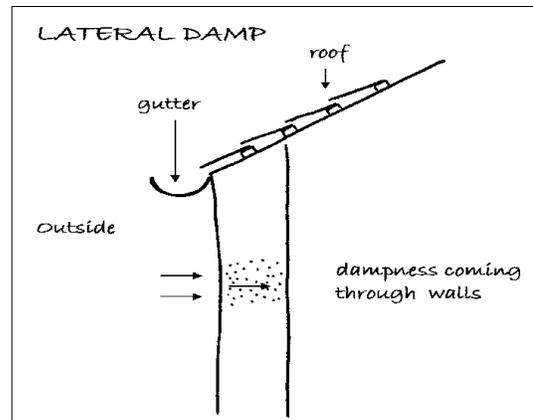
A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls. The readings we obtained indicated that there is minor dampness in the property which may have been caused by condensation; it is at low level where rising damp would normally be found.



Checking for rising damp

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Within the property a visual inspection was carried out and tests were taken with an electronic conductivity meter at selected points to walls. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected considering the properties age, type and style. However within the roof we believe there is some dampness coming in. Please see the adjoining photo.



Dampness getting in via parapet wall to left hand side

Condensation

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

Condensation and mould were noted in the bathroom; please see our comments within the Executive Summary with regards to adding an extractor within the bathroom and kitchen.

There were clothes drying inside the house at the time of our inspection which does lead to condensation being caused.

Condensation 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.



Internal radiators drying clothes – condensation likely

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The property has stripped wood panel doors. They are generally in reasonable condition, although they don't fit perfectly.



Door

Staircase

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



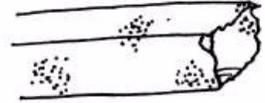
Underside of stairs not lined

Kitchen

The kitchen was an average modern kitchen; we have not tested any of the appliances.

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please note we have not had access under the floors.

Wet Rot

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

Generally no evidence was found of any wet rot, with the exception of to the windows. It wouldn't surprise us if the fascia boards had some wet rot as well. Please note we have not opened up the floors which we recommend you do.

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

Woodworm



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

In many properties of this age, there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection was restricted in the roof by insulation, the timber configuration and in this case a mass of stored items and a lack of light within the main roof. However, having said that we couldn't see any signs of significant woodworm activity.

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.

The decoration is average, with minor marks as you would expect in a home that's been lived in.

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.

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs

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

Roof insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not to current Building Regulation requirements of 300mm. In this instance you have approximately 150mm to 200mm and a lot of stored items.

Window insulation

The windows are single glazed and sliding sash, so the thermal properties will be poor.

Wall insulation

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 efficiency

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

Services

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

Summary

Overall, provided our assumptions correct and considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties for what we typically see but refer to your HIPs report.

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

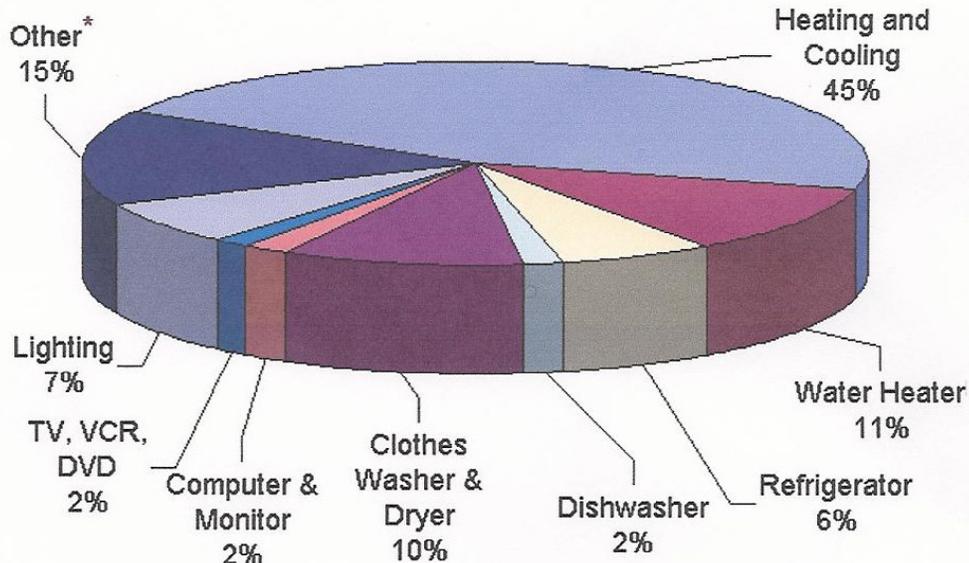
[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



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

www.ISLAssociated.co.uk

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OTHER MATTERS



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

Smoke Alarms

No 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 that is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed.

We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on, providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year. We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

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

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. This was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time. We are not asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located under the stairs. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1970's/1980's and, whilst not the best now available, it is average.

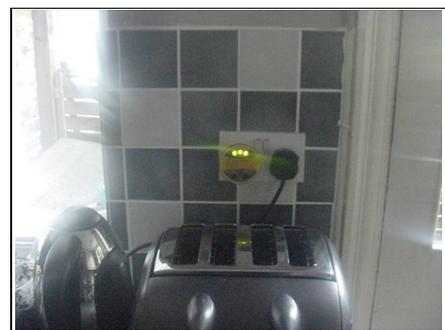


Fuse Board

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: NICEIC approved contractor to carry out an IEE inspection test and all recommendations to be actioned. A new fuse board is recommended.



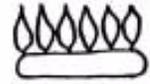
Earth test

Also note that 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.

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

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

GAS



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

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

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

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

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 Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage tests we checked the pressure, literally by putting a finger over a tap, and the pressure seemed typical of what we find.

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

Cold Water Cistern

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

Hot Water Cylinder

We have not found a hot water cylinder so we assume it is an instantaneous boiler.

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the kitchen and was unmarked; therefore we were unable to identify the model however it looks old.

Internal radiators

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

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

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

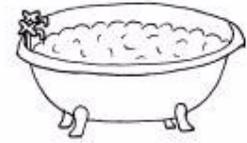
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present so the heating has not been tested.

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

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

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

BATHROOM



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

Family Bathroom

The bathroom suite looks in average condition, and is located in a large room. We noted condensation above the shower.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add a large humidity controlled extract fan. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Separate w.c.

The w.c. is separate and in this case has no wash hand basin.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We assume that the property has the benefit of mains drainage, although we could not identify which way it travels.

Manholes / Inspection Chambers One

We have not found any manholes/ inspection chambers or rodding eyes, this is unusual. Therefore we are unable to comment further.

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 age of property it is likely to be into shared drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

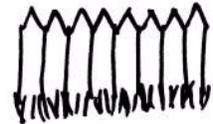
PARKING



Roadside parking is on a first come, first served basis with a parking permit in place.



EXTERNAL AREAS

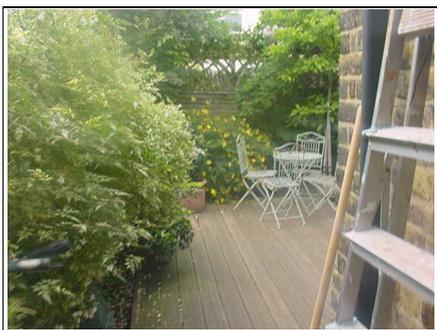


Front Garden

A small area mainly used for bin store. We did note that it has a retaining wall, i.e. it is above the path level and we would always recommend that weep holes are added to the wall so that there is no build up of brown water behind it that literally pushes over the wall. We note there is a relatively new wall along there, which leads us to believe that this problem is occurring.

Rear Garden

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Rear garden



Garden fence is in need of straightening up and general repair

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

Right of way

There is a gate to the rear of the property which may be a right of way. Originally in our experience generally these were present to give the coalman a right of way to deliver coal.



Shared access to the garden

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor needs to check and confirm.

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

Finally, whilst we note the boundaries, these may not be the legal boundaries. Your Legal Advisor should make further enquiries on this point and advise you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

Neighbours

Left and Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked on the door and no-one answered which isn't unusual during the middle of the day.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) 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.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or

are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

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

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

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
2009	Third wettest August since 1956
2010	Heaviest snowfall in march since 1991
	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years

References BBC News www.bbc.co.uk

NOT LOCAL

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

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as we have not opened up any of the floors, we have had a limited view of the roof due to the stored items in it. There were no manholes visible to inspect the drains and we had a limited inspection of cupboards due to amount of stored items.



Inspection limited due to amount of stored items in the cupboards generally

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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

www.globrix.com

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