

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY
OF
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10



FOR
Dr S

Prepared by:
INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES, PARAPET WALLS, DORMER WINDOWS, ROOF WINDOWS
ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS
ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT SPACE
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES AND SOIL AND VENT PIPES
EXTERNAL WALLS
FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS
EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES
CHIMNEYBREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES
FLOORS
DAMPNESS
INTERNAL JOINERY
TIMBER DEFECTS
INTERNAL DECORATIONS
THERMAL EFFICIENCY
OTHER MATTERS

SERVICES

ELECTRICITY
GAS
PLUMBING AND HEATING
BATHROOMS
MAIN DRAINS

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES AND OFF ROAD PARKING
EXTERNAL AREAS

POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey property, with the upper rooms being formed partly within the roof. The property has also been extended and amended over the years.

There are gardens to the front and rear, together with a detached car port and various sheds, which can have all sorts of uses!

The property is situated in a rural area, surrounded by fields, with one adjoining neighbour.

The property is a mixture of different constructions, styles and ages. We believe originally that the property was built from the mid-1800's, with the majority of building in that area being carried out in the late 1800's; this looks the most likely date. We can find very little physically to date the property by and have dated it on the general style. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

1837	Victoria becomes Queen of Great Britain.
1840	The First Postage Stamp
1851	First World Exhibition held in London
1854	Florence Nightingale pioneers modern nursing in the Crimea
1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Rear View



Street View



Rear garden

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Dining area
- Lounge
- Kitchen

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Two bedrooms
- Master bedroom, with en-suite shower room
- Bathroom

Outside Areas

The property has gardens to the front and rear. There is a detached car port and a number of sheds.

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



Kitchen



Lounge



Dining Area

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

First Floor



Left hand bedroom



En-suite shower room



Middle bedroom



Right hand bedroom



Bathroom

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	One large brick chimney
Main Roof:	A pitched roof, clad with slates and two flat roofs to the rear dormers, which are felted.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Predominantly render, some brickwork, some cladding (construction unknown)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Timber double glazed windows and timber doors

Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	A mixture of solid and hollow (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Predominantly solid under foot, assumed concrete with a part of a suspended timber floor remaining.
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards (assumed)

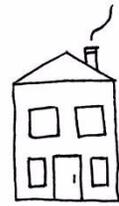
Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The boiler is located in the kitchen, the make is Potterton Statesman and the electrics are 1970's, located in the lounge.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

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

Generally we found the property to be in 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!

- The property has potential to amend or extend.

We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

The Bad

Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

1) High Level

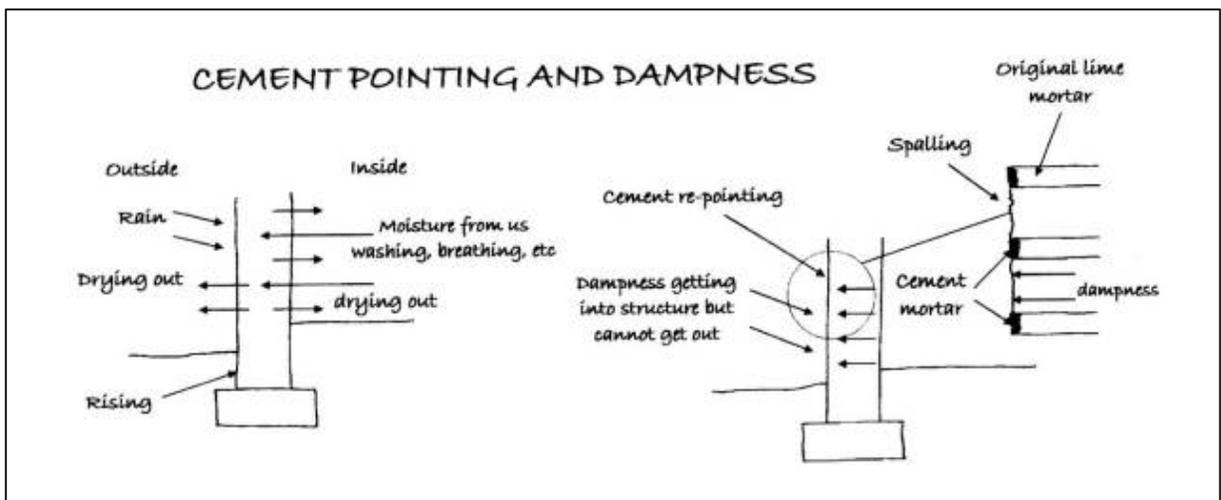
The property has a large red brick (a soft brick) chimney, which is in need of repointing and general work. The repointing should be carried out in a lime mortar to minimise further deterioration in the chimney. There appears to be some cement mortar from past "repairs". Unfortunately, it has caused accelerated deterioration to the brickwork. There is also a cement flashing rather than a lead flashing. If these items are left dampness will start to come into the property.



Close up of top of chimney



Close up, where a lead flashing is needed



ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and repoint the chimney appropriately and add a lead flashing.

ANTICIPATED COST: As this is high level work, it is likely to need scaffolding (savings may be made if you buy a tower scaffold). We would anticipate costs in the region of £1,000 to £2,000 Quotations will be required.

Please see the Chimneys Section of this Report.

2) Slate Roof

You have an older style slate roof, which does not have an underfelt. This indicates that it was carried out 40 plus years ago, or it was carried out more recently and not to current standards! The lead tingles would indicate that the nail fixings are rusting and failing, as tingles are commonly used where this problem occurs. It is known, in a worst case scenario, as nail sickness.



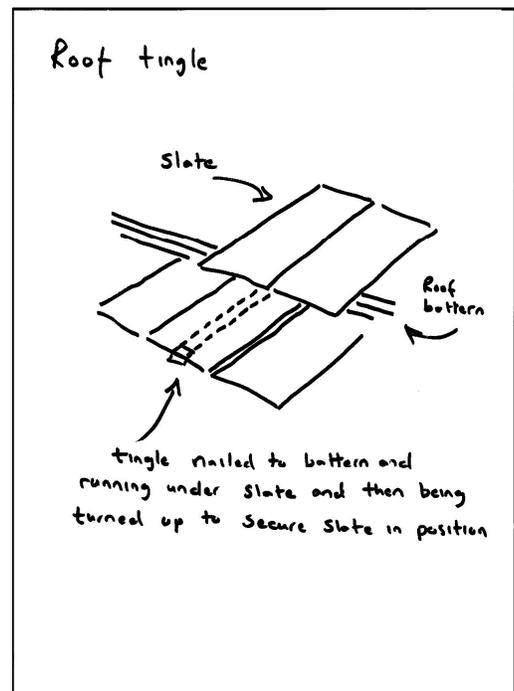
Slate roof, with lead tingles

Lead Tingles or Lead Slaps Defined

These are strips of lead usually about 25mm wide which are used to secure slates where they have slipped.

ACTION REQUIRED: We feel that ongoing maintenance will be required. We normally consider it a rule of thumb that if there are more than a dozen tingles (near each other) you need to look at re-roofing the property. In some areas you are getting close, for example directly above the rear right hand side (all directions given as you face the property dormer roof).

The property may have nail sickness. However, the roof does look very flat and true.



ANTICIPATED COST: We would recommend setting aside a budget to buy slates to match the ones on the roof so that the repairs can be carried out immediately. Remember, there is nothing underneath the slates other than your roof insulation, some plasterboard and your bedrooms.

It is very hard to predict how long a roof like this will last, as a sudden or unusually strong wind or heavy snowfall may have an adverse effect on it. We do think there is an element or risk of taking on this property with this type of roof problem.

We spoke to the owner during our question and answer session, who advised us that they carried out little, if any, maintenance over the years they had been at the property. This does in one sense appear good, i.e. that they were not forced to carry out maintenance, but in another sense it does mean no maintenance work has been carried out and therefore you will have additional liability.

ACTION REQUIRED: It may well be worth fitting a slate guard to the gutters, as, twofold, it will help the number of leaves going in and also the slates will be caught by it.

ANTICIPATED COST: A new roof to this property with associated scaffolding and roof over the top would be £5,000 to £10,000, assuming the existing slates can be re-used. We feel that some part replacement will be necessary in the not too distant future and we would set aside a budget of £2,000 to £3,000. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

3) Valley Gutter

The front valley gutter is leaking. This looks to have been a problem for some time, as the lead valley has then been tarred. There are no obvious signs of splits in the leads, but these are often difficult to see when they have been tarred. Therefore, there may be defects in the lead, or alternatively, the leaves may have collected in the gutter and the valley gutter and built up and allowed water to pass around the valley gutter and into the roof.

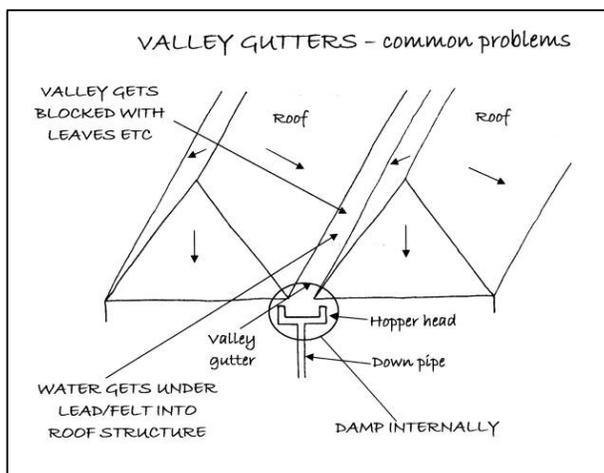


Valley gutter



Dampness from valley gutter

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend for this winter that a bitumen coating is added and redecoration takes place within the room. The warm interior of the property is likely to draw out more moisture during the winter months, if this is not significant then the problem has been resolved. It is a matter of clearing the gutter and keeping them clear more regularly.



If dampness does come in we would recommend the entirety of the valley gutter is removed and replaced with a lead valley gutter.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,500 to £2,500, again because there is likely to be access scaffolding costs. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

4) **Hairline cracking to the render – mixture of properties, old and new techniques**

This property, whilst originally old and, what we would term as a “breathable structure”, has had modern materials added to it, such as the cement based render. This resulted in differential movement between the two types of property (it is not usually a good idea to mix old and new materials). The hard cement render cannot adapt to the movement taking place in the building and is therefore cracking.



Hairline cracking

We have no idea what is underneath the render, it could be a part timber frame structure, it could be a brick structure with binding timbers; both of which cause problems to cement based renders. Again, this is an element of risk with buying this age of property.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to constantly fill any hairline cracks to stop water getting into the structure.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds over a year. This is, however, a constant regular maintenance item.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

5) **Deteriorating joinery – specifically the bargeboard and the tops of the fascia boards**

We believe the property has been “painted to sell” in some areas, without the necessary repair work being carried out to the timber. This has then resulted in the paint peeling quite quickly in some areas.



Deteriorating fascia board

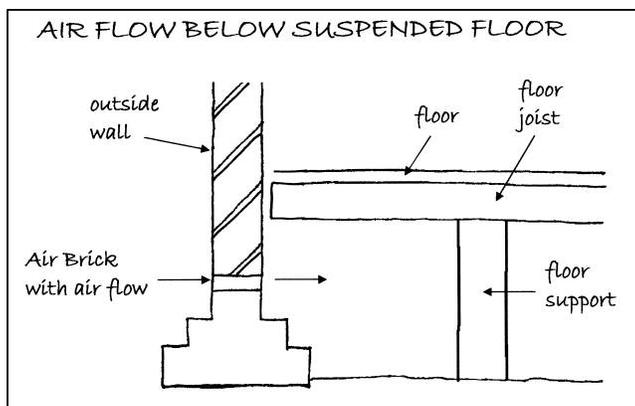
ACTION REQUIRED: From your tower scaffolding, or appropriate safe access, you need to remove any deteriorating timber areas, replace and redecorate.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,500 to £3,000, depending upon the amount of repair work required and replacement work, which can only really be estimated when you are up high having a very close inspection. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Fascias and Soffits, Windows and Doors Section of this Report.

6) **Rising Damp**

To the front of the kitchen the floor is a suspended timber floor. This requires an air flow underneath to help prevent wet rot. In this case rising damp was found in the wall, which in turn will cause dampness to the wooden floor beneath.



Checking for rising damp, Kitchen right hand internal wall

The French gully that has been added is a good start, but whether it is a “true” French gully will only be known by excavating it, as many French gullies become French ponds! Please see the article in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

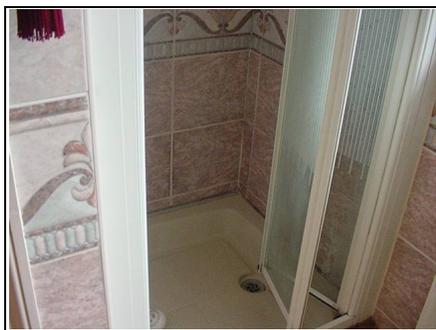
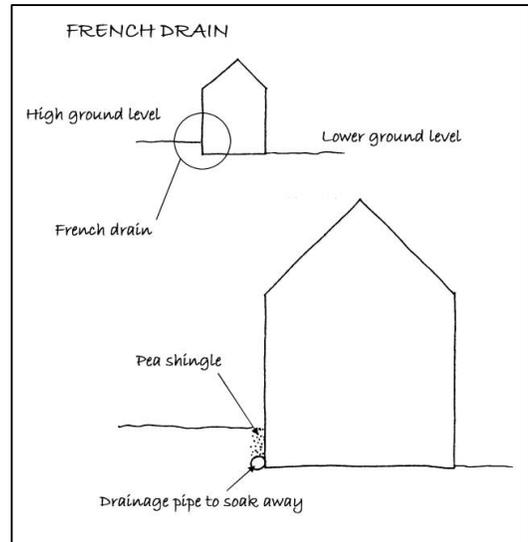
ACTION REQUIRED: It is very difficult to sort this problem out without major work. We recommend, as a helpful preventative measure, that additional air bricks are added externally and also internally a running vent is added.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds. Quotations required.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

7) Bathroom Facilities

These are not up to modern standard and the showers are fairly cramped. We do feel that the bathroom may promote condensation, as there is no extract fan in this area (make sure you use the windows to minimise condensation), and we can see that some is present within the shower unit. Please note the bath looks to be a short bath.



Plastic shower tray



Mould in the shower

ACTION REQUIRED: Add extract fan and always open windows when used.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds. Obtain quotes.

We also discussed changing the showers from electric to power showers. We would comment that you can get some very good electric showers (although this is at the costly end of the market) and you may wish to consider one being kept as an electric shower.

Please see the Dampness and Bathroom Sections of this Report.

8) Services

Heating

At the time of our inspection the oil fired heating was not working and we were advised by the owner that there was insufficient oil to get it working.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you re-visit the property with the oil boiler working to establish the heat levels, as we noticed that some of the radiators are single panel and therefore may not warm up as quickly as you wish and keep the temperature you wish.

Electrics

The electrics are dated and you may wish to upgrade.

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



1970's fuseboard

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £150 to £500, plus the cost of any works; you may wish to add additional socket points. Obtain quotes.

Please see the Services 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.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

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. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

The risk in the roof should not be under-estimated. A worse case scenario would involve re-roofing the entirety of the property so you need to consider this carefully.

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**



Independent Chartered Surveyors

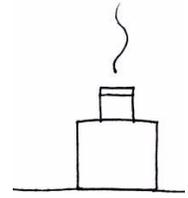
Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES, PARAPET WALLS, DORMER WINDOWS 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 one chimney, which is located to the right hand side of the property (all directions given as you face the property).

This substantial chimney is brick built with a cement flashing/partly lead, and one flue. From what we could see the chimney needs repointing and the flashing needs checking/replacing. We were unable to see the very top of the chimney know as the flaunchings, we therefore cannot comment upon it.



General view of chimney



Close up of chimney.



Close up view, with cement flashing to the left and a lead flashing to the base of the chimney

ACTION REQUIRED: Remove cement repointing and repoint in a lime based mortar, the sooner the better. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

Dormer Windows

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

There are two dormer windows to this property; both to the rear; one to the left hand side and one to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property). They have been inspected from ground level.

Dormer one, located to the rear left hand side of the property

We can only see the very edge of the roof, which looks like it is felt. The cheek sides are in a shiplap timber boarding, which would benefit from being re-stained. We are not certain from the edge of the type of felt, but from discussions with the owner they thought it was a felt with bitumen and impregnated chippings. Generally, this is an older style or cheap style of doing a flat roof.



Rear left hand side dormer

ACTION REQUIRED: We would therefore be looking to replace the flat roof prior to carrying out any alterations and improvements within the en-suite.

Dormer two, located to the rear right hand side of the property

We would say a very similar comment to before; we would add that where the downpipe comes down the side it is causing deterioration to the fascia board adjoining it. The water is surcharging or overflowing the gutter.



Dormer to rear

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

Roof Windows

There are two roof windows to the front of the property.

These are a modern metal type, with timber internally and look in reasonable condition, with the exception of the moss that is starting to gather and would therefore benefit from being cleaned.



Roof window, note moss starting to gather

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

We would also say that there seems to be masking tape onto the timber internally. This is not adding to the decorative nature!

Party Walls

The property has a party wall in the roof space, which has been added in more recent times, as well as where the building adjoins the neighbour. Here is some general information relating to party walls.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall etc Act 1996

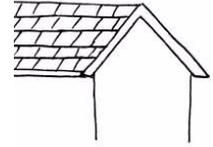
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks, parapet walls, flues, dormer windows 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 the 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 this roof in two areas; the main roof and the rear flat roof.

Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad with quarried slate. The slates sit fairly true and are generally in average condition considering the property's age, type and style.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Slate tiles, with some lead tingles

Valley Gutter

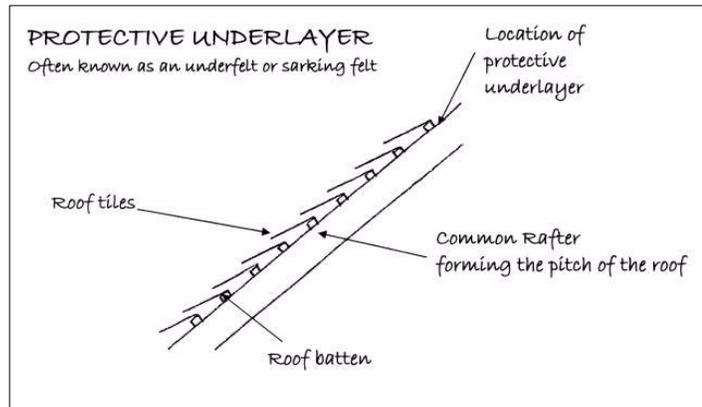
Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Valley gutter

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

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



The roof does not have a protective underlayer. We could see the backs of the slates and daylight in some areas, when we were in the roof/attic space.



This photo shows the backs of the slates.

Flat Roofs

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

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

There is a flat roof to the dormer windows. We are unable to comment further on them, as were unable to see them.

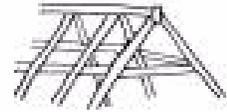
It could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

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

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

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

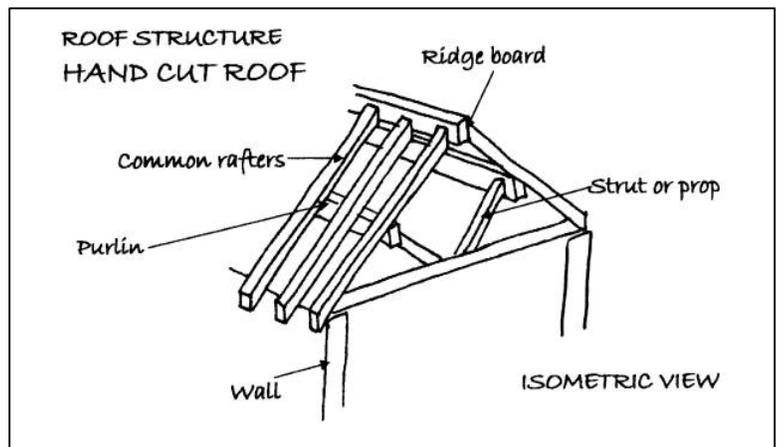
Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly and also the location of the chimney and have we not been able to access this part of the roof.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has, what is known as, a cut timber roof, which is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see. Given the cut of the timber we would estimate it to be 30 to 60 years old and were surprised that there was no underfelt.



Roof Timbers

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

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



General view of roof

Our examination is limited by the general configuration of the roof and the stored items. As mentioned, what we could see was generally found to be in an average condition considering its age. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

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

Fire Walls

Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement. In this instance the fire wall is built in blockwork, which means they have probably been added since 1950 onwards.

Water Tanks

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

Ventilation

The roof style has natural ventilation, although do be aware of over insulating this type of property and causing condensation problems.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

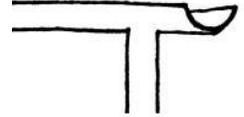
Electrical Cables

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.

The property has plastic gutters and downpipes. They could do with some rearrangement and modification and we think, as mentioned earlier, the downpipes of the dormers are causing the gutters to overflow and cause deterioration.



Overflowing downpipe

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

Soil and Vent Pipe

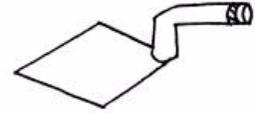
The property has a plastic soil and vent pipe, which towers above the rear dormer flat roof.



Soil and vent pipe

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

WALLS



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

The majority of the property has a painted render finish, with some brickwork to the porch at the front, and some shiplap boarding to the dormers.

Render

The majority of the property is finished in a smooth faced painted render. This is a cement based render, and is not ideal for this age of property, in fact many people would say that it should not be used on this type of property, and this is what we would agree with. However, we are where we are.



Impact damage from a skip; the owner present owner will resolve

We have carried out a tap test to the render at low level (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer) to try to establish if there are any hollow areas. We have found some areas but this is typical for this age of property.

Hairline Cracking

We noted hairline cracking throughout the render, which does show that the materials in the building are moving at different rates. You will need to seal all these cracks. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

We would add we find that generally people are becoming more and more concerned about any cracks in buildings and these could put off some future purchasers.

Paint the render or not?

Please see our comments in the External Decoration Section of this report.

Brickwork

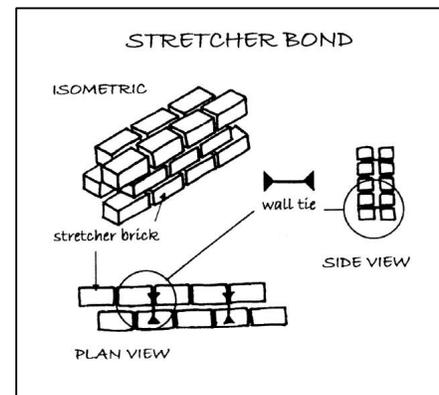
There is a small brick porch to the front of the property. It is bedded in cement mortar in what is known as Stretcher Bond brickwork.

The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher".

We generally found the brickwork and pointing in average condition.



Brickwork to entrance porch



Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete lintels, 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 / render / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / render / plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

Typically, with a property of this period, to the original part we would expect to find a shallow foundation from just below ground level, up to approximately half a metre deep and to the newer part we would expect to find a much deeper foundation, typically a metre deep.

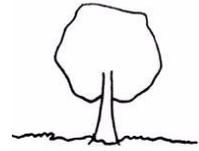
Building Insurance Policy

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.

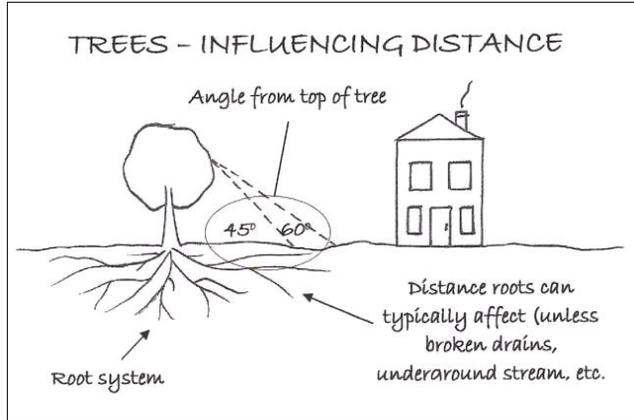
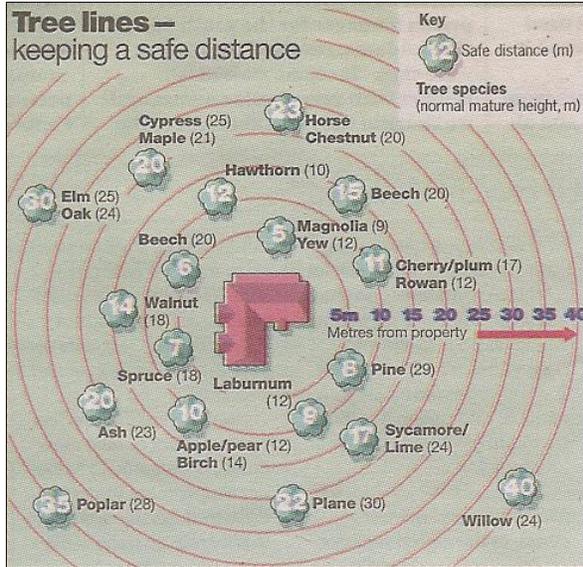
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



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

There are no trees within your garden that are within influencing distance of the main house.



Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE



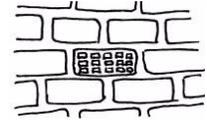
The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole,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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case we did find dampness. We cannot be certain whether or not a DPC is present, but we do like the French gully arrangement for reducing dampness into older properties and possibly a further reduction of this could help. The outside ground level and the inside ground level of the property are very similar. The concrete floor within it has been added at a later date, it would more than likely have originally had a suspended timber floor.

Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

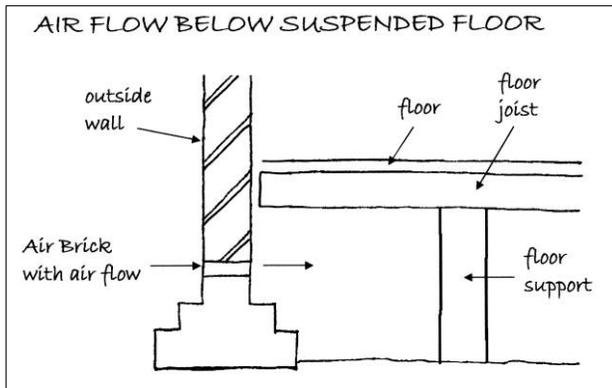
AIRBRICKS



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

Air bricks are only visible to the kitchen area; this indicates a part timber suspended timber floor in this instance.

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



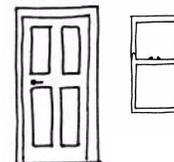
Air brick to front of property

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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

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 fascias and soffits look unsightly where the paint is flaking off the woodwork. In some areas it is further than this and there is rot in the timber as well. You will need new timbers and redecoration, which in turn will mean the associated fascias and soffits close by will need redecorating.



Deterioration to fascia board

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

Windows and Doors

The property has timber double glazed windows without draught seals and trickle vents. We carried out a knife test to a selection of the ground floor windows and found them in reasonable condition. It would however make sense to redecorate them when you are carry out a general redecoration of the property.



Knife test to check quality of the windows

Trickle Vents Defined

Small vents to the windows to allow air movement inside the property to stop a build up of fumes or humidity.

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution. In this case they are in average condition.

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the fascias and soffits and windows and doors. 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 fascias and soffits and windows and doors. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



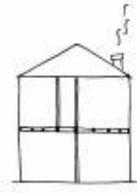
The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

We believe part of this property has been "painted to sell". This has been carried out with very little preparation. We therefore recommend that in the summer of 2010 a redecoration is carried out to the external render. The paint work acts as a protective coat. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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 Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors section.

INTERNAL

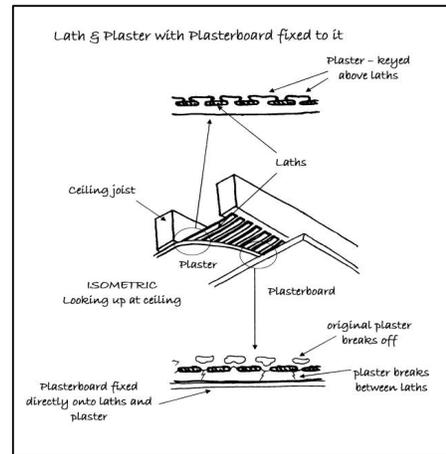


CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

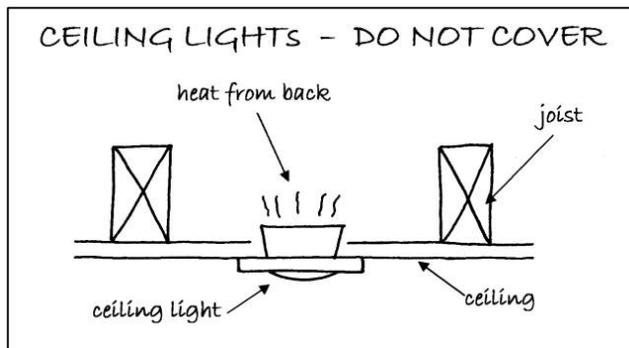
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions. The concept of internal finishes is relatively modern. Partitioning developed originally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

Ceilings

From 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 or replaced. 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.



It looks like you have some classic 1970's lights. These were known for giving heat off the back and, in some cases, causing problems. We are aware of a fire that was once caused, whilst we were carrying out a survey on a pub, due to these lights. Whilst we are not suggesting that there is anything like that degree of problem, it is very much worth an electrician checking and replacing them for a newer light that does not give off as much heat.



1970's ceiling lights

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace old lighting fittings.

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.

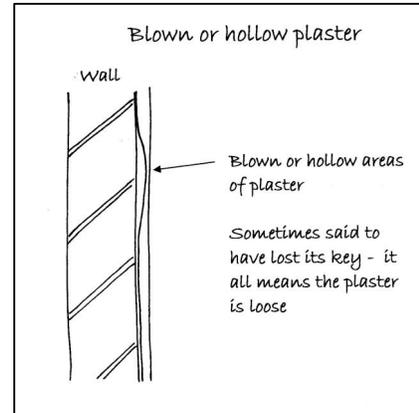
Internal Walls and Partitions

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

Generally it is a reasonable assumption that the solid walls are likely to be made from brickwork and will be the structural walls, with the studwork walls being purely to divide the rooms, for example, around the bathroom. If you recall, we looked at how the wall encroached into the right hand bedroom.

Perimeter Walls

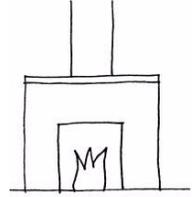
These are likely to be lath and plaster with a skim coat of gypsum plaster. We noticed an above average level of blown levels of plaster.



Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts are located on the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). Please remember our comments with regard to dampness coming in.

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

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

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

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

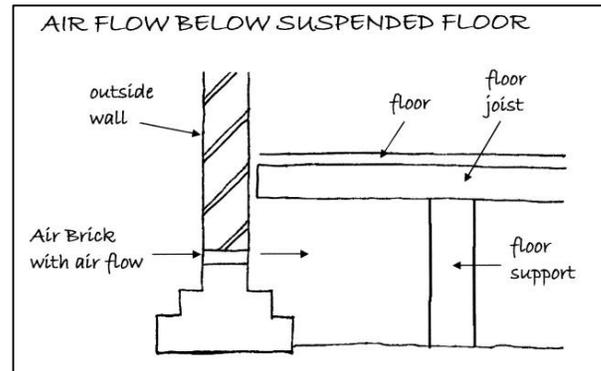
Based on our knowledge of this age of construction, we believe that the ground floor construction is majority concrete/part suspended timber floor.

The solid floors felt firm underfoot so we have assumed they are formed in concrete, but we have not opened up the floors. In this age of property you could find almost anything under the floor!

ACTION REQUIRED: A suspended floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections.

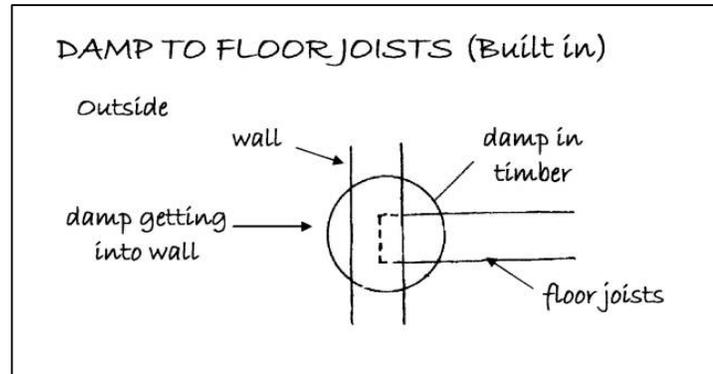
Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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



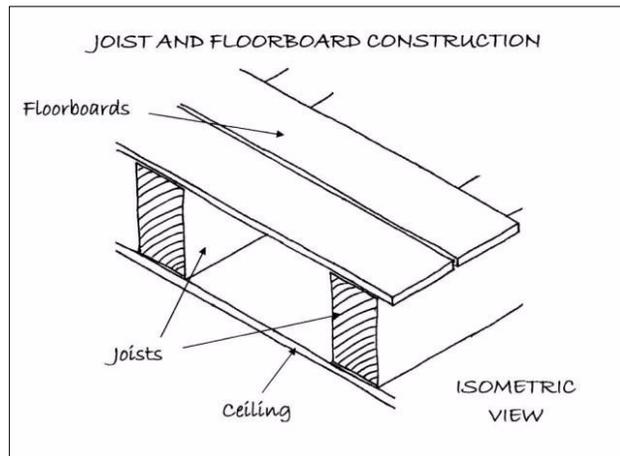
First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property. It 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 floor coverings, etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

DAMPNESS

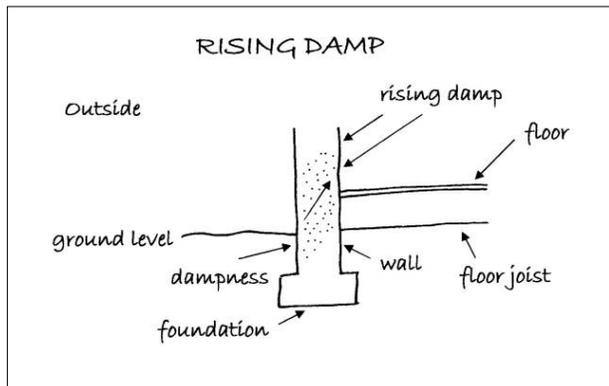


In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

Rising Damp

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

There is now much debate over whether true rising damp does exist after research over a 10 year period.



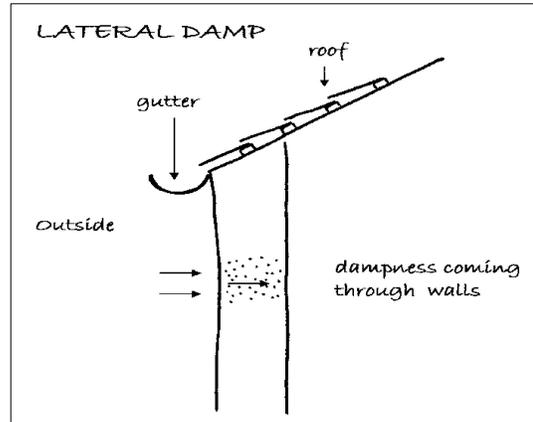
We tested for rising damp using an electronic damp meter and dampness was found. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Checking for rising damp

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. Our readings were in line with what we would expect for this age of property, i.e. minor dampness. No evidence of any significant lateral dampness was detected, however, if the hairline cracking to the render is not dealt with then you will have lateral dampness and also if the gutters overflow there is likely to be some lateral dampness.



Checking for lateral dampness

Condensation

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

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

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

You have modern(ish) internal doors, which are to personal taste.

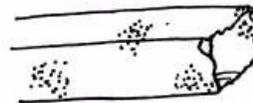


Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in average condition. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors 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. We have not, however, opened up 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.*

Wet rot is evident in the fascias and soffits and the bargeboards. It is also possible that it is underneath the area of suspended timber floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and replace fascias and soffits and bargeboards and open up the floor in the kitchen at some point in time and check the timbers beneath.

Woodworm



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

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

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

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

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paint (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. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place, as it very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, hallways will need tending to more often than a spare bedroom.

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

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

Roof Insulation

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

Walls

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.

Windows

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

Services

Please note that the boiler was not working when we carried out the inspection. Service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

ACTION REQUIRED: Return and get the boiler working.

Summary

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

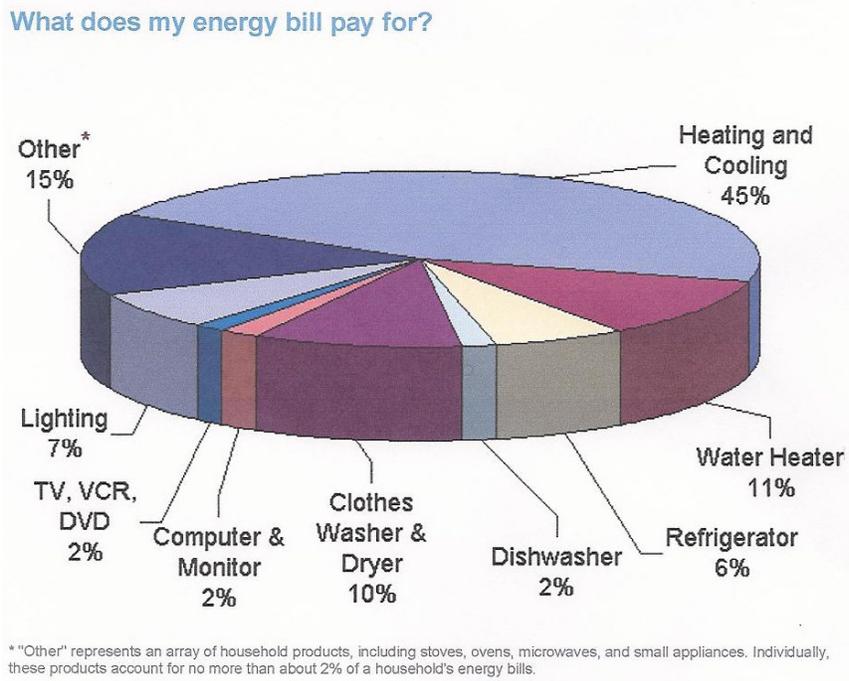
Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

[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 required for future house sales.



OTHER MATTERS



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

Security System

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

Fire / Smoke Alarms

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

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

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

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

Insurance

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

Asbestos

The property has obviously been altered over the years. During the 1950's to 1970's it was common to use asbestos, and 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.

Radon

Radon is a problem in some areas. Please note that we do not carry out radon tests.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically request a copy of the radon test from the owner or have one carried out immediately as it can take some time to get the results.

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 Lounge. We would date the fuseboard as being from the 1970s/1980s and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.

ACTION REQUIRED: An NICEIC approved contractor to carry out an IEE (Institute of Electrical engineers) inspection test and all recommendations to be actioned. Most electricians would recommend a new fuse board.



Dated fuseboard

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.

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle and this did not caused the electrics to trip.

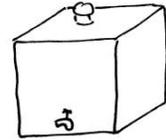


Earth test

ACTION REQUIRED: It is recommended that the installation be tested by a competent electrician (NICEIC registered) and all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be re-tested every five years.

Also note that 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.

OIL



All appliances, pipework and flues should be subject to an annual service by a competent OFTEC registered engineer. 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.

The oil tank looks in reasonable condition. To the part that we could see of it was minimal rust (approximately 30 per cent). It really is not possible for us to establish if the oil tank is leaking from a one-off inspection, although there were no obvious visible signs of this.



ACTION REQUIRED: Have the oil tank checked by an independent OFTEC registered heating engineer prior to committing to purchase the property. You may have to replace with a plastic tank.

Oil tank

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 the tap, and the pressure was low. It is possible that the pipes have blocked over the years and need a clean/replacement.

ACTION REQUIRED: Possible clean and replacement of supply pipes. It may be just that it is low pressure in the area.

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

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 is a Potterton Statesman.

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

Ten Minute Heating Test

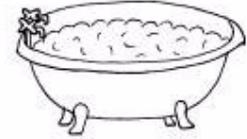
It was not possible to test the oil heating as we are advised there is no oil.

ACTION REQUIRED: Revisit property and ask owner to show that the heating is working.

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

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

BATHROOM



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

The bathroom suite and the en-suite bathroom were dated.

ACTION REQUIRED: You may wish to upgrade them and change and improve them in due course. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

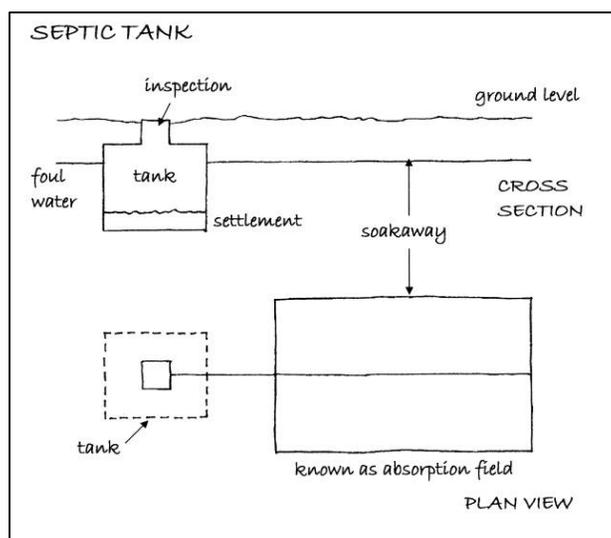
Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of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

MAIN DRAINS



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

It appears that the property's foul drains discharge to a cess pit, traditionally an underground chamber designed for the storage of foul water. Once the chamber has filled it will require pumping out by the Local Authority or a private contractor.



Septic tank

The cesspool was full at the time of our inspection and we have been unable to determine the size, construction or condition of the chamber: obviously the size of the chamber will determine the frequency of the required pumping out, which is, nowadays, a relatively costly operation. In some cases, cesspools have been provided with overflows, or some similar arrangement, designed to reduce the frequency of emptying.

This course of action should not be adopted and will result in pollution taking place and the building owner could be liable for prosecution. With regard to the subject property, we have been unable to confirm whether an overflow has been provided or not. We suggest that you make enquiries of the vendor and ask to see invoices for past emptying of the chamber so that a judgment may be made.

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 have identified one inspection chamber / manhole.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One (located to the rear of the property)

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

From what we could see it is brick built.



Manhole

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

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 directly into the ground, although it should be to soakaways, positioned some distance away from the property. We spoke to the owner about this and he was not aware.

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES/OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING



As we discussed, the outbuildings are a useful space.

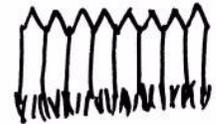


Sheds



Car Port

EXTERNAL AREAS



Gardens

The property has a small front garden and a good sized rear garden.

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

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

Neighbours

Right Hand Neighbours

We went next door, but there was no-one in at the time of our inspection.

Other Neighbours

There are no other neighbours! A point which could be a good thing!

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

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

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please 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

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was a warm, pleasant end of 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

This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

NOT LOCAL

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

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 due to not being able to open up the floor and we have not been able to inspect the left hand side of the roof, due to restricted access.

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.

French Drains

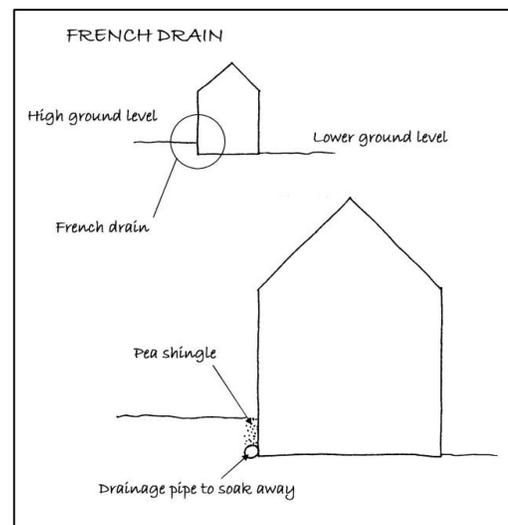
Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio area. This then discharges any rainwater against the building. Quite often the solution is to add a French drain.

Whilst French drains are quite simple and are basically nothing more than trenches filled with gravel, although there is a bit more to them, as we will explain, they are almost a D.I.Y. job for most people and they are relatively easy to install and are low cost. However, you do need some care and attention, otherwise you can install what we have heard referred to, as the French pond.

What use is a French drain?

A French drain is a trench, the width of approximately six inches or 300 millimetres wide, or the width of your spade, and is approximately twice the depth, i.e. 12 inches or 300 millimetres. In most cases this will suffice, however, where there is a great deal of ground water you may wish to make the trench wider and deeper.



The French drain acts as an area where water soaks away quickly. We often recommend them close to building, but not next to the building, as this helps reduce the ground level and/or take any water that is directed at that area away. For example, where a patio has been put in place which aims any rainwater at part of the wall. As mentioned, whilst a French drain is a D.I.Y. job, it does need some understanding of how it works.

French drains must be on a slope

The piping that goes at the base of a French drain should be perforated or, as we did years ago for land drains, there should be gaps between each pipe. It should be set onto a bed of firm ground and the pipes should be on a fall to the drain. Whilst you should be able to ensure there is enough fall by sight, we also like the idea of rolling a marble from one end to the other.

You will then need to put the pipes down, fill the trench with half an inch, to an inch, of good sized gravel. You can leave it at that, or in addition you can cover with sand and then turf over. This is how a basic French drain is carried out.

The French drain system that we would recommend

This would be as described, although we would add to the base an inch or two of gravel on to which the perforated drainage pipe will rest. It will then wrap around that drainage pipe filter fabric. This is to stop the holes in the perforated pipe from blocking up. By the way, the drainage pipe should be four to six inches/100 millimetres to 250 millimetres. We would then fill with gravel. In addition to this, we would add a silt trap and this is added in the run of the pipe and is very similar to a road gully (not that's of much use if you don't understand how a road gully works). The silt trap is a rectangular box with a pipe opening at each end. The drained water passes onto this and any particles sink to the bottom of the box and then the water travels on to the other side of the box, enabling you to feed into a drain.

These are usually made of glass reinforced polyester and have been available in this form since the mid-1980's. They are normally reinforced with a steel frame for additional strength and re-bedded in concrete.

The French pond!

French drains will, over time, clog up, which is why we recommend using a filter fabric. However, even with this they will eventually clog up. Unfortunately, there is no dingo-rod equivalent, as it is normally fine sand, organic matter or clay that has clogged up the French drain. So, it is a case of digging it up and cleaning the pipework (or it may be quicker to just replace it), adding a filter fabric and re-filling the gravel.