JOB REFERENCE: RBS/G

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

OF

A 1980's Detached Property, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23

FOR

Mr L

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

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CONTENTS

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 detached property situated in a cul-de-sac of similar age residential properties with a school adjoining it. There are level grassed gardens to the front and rear with neighbouring trees on the right hand side.

We are advised by the owner that the property was built in 1981. 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:

1977	Elvis Presley Dies
1977-1979	The Winter of Discontent
1979-1991	The Thatcher Years
1980	John Lennon Shot Dead
1981	Royal wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer
1982	Falklands Conflict between Britain and Argentina
1984	Live Aid Concerts
1987	The Channel Tunnel is started
1990	Release of Nelson Mandela from prison in South Africa

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Front Elevation

Rear Elevation

Rear Garden

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance Hall
- Through Lounge
- Cloakroom
- Kitchen
- Utility Room
- Dining Room

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Master Bedroom with En Suite Bathroom
- Three further Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

Outside Areas

The property is accessed via what we believe to be a private unadopted roadway. Your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm your responsibilities and rights with regard to this.

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

Through Lounge

Dining Room

Kitchen

Utility Room

Cloakroom

First Floor

Master Bedroom

En Suite Bathroom

Front Right Hand Bedroom

Rear Right Hand Bedroom

Family Bathroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	A shallow roof, clad with concrete tiles
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Finished in stretcher bond brickwork (assumed)
External Joinery:	Plastic double glazed windows and plastic fascias and soffits

INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Thin partition walls and dry lining (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Concrete floor (assumed).
	First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

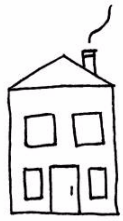
SERVICES

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed).

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

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

Generally we found the property to be in average condition with a few specific defects. 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!

- Cul-de-sac location, therefore it avoids through traffic.
- From the era when building plots and garden sizes were not at such a premium as they are today (and developers were not allowed to build as densely).
- You have the opportunity to 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) Fascias and Soffits

We noted that the property has plastic fascias, soffits and bargeboards and we think that these over-clad the original timber. This is a system used by what we can only term 'cowboy builders' to look as if the fascias, soffits and bargeboards have been carried out in plastic. The plastic is usually stuck on and, as there is no ventilation in this area, rot can occur.

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out a sample by drilling into the fascia to see if there is wood below. If wood is present, strip off the over cladding and check the condition of the timber beneath. Ideally you should add a vent to the soffit and repair and redecorate as necessary.

Please see the External Joinery Section and the Timber Defects Section of this Report.

2) Cracks

To the front right hand side of the property there is hairline stepped cracking visible in the mortar both above and below the ground floor window, running for approximately one to one and half meters in length. These cracks appear to be long standing but from a one-off inspection it is not possible to be 100% certain. Normally insurance companies require monitoring for approximately one year, as recommended by the Building Research Establishment (BRE).

Stepped cracking

There are a variety of reasons why this cracking may have formed:

i. the adjoining trees that are close by within the school grounds;

Trees may be causing movement?

ii. the downpipe to the right hand corner may be discharging directly into the ground rather than into a soak-away.

Downpipe discharging into the ground may be causing movement?

We have inspected the inside for similar cracks but found, due to the dry lining that has been used in the construction, that it was not possible for us to inspect the actual wall structure in this area. We have also inspected the rear of the property for similar cracks and the side, although our view was limited, and we could not see any similar cracks. We have also inspected the rooms above and the roof space, none of which show signs of significant movement.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would therefore recommend, and have agreed this with the owners / vendors, that an insurance claim is made by themselves with their insurer, Legal and General, and that the purchasers utilise the services of the same insurance company. If you would like any further clarification on this matter please do not hesitate to contact us.

ANTICIPATED COST: This will be the sum of the excess, which will be negotiated when you take over the insurance.

Please see the External Walls Section, the Trees Section and the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

3) **Internal Access Door to the Garage**

The garage is considered a high risk area due to the petrol and other things often stored within it. Therefore, current Building Regulations require a fire door. The current door, although it is thicker than a normal door does not appear to be a fire door as there is no intumescent strips around the frame.

Door to integral garage

Intumescent Strips Defined

These are strips within the door that expand during the course of a fire to seal the door and resist smoke passing through it.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that this door is replaced with a fire door, but this is not a retrospective requirement.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £200 - £350, as this looks to be a non-standard door size.

Please see the External Section of this Report.

4) **Maintenance of Trees**

One problem we do foresee with the adjacent trees is that they are not on your property and therefore not within your control and that the school will have to maintain them. Whilst we find that most Local Authorities / County Councils are well aware of their responsibilities and have the skills to carry out such work, they often run short of budget.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you ensure that the Local Authority / County Council are aware of the trees and establish what maintenance programme they will be carrying out on them.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: Your time and patience in discussions with the school and Local Authority / County Council.

Please see our comments in the Trees Section of this Report.

5) **Services**

Dated Electrics

The fuse board is dated and it looks to be original and from our discussions with the owner we understand that there have been various minor alterations and modifications made.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that a new fuse board is added at a minimum.

We would also recommend at the same time that the entirety of the system is checked. We have carried out a basic earth test within the kitchen and found this to be satisfactory, but it does not represent an appropriate check which should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or similar to the Institute of Electrical Engineers current recommendations.

ANTICIPATED COST: New fuse board will cost in the region of £250 - £400 plus the cost of the test and any recommended work which may amount to in the region of £500 - £1,000. We would also recommend that you have extra power points added as we use far more electricity today than we did when the property was originally built.

Heating

The property has a dated wall mounted boiler, which we believe has passed its useful life. Also, the radiator system has single panel radiators, which may not heat the property as quickly as you may wish and certainly wont heat as quickly as the modern double panel convection radiators that we discussed.

We would also add that when the heating was turned on it was slow to warm some of the radiators, which may indicate that it needs draining and cleaning (not forgetting to put an anti-corrodent into the system when it is re-filled, such as Fernox) or that some of the valves are stuck.

ACTION REQUIRED: Budget to upgrade the central heating system.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: We would set aside the sum of £2,000 for a new boiler and another £1,000 - £2,000 for the renewal and replacement of radiators, thermostatic radiator valves and thermostat.

Please see our comments in the Electrics Section and the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

6) **1970s Houses**

We would make the general comment that in our opinion the 1970s was the era when houses went from being built to a quality standard to being built to a price. This often resulted in what we would term as 'lightweight' construction when material usage was minimal. Bearing this in mind the structure does feel above average for this typical standard.

The Ugly

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

We have no items that we feel would fall within this category, although the cracking may fall within 'the ugly' section form many people; some people simply do not want a property with any cracks in it whatsoever. You do need to consider this, as when you come to sell the property if the market is not vibrant it may affect the value that you obtain. We would be more than happy to speak directly with your insurers on this matter if you so wish.

Specific Question

We did discuss the possibility of extending to the rear of the property. We do believe the Planning Department would be amenable to this; we could see the benefits of increasing the size of the kitchen perhaps to make it into a kitchen breakfast room area.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

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

Purchase Price

We also spoke about the value of the property. As discussed, we were not valuing the property in this instance, but we would refer 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. We would be more than happy to carry out a Valuation if you so wish.

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

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

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

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

We would reiterate our comments with regard to the cracking and the trees. We would be more than happy to discuss this further with you.

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

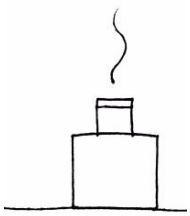
OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



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. The chimney is brick finished with one chimney pot with lead flashings. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition; there may be some minor repointing required in three to five years time. Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunchings we therefore cannot comment upon them.

Front of chimney

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

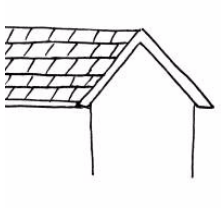
Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

Rear of chimney

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in two areas; the Main Roof and the Low Level Roof.

Main Roof

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

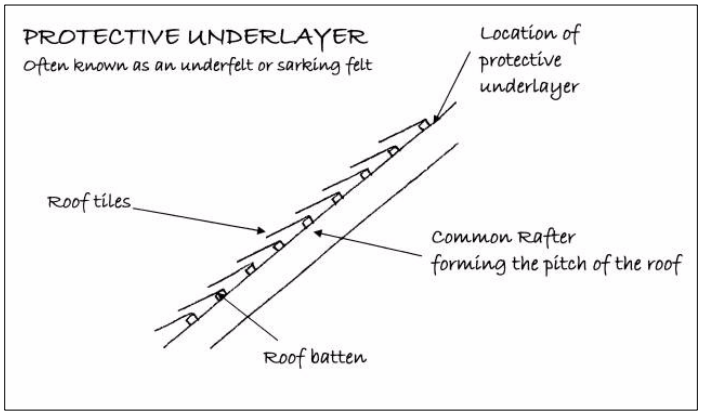
Moss, on concrete tiles, this can cause problems, with damage to the tiles surface and or blocked gutters.

ACTION REQUIRED: Clear moss.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: A few hundred pounds. As this is high level work we would not recommend it as a DIY job.

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

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



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition with damage in some areas.

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

Low Level Roof

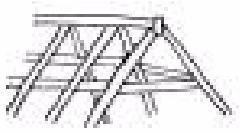
There is a low level roof to the front of the property and over the garage. This roof is pitched and clad in concrete tiles, as previously described.

Where the roof meets the main building it has a lead flashing. Generally the flashing is in reasonable condition, although we did note areas where it has been repointed; this normally occurs because the original lead is not bedded in deeply enough to the brickwork. It is generally now recommended to bed-in with a mastic rather than a cement mortar.

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

We were able to see approximately 90 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

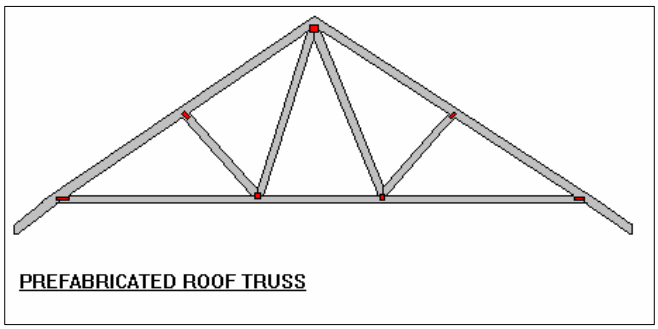
The main roof is the only accessible roof.

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is a loft ladder, electric light and partial floorboards. The loft perimeter has been viewed by torchlight, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

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



PREFABRICATED ROOF TRUSS

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof and the insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition. We believe that in the summer months some minor condensation could occur; ideally the roof should be vented, please see our comments below. It is 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.

Water Tanks

The water tanks are insulated and, from what we could see, they looked to be formed in plastic. We therefore assume they are relatively new (in surveying terms, in this instance, that is the last 30 years). Care has to be taken with roofs and water tanks to allow some warm air so that they don't freeze.

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

We did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation. We find condensation is more likely in shallow pitched roofs such as this all things being equal.

> **ACTION REQUIRED**: Add ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

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

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES

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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be older style plastic, which does get brittle with age and sunlight, at present it is in reasonable condition. There may be some minor leaks, but we feel that most people could live with these.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding the downpipes discharging into the ground.

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 an integral soil and vent pipe which terminates at roof level where we could see a plastic soil and vent pipe and cage to the top.

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

WALLS

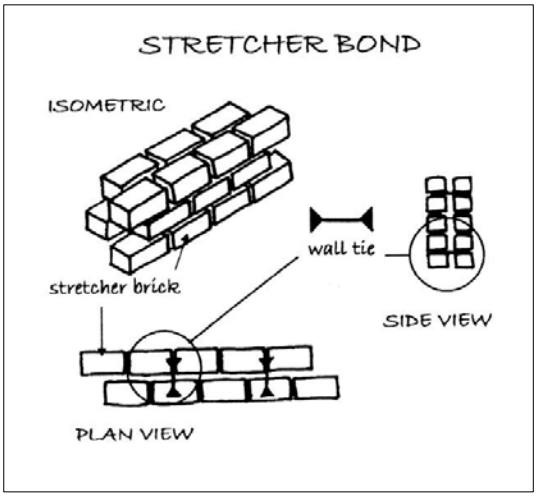
External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

Brickwork

The walls are built in brick and 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.



Step Cracking

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Inspecting for cracking to the inside of the property, opposite the right hand corner.

Bay Window

The brickwork section below the bay window has been added by the present owners, as has the radiator within.

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / plasterwork (we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always at 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

As the property is relatively new, it is reasonable to expect Building Regulations approval to have been gained. Since 1948 the Local Authority has been tasked to check that the property is built to Building Regulation standards. Originally a depth of about half a metre was required this increased to 0.9 of a metre and in 1979 foundation depth was increased to 1m - 1.2m following problems with foundations said to be due to our warmer weather.

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.

Please see our further comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

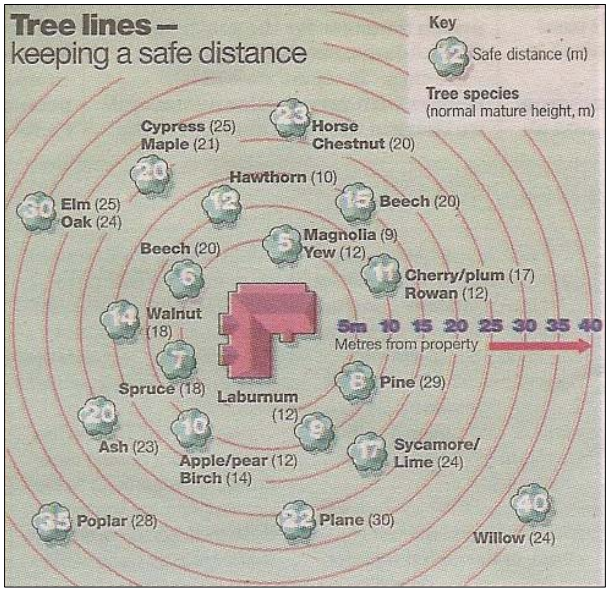
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

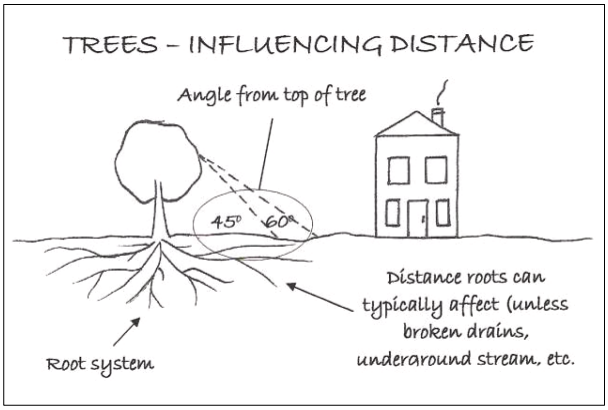
TREES

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

Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. Whilst you don't have any trees in your garden, we have found trees adjoining the house which we believe are owned by the Local Authority / County Council and are 'within influencing distance' of the property.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.





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.

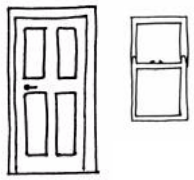
All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels.

In properties of this age it is likely that a damp proof course would have been built in as the property was constructed and it is likely to be a plastic or bitumen-based damp proof course.

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

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

EXTERNAL JOINERY



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

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

Fascias and Soffits

We noted that the property has plastic fascias, soffits and bargeboards and we think that these over-clad the original timber.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows, which generally look to be of a reasonable quality. We did not see any trickle vents.

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.

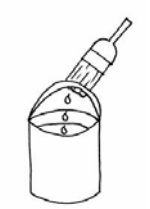
Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years

Trickle Vents Defined

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

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The external decoration required is minimal.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

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

Plasterboard Defined

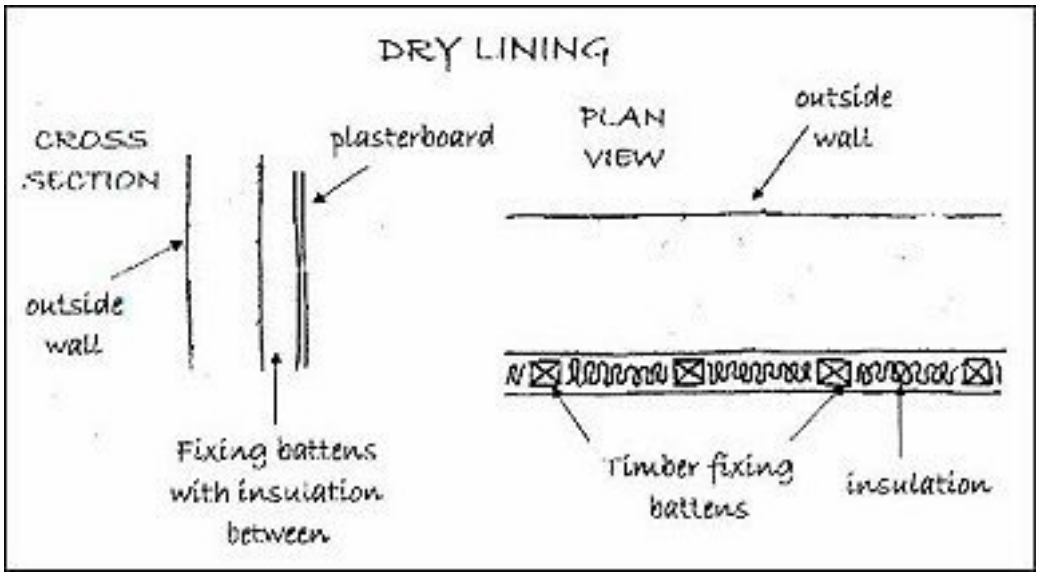
The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard, which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

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 and studwork walls some of which is very lightweight for example the bedroom walls, which looked to be between two to three inches (50mm – 75mm) thick. We would ask you to revisit to check you are 100% happy to live in a property built like this. You may find some noise transfer between rooms.

Perimeter Walls

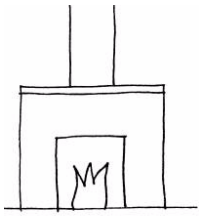
False walls commonly known as dry lining have been used. In this age of property these walls were used to increase the thermal efficiency as the 1970s was the first era when we really started to think about such issues in the building world.



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 chimneybreast is located within the through lounge.

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

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

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

FLOORS

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

Ground Floor

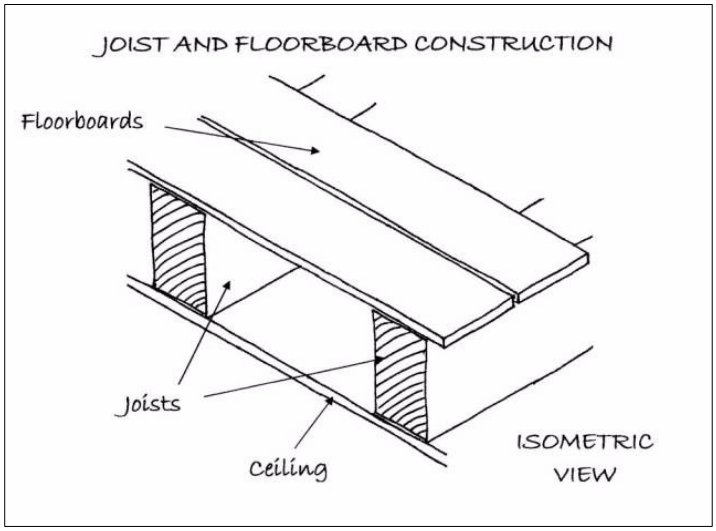
The floors felt solid underfoot so we have assumed they are formed in concrete, however in some properties of this age builders used a suspended or pre-fabricated floor system. We have no way of knowing for sure unless the floor is opened up.

First Floor

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

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



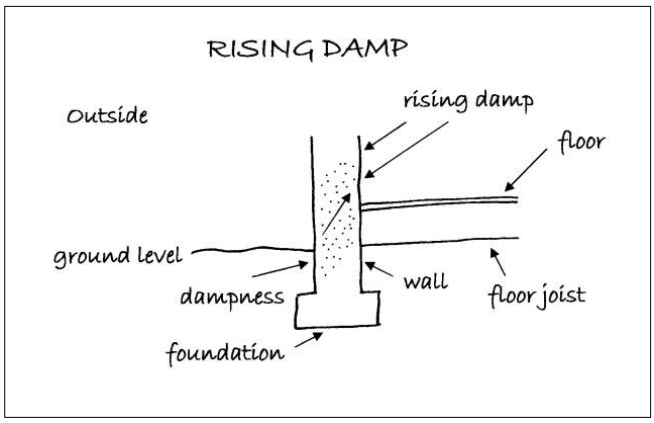
Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets and floor coverings. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way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

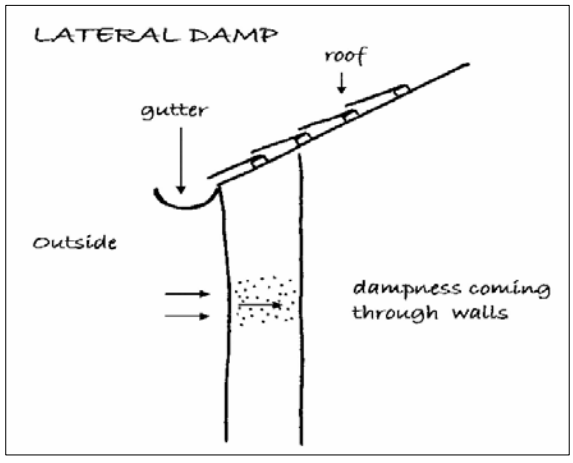


We would normally carry out tests with an electronic damp meter. However, as your property is dry-lined we were unable to do this. We therefore carried out a visual inspection and did not find any signs of significant dampness coming through.

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.

Again, due to the dry lining we were unable to check for dampness, however our visual inspection did not indicate any significant dampness coming through.



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.

We like the large extract to the internal bathroom; however it does discharge into the roof which is the reason why the roof needs to be kept well vented.

If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Commonsense 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

The property has Veneer doors and, all things considered, they are in reasonable (although not perfect) condition and fit acceptably.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding the internal door to the garage.

Staircase

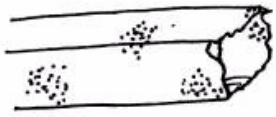
We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked small for the size of the property; this may put some future purchasers off. 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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

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

Wet Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant wet rot, with the exception of the possible over-cladding to the fascias and soffits.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and External Joinery Section about over-cladding.

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 there is an element of woodworm that is not active; in newer properties such as this we tend to find that woodworm is brought in on furniture or in the removal boxes that people use, as often the woodworm will be found at the bottom of the stairs where the boxes are first put or at the top of the stairs or just at the entrance to the loft hatch.

Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, and roof configuration, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

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

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

The internal decoration is average, with minor marks as you would expect in a house that's been lived in. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place, 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 and anywhere that active children go will need to be redecorated very frequently.

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 insulted disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.

Roof 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 property has a stretcher bond construction. In this age of property the cavity should have been insulated and a dry lining added to meet energy efficiency requirements.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to investigate.

Windows

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

Services

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

Summary

Overall, provided our assumptions correct and considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties.

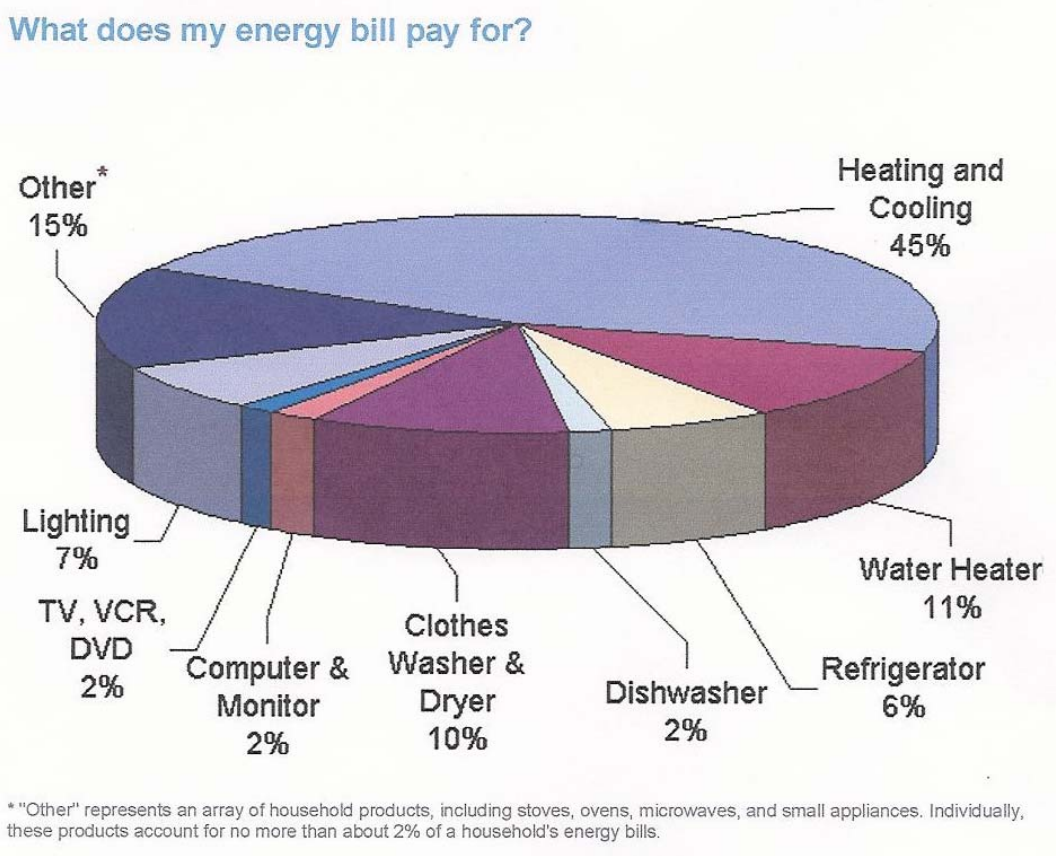
Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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



OTHER MATTERS

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

Security System

We did not note a security system within the house. It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. We suggest you contact a member of NACOSS (National Approval Council for Security Services), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

Fire Systems and Smoke Alarms

Some smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

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

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

Insurance

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Asbestos

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

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

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY

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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the kitchen. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1960s. Rewireable fuses are now superseded. Far better fuse boards are now available.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Earth Test

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

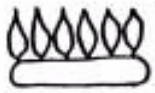
ACTION REQUIRED: A new fuse board is recommended.

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

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

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

GAS



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

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e. a member of CORGI (the Council of Registered Gas Installers); works to gas appliances etc. by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

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

PLUMBING AND HEATING

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

Water Supply

We are advised that the stopcock is located in the kitchen under the sink. It is important that its presence is confirmed in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

Water Pressure

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

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Structure 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 is wall mounted and is made by Potterton and the model is a Netaheat, which is a commonly found boiler, but dated.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Ten Minute Heating Test

If you recall we had the heating turned on when you were at the property and it did warm up the radiators, but slowly and not every radiator.

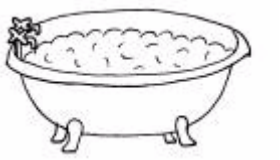
Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

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

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

BATHROOM



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

The bathroom suite, looks in average condition and is located in a large room,

The en suite has a three piece bathroom suite, which looks in an 'as new' condition and consists of a WC, basin and bath.

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

MAIN DRAINS

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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified two inspection chambers / manholes to the property. Unfortunately we were unable to lift either of them; having said that we have run the taps for fifteen minutes plus, without any build up or back up.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding the cracks to the wall.

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.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding the cracks to the wall.

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

GARAGE / PARKING

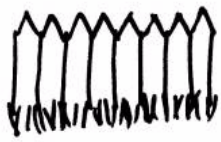
The property has an integral garage and also a driveway with parking for many cars.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding fire safety and the internal door to the garage.

Rear of garage

Garage

EXTERNAL AREAS



Access Road

We have not made any informal enquiries with regard to the access road.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to make enquiries with regard to your responsibilities and liabilities for the access road, which we assume has not been adopted by the Local Authority and therefore maintenance is your responsibility.

Access road.

Front Garden

You have a good sized front garden.

Rear Garden

You have a level rear garden laid mainly to lawn.

Boundaries: We are not exactly certain where the boundaries are but your Deeds will identify this.

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

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

The left hand neighbour was not in at the time of our inspection.

Front Neighbours

We spoke to the front neighbour briefly and were advised that they had no issues with their neighbour.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

a) Responsibility for boundaries.

b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.

c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:

i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
ii) Rising damp treatments.
iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
v) Roof and similar renewals.
vi) Central heating installation.
vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.

d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.

e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.

f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.

g) Adjoining roads and services.

h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.

i) General development proposals in the locality.

j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.

m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.

n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion, by using appropriate specialist advisers.

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

Finally, an extract from the book “Sold”!

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

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

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

Surveying buildings
By Malcolm Hollis 4th edition published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Books.

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was a chilly winter's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

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.

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.