

JOB REFERENCE: XXXXXXXXX

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXX
Warlingham
Surrey
CR6 XXX



FOR

Mr X

Prepared by:
XXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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INTRODUCTION

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

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.

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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 detached two storey property with a double garage and off road parking. The property has a conservatory extension and there is a garden to the front and to the rear.

We believe that the property was built in the mid 1970s; current owner advises 1974 (with the builder going into bankruptcy?). If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1970	Decimalisation
1971	London Bridge brought to the US
1972	Terrorist attack at the Olympic Games in Munich
1973	VAT came into effect
1975	Microsoft founded
1976	The first commercial Concorde flight took off
1979	Mother Theresa awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
1980	The Marlborough diamond stolen in London

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Rear View



Left hand view



Right hand view



Street view



Rear garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance Hallway
- 2) Through Lounge
- 3) Cloakroom
- 4) Study/Games/Family
- 5) Dining Room
- 6) Kitchen with conservatory
- 7) Utility Room

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 5) Landing
- 6) Master Bedroom with en suite (front)
- 7) Bedroom Two (front middle)
- 8) Bedroom Three (rear middle)
- 9) Bedroom Four (rear right hand side)
- 10) Bedroom Five
- 11) Family Bathroom (front)

Outside Areas

There is a garden to the front of the property and to the rear which is laid predominately to lawn. Parking is at roadside on a first come first served basis.

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Ground Floor



Through Lounge (front)



Through Lounge (rear)



Dining room



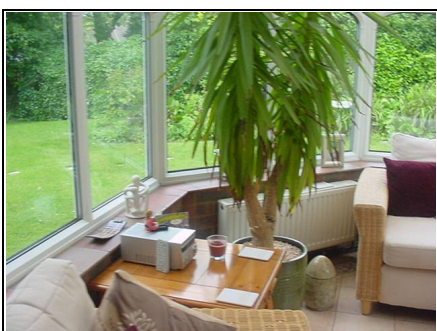
Study/Games/Family room



Hallway



Kitchen



Conservatory



Cloakroom

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First Floor



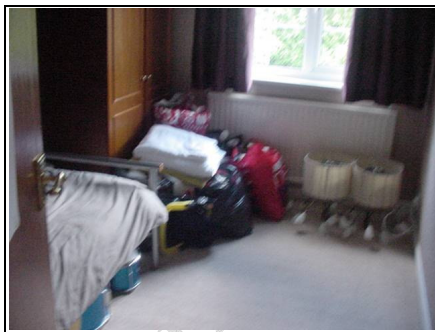
Master Bedroom



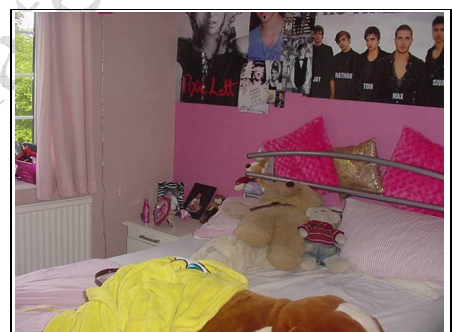
En-suite to master bedroom



Bedroom Two (front middle)



Bedroom Three (rear middle)



Bedroom Four
(rear right hand side)



Bedroom Five



Family Bathroom



Landing

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Two brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, hipped roof clad with concrete tiles perimeter detail
Main Roof Structure:	Prefabricated roof truss
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Stretcher Bond (assumed) Cavity Bond brickwork
Fascias and Soffits:	Plastic and vented
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed plastic windows

Internal

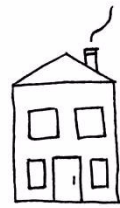
Ceilings:	Plasterboard sheets (assumed)
Walls:	Predominately studwork (assumed)
Perimeter Walls:	Is it a timber frame?
Floors: Ground Floor:	Concrete floor (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist (joist hangers?) and floorboards (assumed)

Services

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The property has an original wall mounted Potterton boiler and the electrics are 1990s.

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

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



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 250 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

- 1.0) The general proportions of the property are good including the room size.
- 2.0) The property has front and rear gardens and a double garage which are well portioned.

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.

1.0) Is this property structure a modern timber frame?

We are unable to confirm 100% and we believe this is so important to be confirmed 100% whether the property is a modern timber frame structure or not, this is also known as a non traditional construction.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically ask in writing to the current owners if they are aware if the property is a modern timber framed property/non traditional construction. The owner advised us that he was an estate agent so he should be aware of this type of property and the affect it can have on value.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

2.0) Thermal gain/heat loss from conservatory

On the ground floor you have a large kitchen/conservatory which the current owner advises faces south.



Location Plan

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Any kitchen/ conservatory of this size is likely to experience thermal heat gain in the summer and heat loss in the winter months and this will impact the house as a whole. We noted that the conservatory does not have blinds nor high level vents which we prefer to see as these allow a better climate control.



Moss starting to occur on conservatory roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend to improve thermal gain/heat loss is to add good quality blinds/curtains and a roof vent if possible. Also for cosmetic reasons you may wish to clean the polycarbonate roof.



Mould to conservatory roof

The next step after this would be to re-roof with a real roof not a polycarbonate roof that you have currently.

ANTICIPATED COST: It will depend upon what you wish to carry out but we have found that roof blinds seem to be particularly expensive; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

3.0) Flat right hand side roof flashings coming away and roof leaking

The flashing is coming away to the right hand side flat roof (all directions given as you face the property). The felt roof is deteriorating and within the utility room there are signs of a leak.



Flashing coming away to the right hand side

ACTION REQUIRED:
Replace/re-bed flashings. Budget to re-roof or patch repair.

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ANTICIPATED COST: To patch repair a few hundred pounds; please obtain quotations.



Leak in utility room

4.0) Garage roof

The garage roof is letting in rainwater particularly to the rear right hand corner (all directions given as you face the property). From viewing on the roof itself this leak is directly over the gully that is within the flat roof.



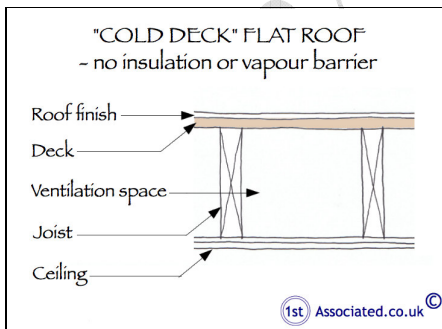
General view of garage roof

ACTION REQUIRED: Re-roof and partially replace the decking.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £3,000 to £5,000; please obtain quotations.



Rear leaking gutter to tree end



There is no plasterboard in this particular instance



View inside garage roof, mould to the roof decking.



Rear right hand corner of garage roof

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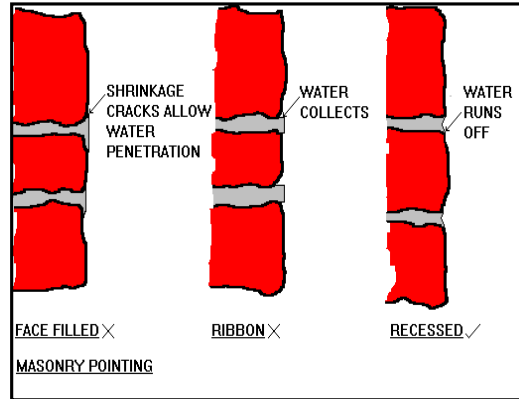
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Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

5.0) Messy pointing to the brickwork

The property has messy pointing to the brickwork which requires re-pointing. It looks like the perpendicular ends (known as the “perp ends”) have been carried out at a later date.



ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out ad hoc re-pointing work over the next few years.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,000 to £3,000; please obtain quotations.



Messy pointing to brickwork



Close up of messy pointing to brickwork

Please see the Brickwork Section of this Report.

6.0) Extension to the right hand side

There is a small flat roof single storey extension to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property) of the property.

We believe that extending this area



Right hand side flat roof 15

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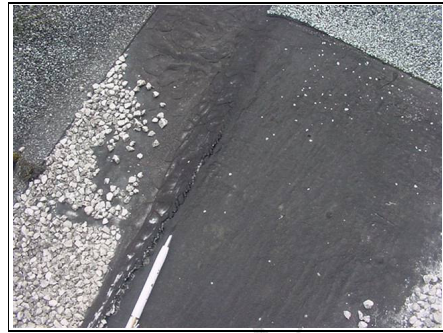
would be a good idea.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend the addition of a pitched roof rather than the current flat roof that is within five years of the end of its natural life.

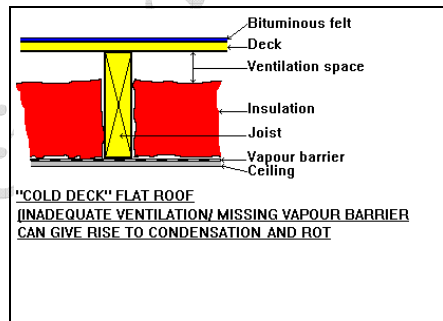
The great thing about a pitched roof is that it allows you to have a vaulted ceiling which can become a feature of the kitchen area.

ANTICIPATED COST: £1,500 to £3,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.



Splitting starting to occur



7.0) Rear Bow window

The property has a rear bay window which has a felt roof which is dated.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend when you have the roof work carried out to the garage that you also have this area re-roofed with a modern high performance felt sometimes known as an elastomeric felt.

ANTICIPATED COST: £500 to £1,000 if carried out at the same time as other work; please obtain quotations.



Rear Bow window



Bow window to rear 16

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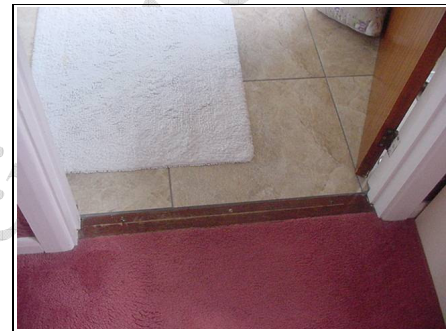
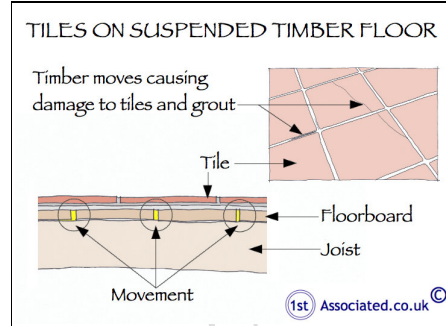
Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

8.0) Tiles on wooden floors

In the family bathroom the tiles have been installed onto a wooden floor which is prone to movement and therefore cracking of the joints.

ACTION REQUIRED: Check for movement and remove grout and replace when cracking to joints occurs.

Please see the Floors Section of this Report.



Tiles to wooden floor in family bathroom at first floor level

9.0) Planning Application Notice to neighbouring property at XXXX

At the time of our survey we noted a Planning Application Notice regarding XXX

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm details regarding this Planning Application.



Planning Application

10.0) Services

Boiler

The property has an original wall mounted Potterton boiler which is dated with more energy efficient boilers now being available.



Potterton Boiler

ACTION REQUIRED: These boilers can last a fair amount of time, it depends upon the maintenance carried out however ultimately you do need to start saving/budgeting for a replacement boiler and a power flush of the radiators. Possibly you may have to change the radiators as the pressure in the newer boilers tends to be greater than that in the older boilers.

ANTICIPATED COST: £2,500 to £3,500 assuming no major re-plumbing is required; please obtain quotations.

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 section providing you are happy with the characteristics of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report and if it is not timber framed.

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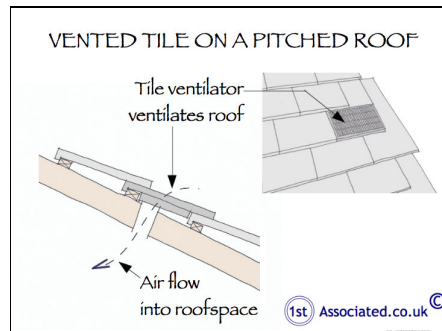
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Other Items

Specific Question

1.0) Is the roof insulated?

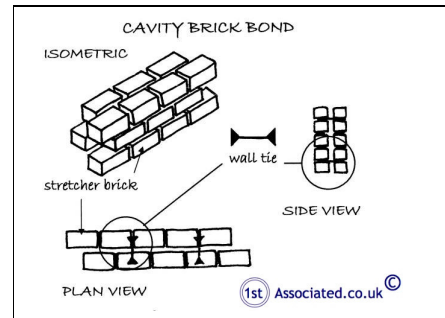
The main roof has insulation which is 300mm in depth and having spoken to the current owners during our question and answer session they advise that insulation was added in 2010.



Roof space mass of insulation
more ventilation required

2.0) Walls

We also spoke to the existing owners about the walls which appear to be Stretcher Bond (assumed) from the external brickwork pattern which means there is likely to be a cavity within. We were advised by the current owners that they believed the cavity has been insulated as they were going to add insulation but the insulation company advised this was already present when they drilled holes to check.



ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm in writing that the cavities are insulated.

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3.0) Telephone points?

The property has telephone points in the Through Lounge and Study.

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 an older 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.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the services within the property we also need to advise you of the following:

Electrics

For the electrics we would recommend an Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) test and report carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent, which is recommended whenever a property changes occupancy.

Heating

The property has an original 1970s wall mounted Potterton boiler which is dated and better are now available. We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Drainage

We have been unable to lift the manhole covers at the time of our survey. The only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains. In this age of property there have often been leaks over the years.

Water Supply

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

ACTION REQUIRED:

We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating 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 Building Costs

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

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We have no further comments to add and would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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

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

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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 Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



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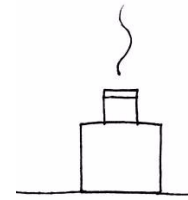
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



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.

There are two chimneys to this property they are located to the front right hand side and rear left hand side (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One – Front right hand side

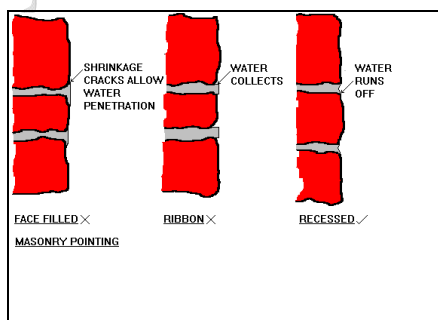
This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style.



Chimney One

Does the chimney require re-pointing?

The brickwork on this property has a very deep recess, far deeper than we are keen on as it allows rainwater to sit in it and this is particularly so at high level.



Re-pointed required

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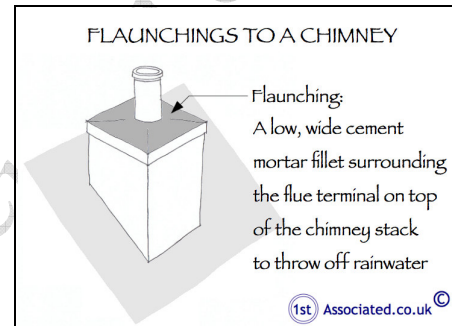
XXXX



Re-pointed required

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend re-pointing work to be carried out to the chimneys and would suggest this is carried out in the summer of 2014. Periodically inspect the chimney.



Chimney Two (left hand side)

This chimney is also built as the first chimney, though in this case we would comment again with regard to the re-pointing work necessary.

We noted that ivy has been present at one time which has been cut back.

ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney, re-point in due course.



Chimney Two

XXXX

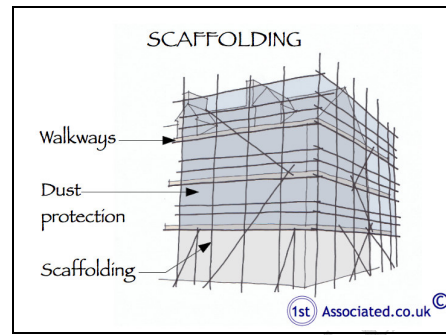
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ANTICIPATED COST: As this is high level work it will most likely require scaffolding or a tower scaffold and we would therefore anticipate costs in the region of £2,000 to £4,000. At the same time this work is carried out we would recommend gutters and roof are also checked and any work required carried out at this time.



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.

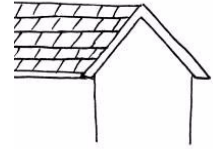
Flaunchings Defined

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

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks from the parts we would see above roof level. 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.

Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in six areas:-

- 1) main roof
- 2) rear extension flat roof
- 3) double garage flat roof
- 4) kitchen/conservatory roof
- 5) bow window roof
- 6) front entrance porch roof.

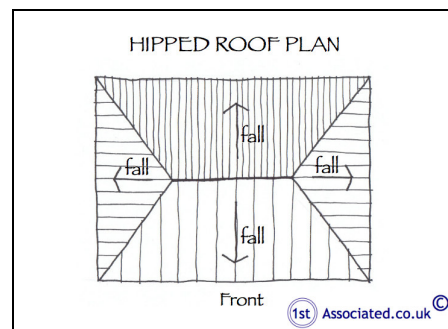
Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and hipped being clad with concrete tiles and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roofs age type and style. With this age of roof there will usually be a few missing or displaced tiles, this is nothing unusual.



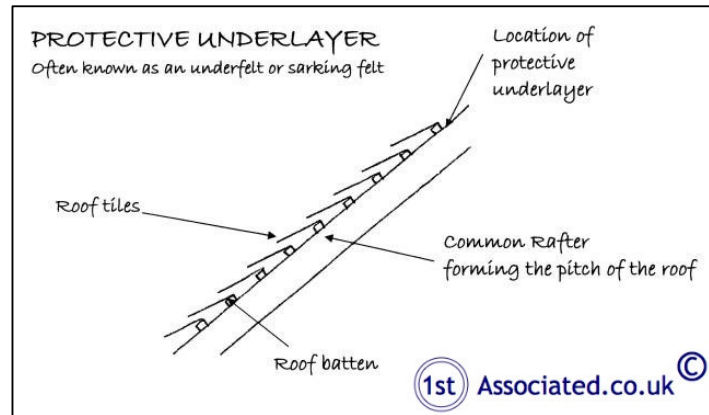
Main roof

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.



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 which is what we typically find.



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

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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.

Flat roof – right hand side

There is a flat felt covered roof to the right hand side extension (all directions given as you face the property) which is approximately five years from the end of its natural life.

ACTION REQUIRED: Patch repair or a full repair dependent upon your budget.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



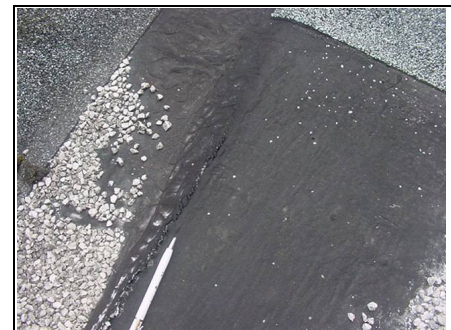
Flat roof



Flashing coming away to the right hand side



Leak in utility room



Splitting starting to occur

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Garage Roof

The property has a double garage with a flat felt roof. There is a leaking rear gutter.



General view garage roof

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



Leaking rear gutter

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

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

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 or the roof themselves.

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Bow window roof

The property has a flat bow window roof which is dated although there are no visual signs internally of any problems.



Bow window roof

Entrance Porch Roof

There is a flat roof over the entrance porch.



Roof over entrance porch

Kitchen/Conservatory Roof

The property has a kitchen/conservatory with a polycarbonate roof, generally from the cheaper end of the market.

Polycarbonate Defined

Transparent, extremely tough plastic sheet, used for security glazing. It may also be an insulating light panel, double walled or triple walled, or 10 or 16mm thick. It is not a fire hazard as it has low ignitability and low flame spread, and releases little heat and little smoke if burnt. It can be coated to resist damage from ultraviolet.



Kitchen/Conservatory to the rear

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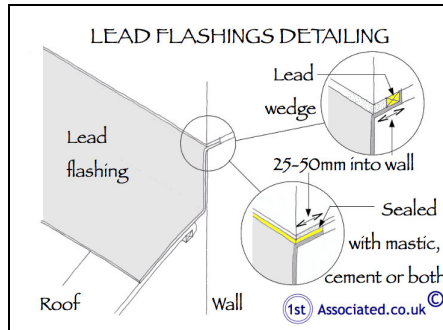
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ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Close up of lead flashing where conservatory meets the main building

Finally, we were only able to see approximately eighty 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.

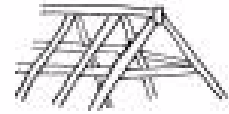
For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

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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

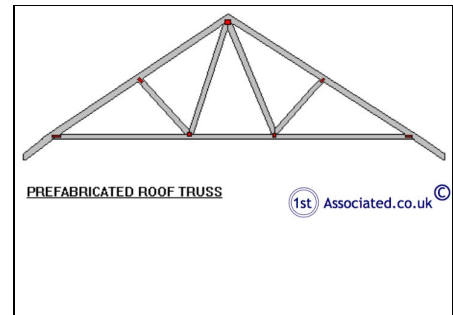
Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located landing. There is a loft ladder, electric light and a few secured floorboards. We recommend that the remainder of the roof is boarded out, 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.

Roof Structure

The property has a pre-fabricated trussed roof rafter. These are made in a factory and transported to site and then lifted into place. Without the manufacturers calculations and installation details we cannot comment categorically on the roof structure other than to say it is in line with what we typically see when looking at pre-fabricated trussed roofs.



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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, the insulation and stored items. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style. 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.



General view of inside of main roof



Pre-fabricated truss roof



Roof truss to the base as an interesting design

Water Tanks

The property has a water tank.

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



Water tank

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are often cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!

Ventilation

We could see some ventilation is present but we were unable to feel this when we were in the roof. We recommend high level ventilation is added if at all possible.

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 of wiring 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.

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GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property has plastic gutters and downpipes which we believe is a profile gutter. The condition is fairly typical of what we see; they are in average condition for their age, type and style.

There may be some minor leaks but most people would be happy to live with these providing repairs are carried out within the next six to twelve months.

Please refer to our earlier comments regarding the leaking garage roof gutter.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints. We would also recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, (as they are more than likely to require a clean), the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.



Gutter and downpipe



Close up of Gutter

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Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipes are plastic.

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.

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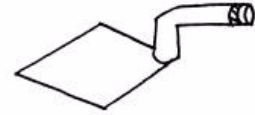
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WALLS



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.

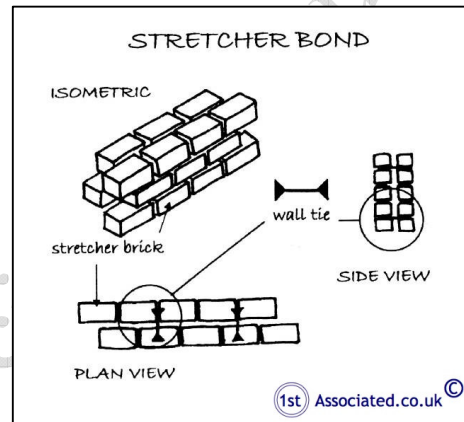
The walls are constructed of brickwork.

Brickwork

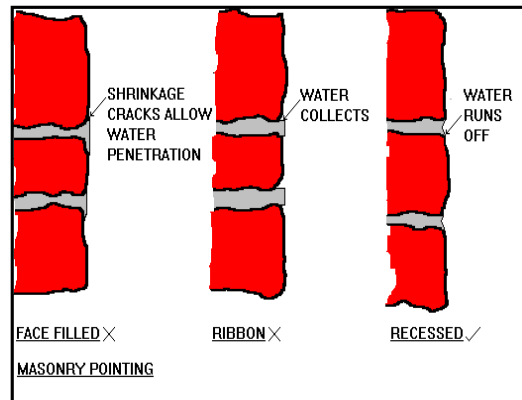
The property is built in a brick in what is known as Stretcher bond brickwork.

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". This pattern would repeat throughout.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding poor quality pointing.



Brickwork with poor quality pointing



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Cavity Walls

Cavity walls were first used in Victorian times. It originates from solid walls not always being waterproof against driving rain and not providing a good degree of heat insulation. The design of cavity walls makes them relatively unstable and they depend upon the wall ties.

Wall Ties

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. We would typically see horizontal cracking where there are problems. In this case we have not noted any cracking however wall tie failure is a progressive problem. We would add as there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties. As such we cannot be hundred per cent certain with regard to this problem unless we open up the structure. From what we can see externally it appears not to have any problems.

Lintels

In properties of this age it is likely that metal lintels.

Please see our comments with regard to dry lining.

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 metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

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

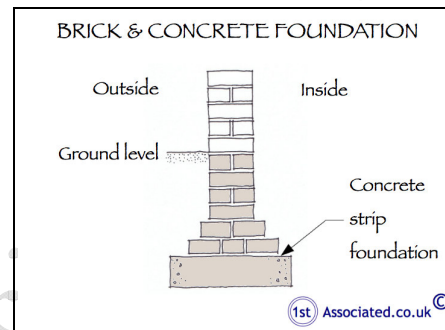


FOUNDATIONS

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

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a deep strip foundation.



Building Insurance Policy

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

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection - the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

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

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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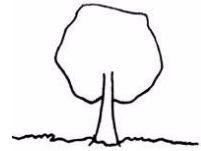
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Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

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.

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TREES

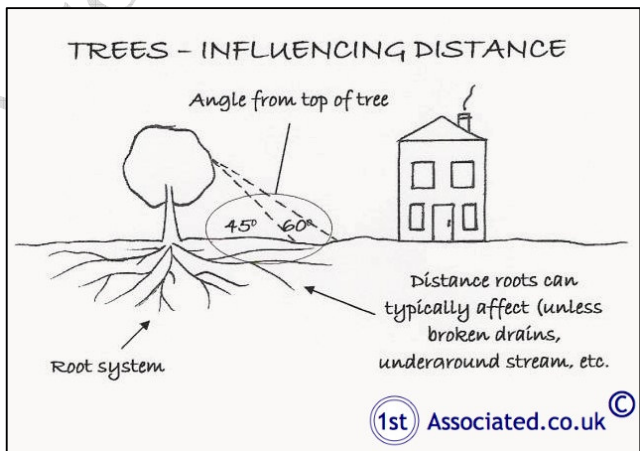
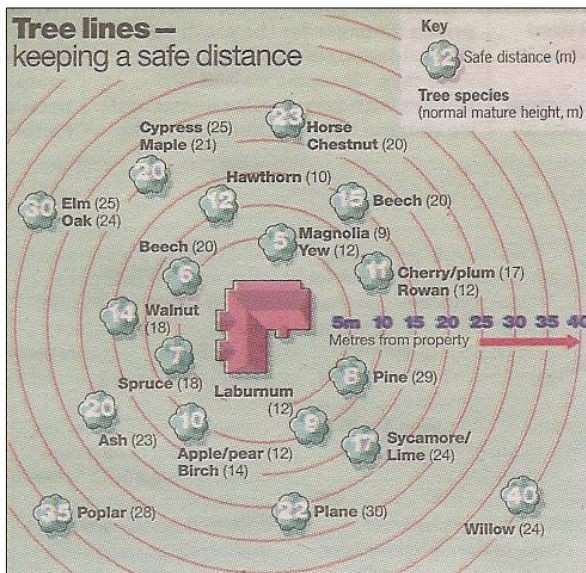
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There is a tree within what insurance companies would term as the influencing distance of the property which we are advised by the present owners was cut down approximately six years ago.



ACTION REQUIRED: Seek advice from an aboreturist not a tree surgeon as the root system is still in place which could affect the property.

Tree cut down to the front of the property



Influencing Distance Defined

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

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable

distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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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 can see a DPC to the main property and to the kitchen/conservatory.

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.



Main property damp proof course



Kitchen/conservatory damp proof course

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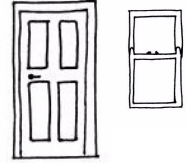
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

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

Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are plastic. We would comment they are in average condition for their age, type and style.

With regard to the colour of the gutters and the fascias and soffits the sort of moss that gets on these areas is very typical of where there are trees surrounding the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: Make sure gutters and downpipes are watertight before carrying out any work on fascias and soffits.



Fascias and soffits



Moss to garage fascias and soffits

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Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows without trickle vents. Without trickle vents it means that there is a higher chance of condensation in the property. Trickle vents are a modern day requirement.

There is a box window to the rear of the property.

Trickle Vents Defined

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

Generally they look to be of an average quality for their age, type and style.

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.

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

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



Double glazed plastic windows



Bow window to rear



Close up of double glazing

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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.

There is little external decoration required to the property with the exception of the plastic gutters and fascias and soffits require cleaning which is something we are coming across more and more often.

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.

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INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are modern plasterboard.



Ceiling rose detail

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

These are, we believe predominately solid construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

Perimeter Walls

Originally these would have been constructed with a wet plaster.

Again, we cannot be 100% certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.

This comment has been based on the visual look of the wall which is relatively “smooth” and normally means a modern finish.

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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.

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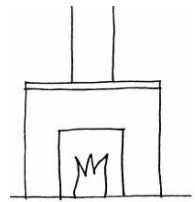
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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 to the front left hand side and rear right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey the chimney in the left hand side of the lounge was the only one we could see that was in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.



Through lounge fireplace

Finally, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden particularly when plastered over.

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained.

It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues

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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 under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete.

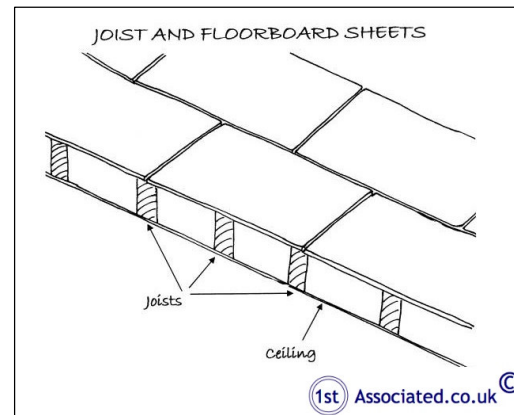
However, we have not opened up the floors or lifted the carpets / floor coverings.

First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and 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, floor coverings, tiles 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.

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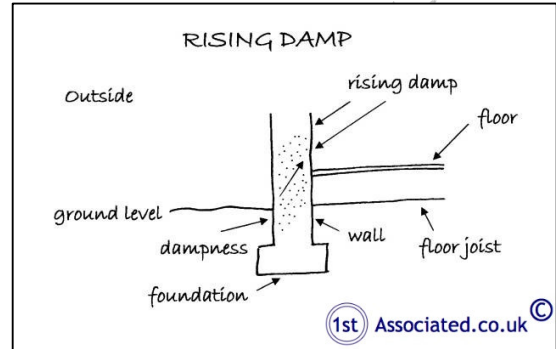


DAMPNESS

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 a strong argument that true rising damp very rarely is found.

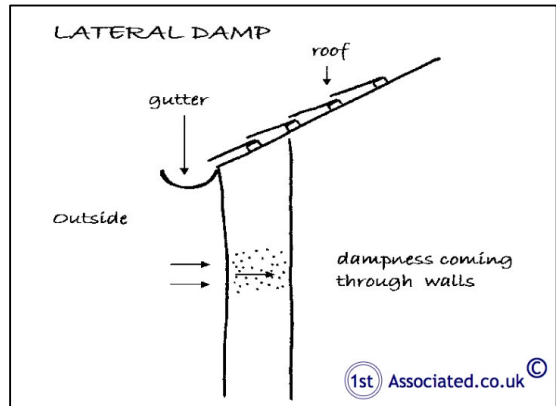


A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found no rising damp.

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.

We used a damp meter on the external walls. We have found dampness in the utility room which we believe is due to the gutters on the flat roof leaking.



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Roof section.



Looking for lateral dampness underneath bow window – no visible signs

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation. There are no trickle vents present to the double glazed plastic windows although the rooms are relatively large.

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, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

Extract fans in kitchens and bathrooms

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans within the kitchens and bathrooms which are moisture generating areas.

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

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The doors are veneer doors.



Veneer door

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.



Staircase

Kitchen

We found the kitchen in above average condition, subject of course to some wear and tear as one would expect.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

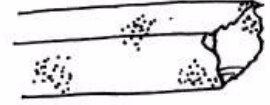
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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.*

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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.*

Again, we have not visually seen any wet rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof

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 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. Our inspection is usually restricted by the mass of insulation

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

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

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

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

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INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

Internal decorations are in average condition. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

HIPs

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

Roofs

A mass of roof insulation was present to what looked to be to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm or more! This limited our view of the ceiling joists.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have. Also they are unlikely to have any substantial insulation. However, unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property.

Windows

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

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Services

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

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see.

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.

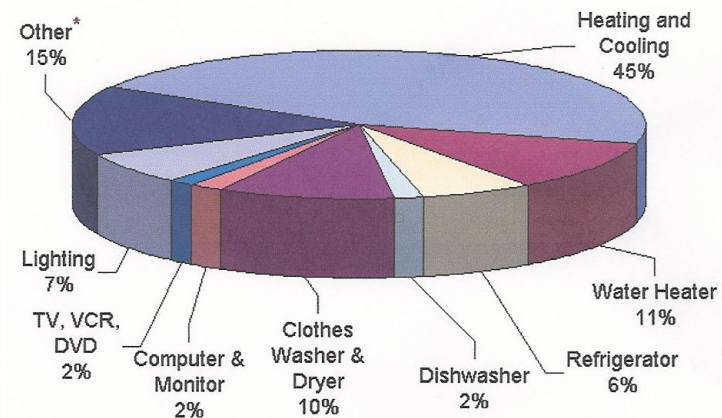
or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
[HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html](http://www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html) to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay
[HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs)*

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency.

What does my energy bill pay for?



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

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OTHER MATTERS

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

Security

A security system has been installed. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further.

ACTION REQUIRED: Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer.



Security system

Fire / Smoke Alarms

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.



Battery operation smoke alarm

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Insurance

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

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos.

In this case we have not noted 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.

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SERVICES

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

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

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ELECTRICITY



It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 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 cupboard to the left hand side of the entrance (all directions given as you face the property). The fuse board looked dated and better are now available.



Fuse Board

Earth Test

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

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



Earth Test

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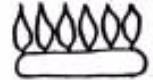
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In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any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

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

GAS



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

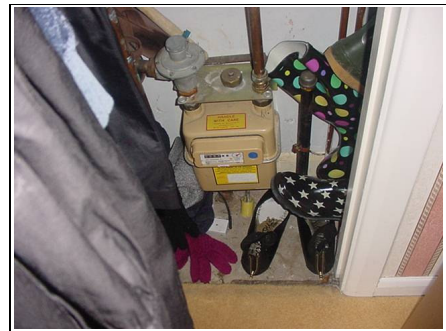
We are advised that the property has mains gas. The consumer unit is located in a cupboard to the left hand side of the entrance (all directions given as you face the property).



External gas pipes

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of Gas Safe; works to gas appliances etc., by

unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.



Internal gas unit

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

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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 as the owner was unsure of its location.

It is important that its presence is established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners to show you where it is.

Water Pressure

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



Tap test

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.



Water tank

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Hot Water Cylinder

There is a hot water cylinder located in the airing cupboard. It is factory insulated, which indicates that it is relatively new (in this case we mean in the last 30 years). This cylinder will therefore have a good thermal efficiency, although not as good as the more modern hot water cylinders.



Hot water cylinder

Plumbing

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

Heating

The original wall mounted boiler was located in the utility room, it is manufactured by Potterton.

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.



Potterton boiler

Ten Minute Heating Test

The owner turned at our request turned on the heating for approximately ten minutes. We checked the radiators on the ground floor lounge and first floor master bedroom and these were warm although slow to turn on.

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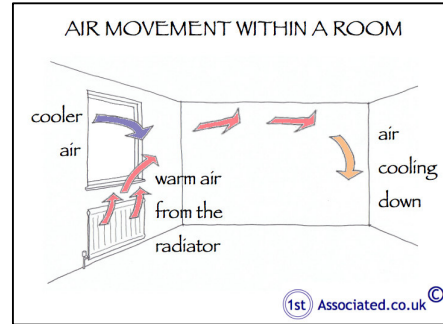
Internal Radiators

We noted the radiators are internal in some areas. This is often carried out on cheaper central heating systems to save the labour and piping costs of taking the radiators underneath the windows. However, it then reduces the air movement in the room.

Internal Radiators defined

Radiators located underneath windows help air flow in a property as warm air rises and hits the cooler air above the windows it then circulates around the room and helps the air circulation in the property as a whole.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would live in the property and then if there are problems we suggest you move the radiators underneath the windows as this gives a better circulation of air and reduces the chance of condensation.



Internal radiator

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.

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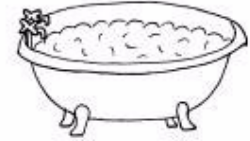
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BATHROOM



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

Bathroom

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



Family bathroom

En-Suite Bathroom

We would comment the en-suite to the master bedroom has been updated.



En suite to master bedroom

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

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MAIN DRAINS

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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified three inspection chambers / manholes.

Manholes Defined

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes One and Two (front, right hand side)

We were unable to lift the manholes at the front of the property during our inspection.



Front manholes

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**Inspection Chamber / Manhole Three
(front, a little more central than manholes
one and two)**

Again, we were unable to lift this manhole at the time of our inspection.

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



Manhole Three

Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.

Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

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

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

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

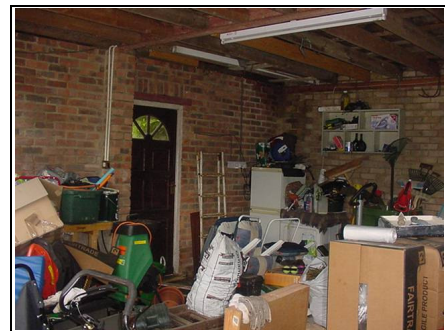
PARKING



The property has a double garage (currently used for storage) and off road parking. Parking is also available in the cul de sac at roadside parking on a first come first served basis.



Double garage



Garage currently used for storage

We reiterate our earlier comments regarding the garage roof.

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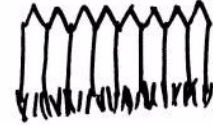
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EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

The front garden has brick pavers allowing off road parking. We noted the area to the front had a pavier which has lifted indicating movement.

ACTION REQUIRED: Monitor for movement. Re-bed brick pavier.



Front garden



Front Garden – pavier lifting indicating some movement

Rear Garden

There is a good sized rear garden laid predominately to lawn.



Rear garden



Rear Garden

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

We did not walk the boundaries. The rear boundary needs Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm.

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

At the time of our survey when we knocked on the front door of the left hand neighbour there was no reply.

Right Hand Neighbours

At the time of our survey when we knocked on the front door of the right hand neighbour there was no reply although we could hear them!

Other Neighbours

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



XXXX Planning Application

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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) 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) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - ix) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - x) 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.

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- 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.

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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

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REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

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LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated XXXXX 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.

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WEATHER

It was dry and sunny at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

NOT LOCAL

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

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited as there was a mass of insulation in the roof space and as we were not able to open up the ground floor or the first floor.



Mass of insulation

BUILDING INSURANCE

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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

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APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. Condensation and Cold Bridging Article

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THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - 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.

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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.

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

www.motleyfool.co.uk

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

www.rightmove.co.uk

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

www.zoopla.co.uk

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

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Condensation and Cold Bridging

What is Cold Bridging?

What is cold bridging and how does it work?

Cold bridging is a term and a problem we feel will become much more common in years to come. We are finding more and more examples of Cold Bridging. This happens in certain types of property and to some extent it could be argued that it is a characteristic of that type of property and quite a complex issue to resolve. Unfortunately it means condensation is more likely.



Post war / 1950's property that cold bridging can be a problem in.

Cold Bridging

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure or fabric of the building allowing coldness to pass through. When warm moist air is present in the property and it passes through the colder elements of the structure we have what is known as Cold Bridging. This is often caused by a combination of issues. It can occur from things such as having a shower or a bath, cooking or clothes washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. It could, in commercial properties, be a large gathering of people breathing (this can cause a lot of humidity) in a building that has stood cold and empty for some time such as a church, village hall, sports centre or a crèche. These human atmospheres create a climate which can result in condensation on the cold elements of the structure and fabric if the room is not ventilated properly.

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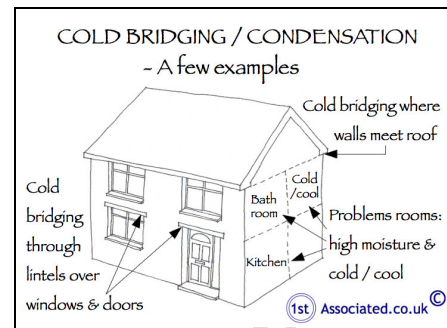
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Certain types of buildings are more susceptible to Condensation and Cold Bridging

Here is our sketch on Cold Bridging

This is a good indication of the typical things that cause Cold Bridging in a house and how extraction from humidity generating areas such as the kitchen and the bathroom can reduce problems. You do need to look at how you live in the house.



Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors

Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors. Not only can it be an original characteristic of the building it can be encouraged by all types of extension and alterations.

Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure which you can do very little to change without great expense. If you buy a 1960's property for example, with concrete lintels that cause cold bridging, this is a characteristic of the property and it is very difficult to change. However not only could it be a characteristic of the building it could also be caused by alterations that you make to the building.



1960's properties built with concrete lintels that can cause Cold Bridging

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To give you some examples of Cold Bridging

As mentioned above typically Cold Bridging can be caused by lintels and also by beams (which effectively are big lintels). These were very commonly used in 1960's and 1970's buildings and can lead to condensation over doors and windows. We mentioned a 1960's building but here are some examples of concrete lintels that were commonly used in the 1970's and which today have caused cold bridging over the door and which in turn has led to condensation and deterioration of the paintwork.



A rear door to a 1970's building.
Can you tell where the cold bridging would be in this photo?



A close up view showing there is a concrete lintel over the door and window. This is where the cold bridging occurs causing condensation inside.

Cold Bridging can also occur on metal lintels. We note that some modern metal lintels now have insulation in them which we assume is to reduce cold bridging.

Commercial properties suffer from Cold Bridging too

Commercial buildings are often built using structural frames. These frames are usually constructed of concrete or metal or sometimes both. The structural frame forms the skeleton of the building as you can see in the adjoining photo. Sometimes the structural frames, particularly, the concrete ones can suffer from Cold Bridging which causes blackening of the concrete frame. This can look like the roof has leaked and can lead to wrongly diagnosing a problem as being a roof leak. This can result in great time and expense being wasted repairing a roof that was not leaking and indeed in some cases has led to a new roof being



Cold Bridging in a commercial property with a concrete frame.

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fitted which has costs tens of thousands of pounds. This happened because it wasn't understood what the problem was.

When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in

1. Georgian and Regency properties
2. Victorian and Edwardian properties
3. Pre-war properties
4. War years construction properties
5. Post war construction properties up to the 1980's.
6. Commercial properties that use structural frames particularly concrete frames.

We find that cold bridging and condensation occur most commonly where a property has a relatively high heating level, a good level of insulation and where it has many occupants.



Georgian style properties can suffer from cold bridging and condensation. However in our experience it is more likely to be the new extensions or alterations that are added to them



Post war 1960's properties with plastic double glazing without trickle vents that have been added can cause condensation.

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Problems with 1970/1980 era properties relating to Cold Bridging

Let us take a look at the 1970's/1980's era of property to give an example of the problems we have come across with this era.

The 1970's is an era where we had just begun to think about insulating due to the oil crisis and

where we added insulation into our structures

For example with;

1. cavity wall insulation or
2. double glazed windows.

This meant they were warmer which has meant the significance of a lintel, over a door or window, being colder and allowing the transfer of coldness becomes much more important. This results in condensation that we commonly see above windows in this age and era of property.

How to solve Cold Bridging

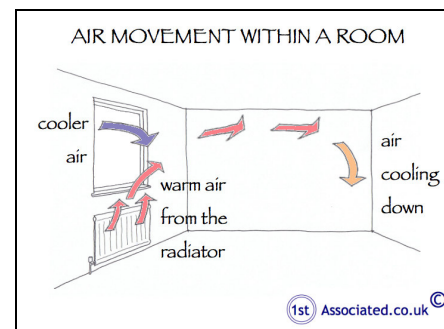
The difficulty is resolving cold bridging. Normally, where condensation is involved, if you get the balance of warm and coolness of the air, ventilation and movement you can reduce considerably the chances of condensation. Airing the room by opening the windows, which seems to have gone out of fashion, can help considerably.



1970's property with cold bridging to the roof beams and the lintels



1980's property, cold bridging was found in the lintels



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Where do we most commonly find Cold Bridging?

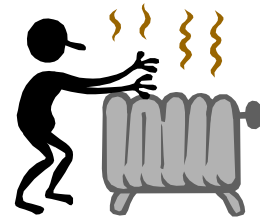
Our thoughts on this have very much changed as we used to say that cold bridging was typically found in properties from the 1960's/1970's. However we are increasingly finding it in a broader range of properties, particularly Victorian properties, where people are trying to live to modern standards of heating and insulation without understanding that the properties need to breathe as well. We have also found cold bridging in properties where extensions have been carried out and where the extension has been built to a different standard to the original property.



Victorian properties that have been extended and altered over the years with new thermal properties that can cause Cold Bridging because of the mix of old and new standards

Is your life style a factor in Cold Bridging?

This is often a contentious and difficult question, particularly where the occupier is a tenant and there is a disagreement between the landlord and the occupier as to why there is mould in the property. In our experience the major factor is the size of the family living in a property. This is especially the case with large families with young children and where in turn there is a lot of washing of clothes being done. This is particularly the case in the winter months, with the wet washed clothes being dried on radiators. Also general hygiene washing and not to mention cooking to feed everyone all lead toward a more humid atmosphere.



This is generally known as the lifestyle of occupants and can be a major factor particularly where there are legal cases as to the problems within a property.

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Expert witness case, what is an expert witness?

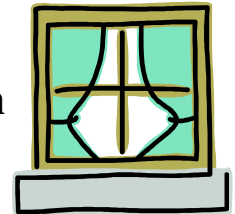
This is where you employ someone who is a specialist within a field, such as us as Chartered Building Surveyors, who comment on problems of condensation within the property. We have been involved in several court cases as expert witnesses where landlords are being taken to court over the condensation that is occurring in their property. The expert witness case looks at how this condensation is occurring and if it relates, for example, to

the occupiers' lifestyle or whether it relates to the way the building was constructed and where there are, for example, cold bridging elements. When discussions of this nature take place in court they can be very expensive.



Older style London converted flats with property problems such as Condensation and Cold Bridging

Is Cold Bridging and Condensation a design problem or a lifestyle problem?



This really is a difficult question to answer. We have been involved in a number of cases as expert witnesses or advocates and the answer can vary. We would comment that there are factors that can be changed and factors that can't be changed. For example, the occupiers lifestyle can in most cases be amended. This may involve the occupier having an understanding of the problems they are causing. For example, drying lots of washing on a radiator inside may be causing excessive moisture in the atmosphere. Equally not opening the windows and closing or sealing up vents can be a problem.

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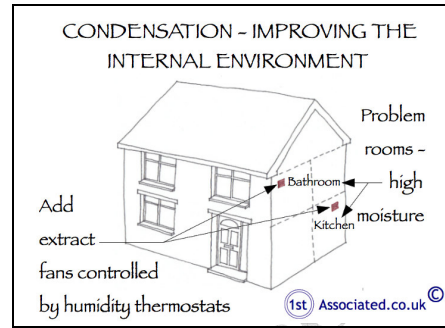
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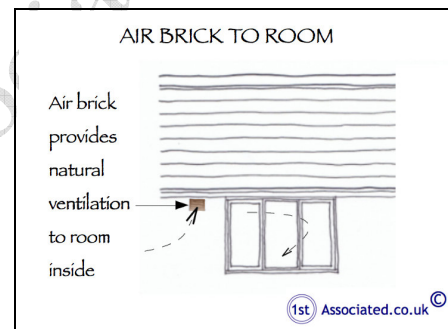
Design of the Building

Sometimes it really is down to the design of the property. Where there are cold elements in it, such as a concrete structural frame or concrete lintels, when these are in contact with moist air condensation occurs. Sometimes this is impossible to stop but often it is possible to reduce it by having a better circulation of air with a better heat and coolness balance and the removal of any moist air.



Things to remember about an air brick

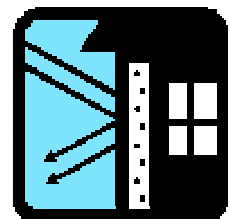
If you are thinking about adding an air brick then you need to be aware that airbricks don't actually allow that much air through. Although externally a nine by three air brick has a lot of gaps, as these gaps taper, it is generally considered that only about one inch square of air regularly passes through the grills.



Air brick may not ventilate room enough

What's happening in brand new housing?

It could be argued that we still do not know what is happening in brand new houses that are highly insulated. We have been involved in one legal case where a modern heat exchange system was being used where it was simply not possible to have a shower in the property without causing condensation, even with the windows open and taking other measures. Our concern is what is happening to this condensation? It was not visible on the surface so is it visible as interstitial condensation? We still think there will be problems to be found in modern properties.



As Chartered Surveyors we like to see things that have been in use for some time work before we would recommend them.

In the winter we have condensation problems but in the summer we don't.

The different seasons mean that the building reacts differently. Anyone who has lived in an old property will know that windows and doors particularly sliding sash windows will swell during the winter months.



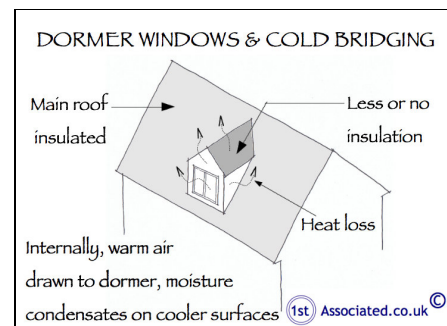
Sliding sash windows can swell in the winter months

There can be similar issues with a property where, regardless of your lifestyle, during some of the different seasons, for example the winter or a wet spring, taking a shower can relate in condensation even with extract fans running (although this is far less likely).

It also depends on what the humidity level is outside as this can be greater than inside. The moisture/humidity will then seek out colder rooms such as spare bedrooms and the corners of cupboards. When you open these at a later date you will be surprised to find black mould.

Extensions and Cold Bridging.

Increasingly we are coming across problems where properties have been extended and it has not been planned or thought through properly. We have come across dormer roofs that simply have no insulation so any heat in the property is going straight out of the dormer roof. We have also come across property problems where an extension has resulted in colder areas within the property and which although not problem areas, as such, our clients have found them not nice areas to be in. It is not a great outcome if you have just spent tens of thousands of pounds on a new extension that you are not happy with.



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A more technical answer

The above article has been written to stimulate debate and discussion. However we are aware from our experience of dealing with these problems, especially when they get into court, that it can be a very emotional subject. We have come across the terms Chronic Damp Conditions and Chronic Condensation Conditions. There is clearly a mismatch in these situations between the building and the lifestyle of the person within. We have come across buildings which have a relative humidity exceeding seventy per cent most of the time and where mould growth can become established. Whilst this is at the extreme end of what we see, it is of course a concern if you are the landlord or tenant with this issue.

Here are some references for you

Landlord and Tenant act 1985 - legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/70

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (known fondly as the HHSRS) - hhsrs.org

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