

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY
OF
A 1960's End of Terrace Property, Welwyn Garden City,
Hertfordshire



FOR
Mr G and Ms T

Independent Chartered Surveyors

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for using our services once again and your kind instruction. We have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property.

As you may recall 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.

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two-storey end of terrace property that has had a two-storey side extension together with a rear single storey extension. The property sits in a residential area of similar type properties.

There is a garden and driveway to the front (part of it is shared) and part of it is shared with the allotment. There is an allotment to the left hand side of the property that it borders on to.

We believe that the property was built in the 1960s. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1950	The concept of artificial intelligence for computers was developed by Alan Turing (MOD)
1960	Internet was developed as a communications system for the defence industry
1963	President Kennedy assassinated in Dallas
1965	The Death Penalty is abolished
1966	England win the football World Cup
1969	Man lands on the Moon
1971	Decimalisation
Early 1970s	British Property Boom

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Rear Elevation



Left Hand View



Right Hand View

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance Hall
- Front Lounge
- Rear Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Cloakroom (including a shower)
- Rear Study

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Two Front Bedrooms
- One Rear Bedroom
- Side Bedroom
- Bathroom

Outside Areas

The property has a separate garage which is linked with next door's garage and overlooks next door's garden. The garage driveway and the path adjoining it appear to be shared with the allotment.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to confirm exactly where your boundary is and your rights and responsibilities.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

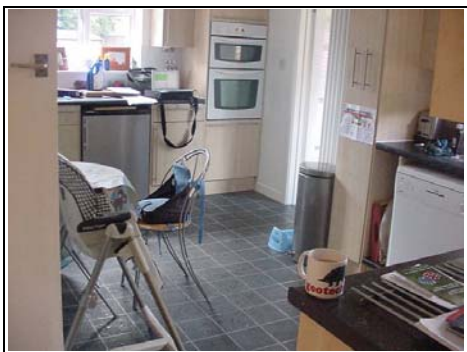
Ground Floor



Lounge



Dining Room



Kitchen



Study



Cloakroom

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First Floor



Master Bedroom



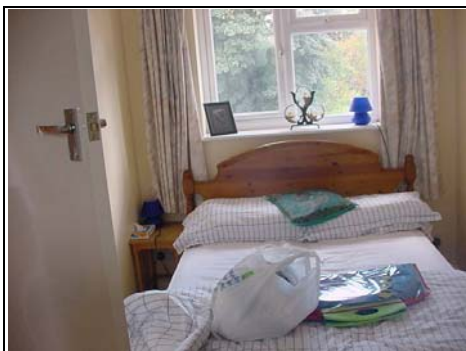
Bathroom



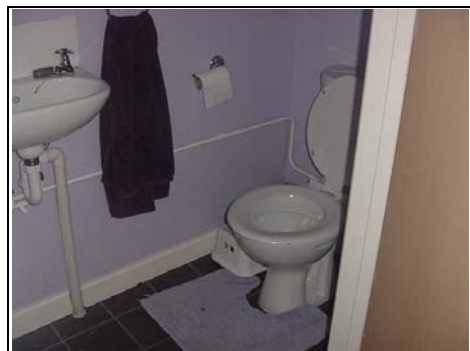
Front Left Hand Bedroom



Rear Right Hand Bedroom



Left Hand Bedroom



En Suite

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

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Chimneys:	One brick chimney sitting on the Party Wall
Main Roof:	A pitched roof clad with a concrete tile
Gutters and Downpipes:	Profile plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Stretcher bond brickwork
External Joinery:	Plastic double glazed windows and plastic fascias and soffits

INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	A mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Solid, assumed concrete First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

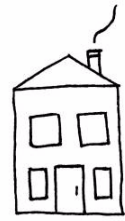
SERVICES

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

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of fifty 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. Having said all of that, here are our comments:-

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

The Good

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

- The property sits on a good sized plot and the extension has added considerably to the size of the property without giving the house an awkward layout that we often find.
- The décor is of a good standard, although you may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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) Chimney

We could see that the pointing is deteriorating slightly to the rear of the chimney, which will ultimately lead to dampness getting in via the chimney.



ACTION REQUIRED: In the next few years some re-pointing will be necessary.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of few hundred pounds; however there may be considerably more costs for the scaffolding to gain access to the chimney. Quotations should be obtained.

Please see the Chimneys Section of this Report.

2) Possible Rainwater Issues with Regard to the Flat Roof Extension

Presently the rainwater discharges through a downpipe and into a water butt located on the allotment. This is known as permanent trespass and this is where you use someone else's land for your own purposes.



An extension such as this should have a soak-away located three to four meters away from the property. We find that builders often miss these out, although they would have to have had one to get Local Authority and Building Regulation Approval.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor to specifically enquire as to whether the Local Authority have signed-off the rear extension knowing that the soak-away has not been added.

ANTICIPATED COST: To install a new soak-away will cost in the region of £1,500 - £3,000. Quotations should be obtained.

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

3) **Flat Flat Roof (this is not a typing error!)**

The flat roof to the rear extension is very flat and we think rainwater will sit on it. This is a relatively new roof and it does look to have had work carried out to the parapet wall (unless the builder simply used a different colour brick when constructing it). Deteriorating to a parapet wall can often be caused by a poor flashing detail.



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.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that in the near future the felt flashing is replaced with a lead flashing (you already have a lead flashing where the flat roof meets the main property; it seems strange that they have not used one to the perimeter). In the long term we would recommend that a 'fall' is added to the flat roof. A good way of doing this in our experience is to use an insulation cut to falls on the flat roof, as this guarantees a fall and it also adds insulation to reduce the heat loss from the roof.

ANTICIPATED COST: To add a lead flashing we would expect costs to be in the region of £200 - £400. Quotations should be obtained.

To re-roof we would expect costs to be in the region of £3,000 - £5,000, depending upon the quality of felt used, we would recommend a high performance felt (known as a HP felt). Quotations should be obtained.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

4) **Walls**

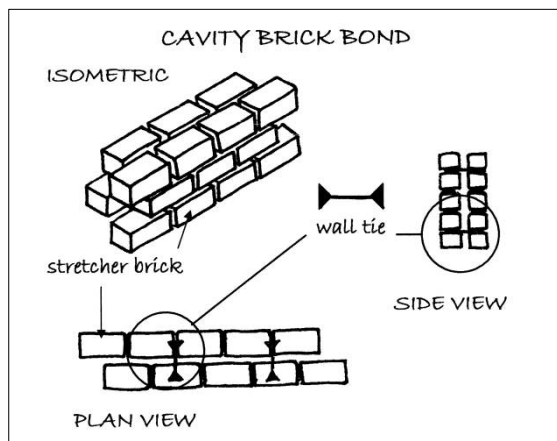
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Whilst the cavity wall construction allows the opportunity to put insulation in, in this age of property it was not originally common practice. Without opening up the wall we cannot confirm if insulation has been added or not.



ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor should make full enquires and investigations to see if insulation has been added and report any findings to us immediately. Problems can occur where insulation has been added at a later date.

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

5) Rising Damp and Condensation

Surprisingly we found rising damp to the rear extension of the property.

We believe this is for a combination of reasons. Partly the decking that sits against the wall that will help draw dampness into the property, very much like blotting paper, and partly we believe there is condensation within the shower room due to the extraction system being poor.



ACTION REQUIRED: Add a larger extract fan; we would like the fan to be at least six inches in diameter. Also we suggest you move the decking away from the wall. Once this has been carried out you then need to get the property re-checked by a damp proof company as there is an outside possibility that the original damp proof course and damp proof membrane has failed for some reason. In a worse case scenario this could be very costly as it would involve lifting up the floor to correct it.

ANTICIPATED COST: For the initial work a few hundred pounds. If you wish to be on the safe side we would suggest that the damp proof company inspects the property before you purchase it and you obtain a second opinion.

Please see the Damp Proof Course Section, the Dampness Section and the Bathrooms Section of this Report.

6) **En Suite Shower Room Unfinished**

There are various bits and pieces that did not appear to have been finished off within the en suite shower room on the first floor; these included some tiling and also we could not see an extract duct for the extract fan within the roof space.

ACTION REQUIRED: You should enquire as to whether the en suite room will be complete before the property is sold. Fit a larger extract fan to reduce the chances of condensation.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds.

Please see the Bathrooms Section of this Report.

7) **Asbestos Garage Roof**

The underside of the garage roof looks to be asbestos (it is almost impossible to be 100 percent certain by eye), which was commonly used in properties of this age. We could see in the underside of the garage that an asbestos roof has been used. On the top of the roof it has been covered with a mineral felt.



Much is written about the dangers of asbestos; this related to the fibres that occur when it is deteriorating. In this instance the condition is reasonable within the garage, but our insurance company requires us to advise you that we are not specialist asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: You should note that work involving products containing asbestos is covered by Health and Safety legislation and you are recommended to seek the advice of the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer before proceeding with any such work.

ANTICIPATED COST: This is very specialist work and we would be more than happy to discuss it further with you. If you do decide to remove it then a specialist quotation will be required.

Please see the Other Matters Section and the Outside Areas Section of this Report.

8) **Shared Access with the Allotment**

The property has a shared access with the adjoining allotment. This is more a statement of fact than a 'Bad' item.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to confirm how the access is shared between yourselves and the allotment.

Please see the Outside Areas 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 are no items that we feel should fall within this category.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

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

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

Maintenance

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

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

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the

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

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

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We would comment that we specifically think that the large flat roof could be a problem in years to come. We would also recommend that a damp proof company carries out a check of the rear of the property prior to purchase to be on the safe side.

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

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

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



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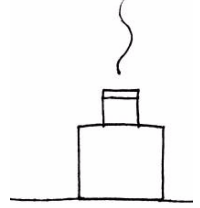
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS AND PARAPET WALLS



Chimney Stacks

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

This property has one chimney, which is located to the right hand side of your property and to the middle of the two semi detached properties. The chimney sits on what is known as the Party Wall (more about this at the end of this section of the report).

This chimney is built in brick with a metal flashing believed to be lead and has one chimney pot and one flue. From what we could see the chimney needs repointing and we would also recommend that the flashing is checked at the same time. We were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon it.



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

Flaunchings Defined

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

Flashings Defined

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

Parapet Walls

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

In this case there are parapet walls to the rear flat roof extension. The flashing to the parapet walls is felt; we would much prefer to see a lead flashing as lead moves and adjusts with the building much better whereas a felt flashing tends to deteriorate over the years. Having said that there should be a reasonable amount of life left in the felt, albeit that we could see that the parapet walls have been built in a different colour brick, which may mean that there have been problems.



There is a stone capping to the parapet walls.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically ask the owners if there have been problems with the parapet walls.

Party Wall

Earlier we have used the term Party Wall in relation to the chimney.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

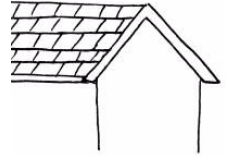
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in three different areas, the main roof, the left hand roof and the rear flat roof.

Main Roof

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



Left Hand Roof

This roof is pitched and clad in concrete tiles, as previously described. It has a flashing to the right hand side and we noticed that this appears to have come away in a few areas and may cause dampness if left.

ACTION REQUIRED: A close up examination is needed to check the flashing; we suggest you do this when you come to repoint the chimney.

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

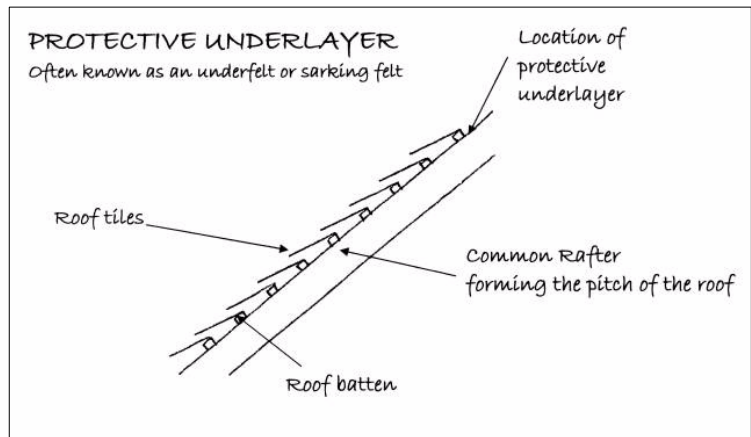
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From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really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



Main Roof

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, although it is damaged in a few places but this is not unusual considering its age.



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

Left Hand Roof

We found a modern breathable underlayer to the left hand roof, which is more akin to a Gore-tex finish than the original felt roof that you have to the main property.



This photo shows the common rafters and the white area between is the breathable underlayer.

Rear Flat Roof

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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.

The rear flat roof has a felt covering, whilst the felt is in reasonable condition it is poorly detailed being predominately flat and having a felt flashing to the parapet walls, although there is a lead cover flashing where it meets the main building (please note that this is not the same as a lead flashing).



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. We would also recommend a lead flashing is added.

General Information on Flat Roofs

Flat roofs typically have a life between 20 and 30 years, depending upon the quality of workmanship, materials and decking, although some roof manufacturers do claim longer.

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.

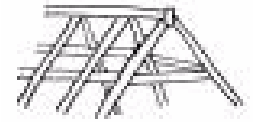
Also it could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and from our ladder. We would add that we have not walked on this roof as this can cause damage and deterioration as the stones are pressed into the felt which can cause future leaks. Please note that we often find that where leaks have been repaired that further leaks are caused by the builders who walk on the stones.).

The roofs have been viewed from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

We will consider the roof in two areas; the main roof and the left hand side roof.

Roof Access

Main Roof

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



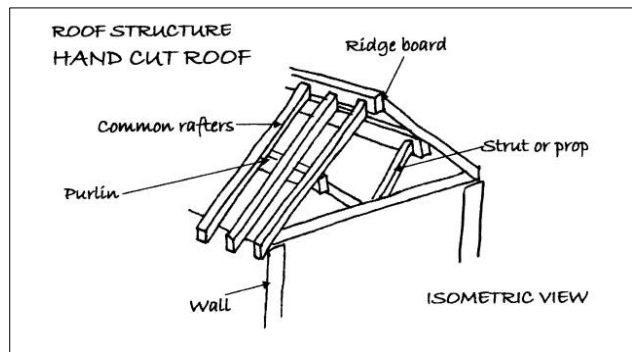
Left Hand Roof

The second roof access is for the extension roof and is located within the left hand bedroom. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing.



Roof Structure

Both roofs have what is known as a cut timber roof, which is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see.



The left hand roof uses timbers that will have had treatments to preserve it against woodworm etc.; whilst the main roof may also have had these they will not have used a pressurised system as is common today.

Roof Timbers

We have inspected both roof structures for:

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



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

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

Fire Walls

Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement. In this instance the firewall is built in brickwork.

Water Tanks

There are no water tanks in the roof, indicating a combination boiler and that all water is directly feed.

Ventilation

We did not see any vents to the main roof (although we could see some to the soffits) and it would help with ventilation if some were added at higher level. What we are trying to achieve in these roofs is ventilated roof space to prevent condensation. In the left hand roof we have quite a different situation where we have a protective underlayer that allows ventilation to take place in the entirety of the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

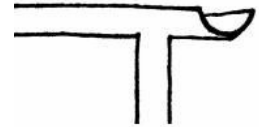
Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case we could not see due to the sheer amount of insulation used in the roofs.

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 roofs, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property's gutters and downpipes are fairly typical of what we see and are in average condition. There may be some minor leaks, but we feel most people would be happy to live with these.



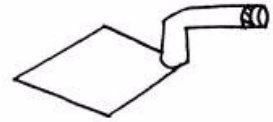
ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipes are plastic and they are in reasonable condition where they could be seen; although a lot is hidden.

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

WALLS



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

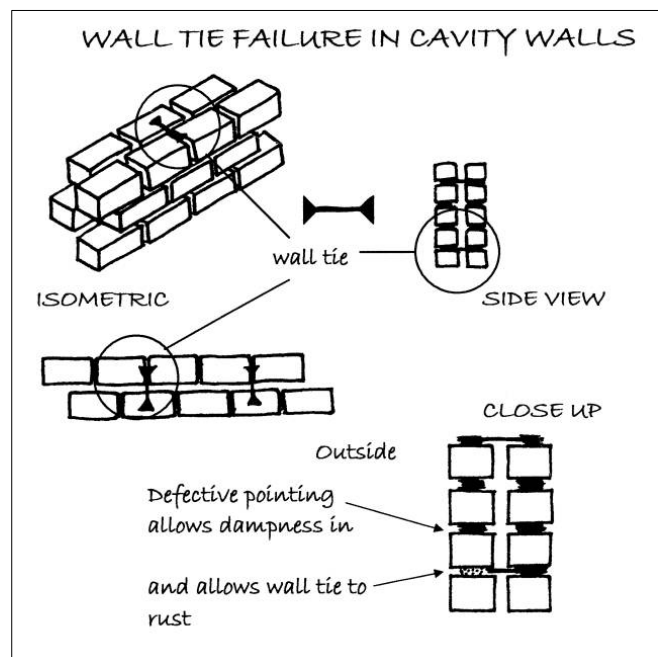
Brickwork

The walls are built in brick and bedded in cement mortar in what is known as stretcher bond brickwork. Stretcher bond brickwork came into common use after the Second World War throughout the United Kingdom.



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

We generally found the brickwork and pointing in average condition. However, you have stretcher bond brickwork from before and after 1970, which can be quite different; the early stretcher can have problems with wall tie failure and generally is not insulated.



Wall Tie Failure

In this instance we did not see any tell-tale signs of wall tie failure which would typically be horizontal cracking being caused by the wall ties rusting and expanding. However it has to be noted that wall tie failure is a progressive condition.

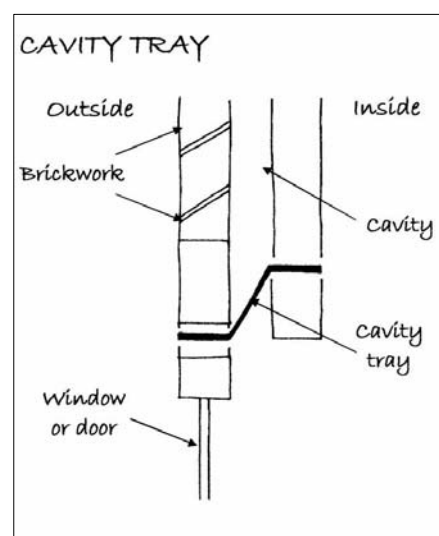
Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this report.

Extension

Unfortunately we cannot see whether the property has a cavity tray or not, but it is essential.

Cavity trays are needed when an extension is carried out to a cavity wall, as this stops dampness getting into the property from the main wall of the original property, in this case the rear wall.



Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels and 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

Since 1948 the Local Authority has been tasked to check that the property is built to Building Regulations standards, it is reasonable to expect Building Regulations approval to have been gained. Your legal adviser needs to check and confirm this.

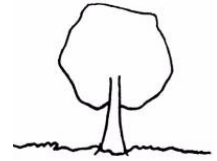
Building Insurance Policy

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

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

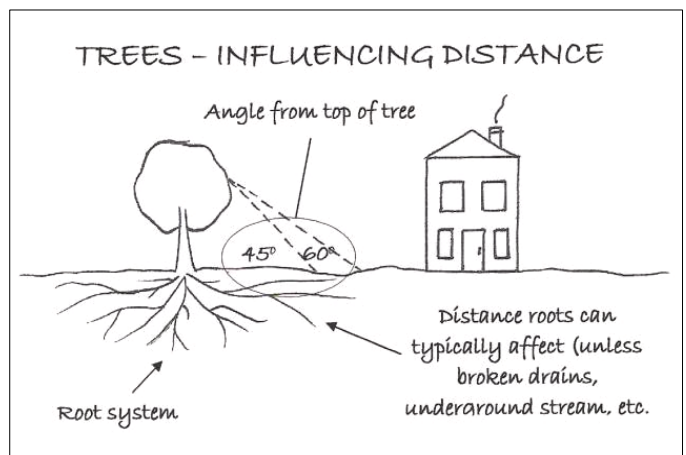
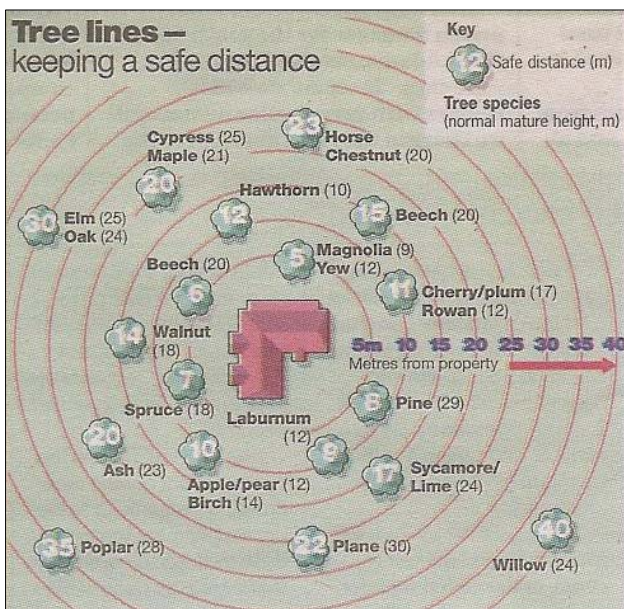
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



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

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



Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE



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

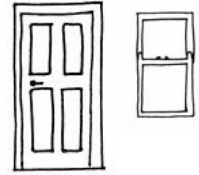
All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case we could see a damp proof course to the property. Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about rising damp and condensation.

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

EXTERNAL JOINERY



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

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

Fascias and Soffits

The property has plastic fascias and soffits and these are in average condition. We were pleased to see that there is a vent in the soffit that will, providing it is not blocked, allow ventilation to the base of the roof to reduce condensation.



Over-Cladding

There is an outside chance that the plastic fascias and soffits have been over-clad over the original timber; this is a common method carried out by unscrupulous builders as it saves them money, however it does cause you problems.

ACTION REQUIRED: We suggest that when you carry out any high level work that you do check that the original timber has not been over-clad. The easiest way to do this is to drill into the plastic to check that there isn't any timber behind it.

Windows and Doors

The property has plastic, double glazed windows, which generally look to be of a reasonable quality. We were pleased to see trickle vents.

Trickle Vents Defined

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



Trickle vents

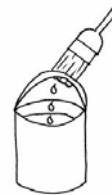
We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term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

Guarantees

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. We spoke to the owners about a guarantee and they did not think that one was available as they paid cash for the windows.

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

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The external decoration required is minimal; the garage door and the fencing are the only items we can think of and that will be in a few years time.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



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

Ceilings

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

Plasterboard Defined

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

Internal Walls and Partitions

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

Generally it is a reasonable assumption that the solid walls are likely to be made from brickwork / blockwork and will be the structural walls, with the studwork walls being purely to divide the rooms.

Perimeter Walls

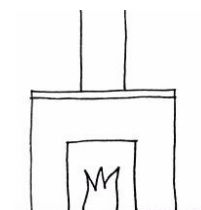
Generally perimeter walls are finished with a modern plaster believed to be carlite / gypsum plaster and decorated. Without the removal of the decorative finish we cannot be 100 percent certain. This type of older property would originally have had lime plaster; some may remain.

Often the mixture of old and new materials will result in hair line movement cracks.

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

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

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts are located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). We noted in the roof space that the chimney breasts have been finished with a cement render, which was a common practice in the 1960s; this was to stop any cinders coming out through the chimney breast in the roof and causing a fire.

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

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

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

FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

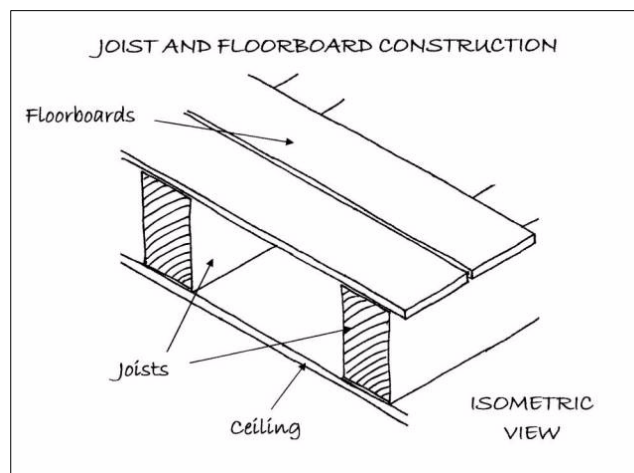
The floors felt solid underfoot so we have assumed they are formed in concrete; however we have not opened up the floors or lifted any of the floor coverings.

First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property. There is slightly more deflection to the floor than we would have expected 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 and laminated flooring etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

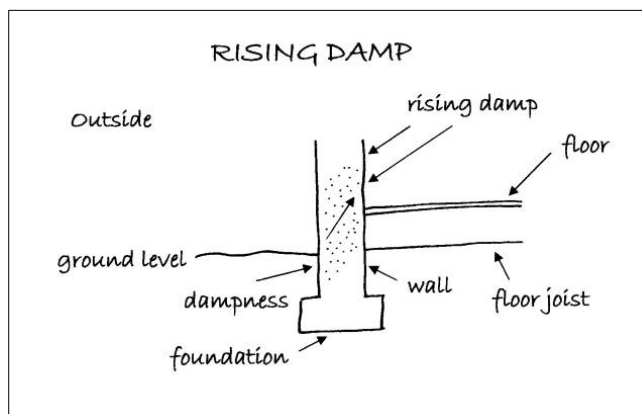
DAMPNESS



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

Rising Damp

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



We carried out tests with our electronic damp meter and were surprised to find rising damp.

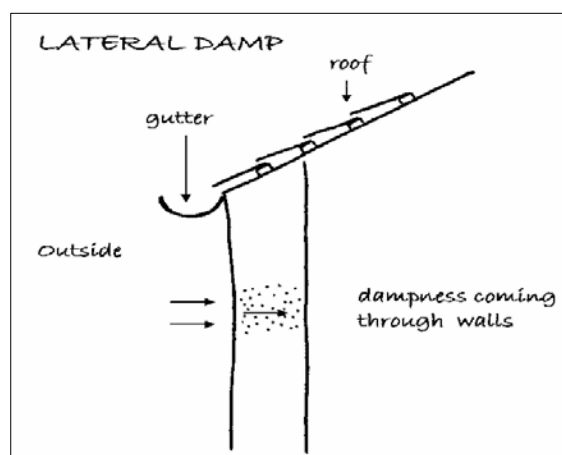
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected.



Condensation

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

We think condensation will occur in the ground floor cloakroom / shower room and also within the shower room in the en suite. We would recommend larger extract fans are added in these areas that discharge to external air.

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

Condensation depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

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

INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The property has some painted flush-faced doors; in this case they are dated and are probably the original doors.

ACTION REQUIRED: You may wish to supply and fit new doors throughout with associated ironmongery.



Staircase

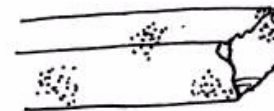
We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining plaster gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in reasonable condition, although it has suffered from some general day-to-day marks. 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.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

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

Wet Rot

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

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

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.

Recent research has shown that many woodworm chemicals do not actually work and it should be remembered that the chemicals are poisons. Also, unless great care is taken, the people applying the treatment can cause significant damage. The woodworm can only really be seen in action during the breeding season, which runs from April to July. We have therefore tried to take a pragmatic view on this matter.

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

In many properties of this age, there is an element of woodworm that is not

active. Our inspection is usually restricted in the roof by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property (for example the floors) by general fixtures and fittings.

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

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The decoration is average, with minor marks as you would expect in a house that has been lived in.

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place, as it very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, hallways will need tending to more often than a spare bedroom.

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

Roof Insulation

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

Walls

Whilst the cavity wall construction allows the opportunity to put insulation in, in this age of property it was not originally common practice. Without opening up the wall we cannot confirm if insulation has been added or not.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser should make full enquires and investigations to see if insulation has been added and report any findings to us immediately. Problems can occur where insulation has been added at a later date.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Windows

The windows are double glazed and therefore have reasonable thermal properties. As mentioned elsewhere within this report we were pleased to see trickle vents.

Services

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

Summary

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

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

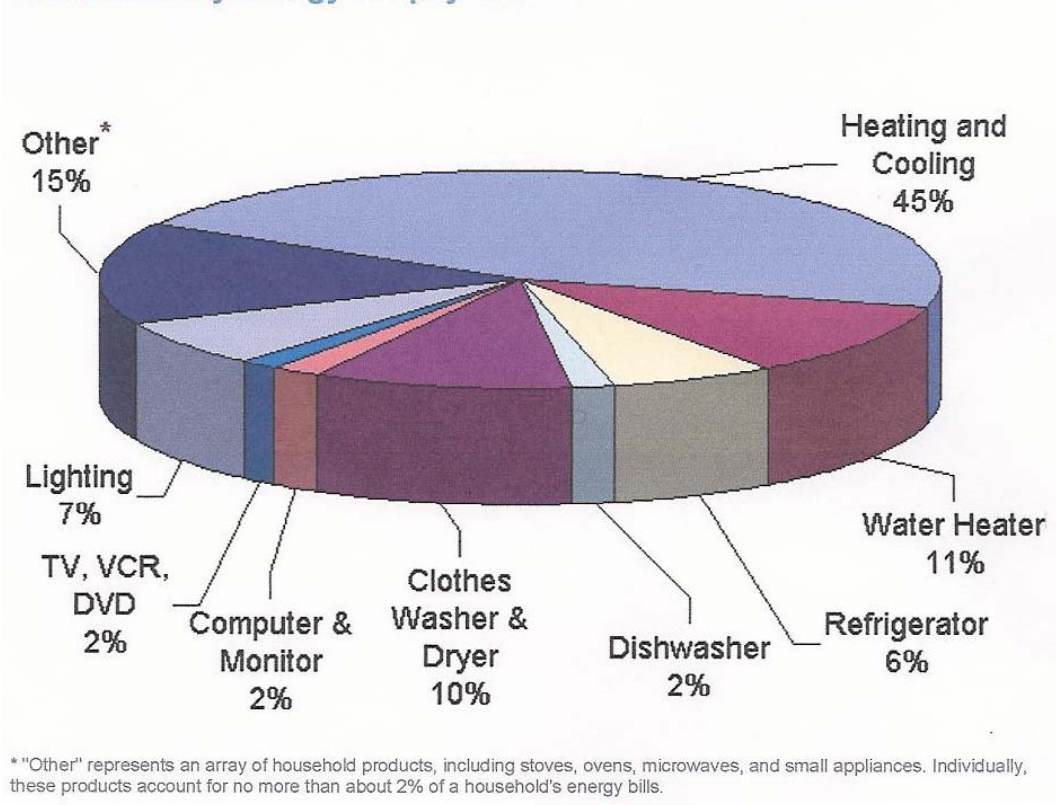
HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



OTHER MATTERS



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

Security System

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

Fire Systems and Smoke Alarms

Some battery operated smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply (which means you no longer have to remember to change the batteries). Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on (providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year). We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We also like the radio activated fire/smoke alarms. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

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

Asbestos

We believe that asbestos has been found in the garage. Within the main house with a property of this age there may also be some more asbestos.

Asbestos 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 in other areas you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

You should note that work involving products containing asbestos is covered by Health and Safety legislation and you are recommended to seek the advice of the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer before proceeding with any such work.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

SERVICES

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

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

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

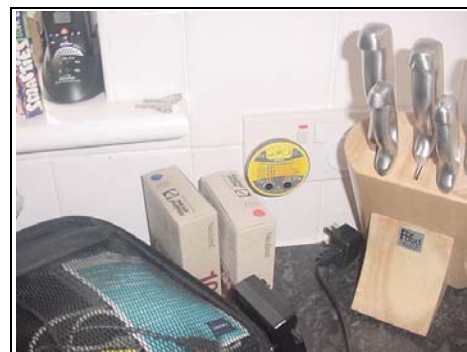
The electric fuses and consumer units were located under stairs. We would date the fuse board as being modern, probably from the 1990s.



Earth Test

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

Neither of these indicators can give certainty as to the condition of the rest of the wiring; in a property of this age you could have much of the original wiring.

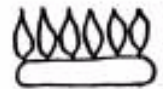


ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an IEE report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor. It is generally considered that wiring lasts about 30 years; as this property was built in the 1960s that means that it should have been re-wired in the 1990s. You need to take specialist advice on this.

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

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

GAS



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

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

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

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners where the stopcock is located.

Water Pressure

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

Cold Water Cistern

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

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler is wall mounted and is made by Baxi, which is a popular make.

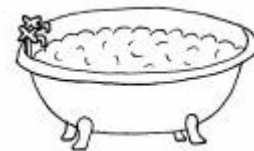
We noted that there are a few internal radiators. The radiators would normally be positioned under the window, which helps circulation of the warm air. These radiators may not warm the property to the heat that you desire. Internal radiators are generally fitted by plumbers to reduce costs (less pipe runs) and save time (less pipe runs). Sometimes dampness (what's known as cold bridging) occurs; we have personally had this problem and ended up moving the radiators to the traditional location under the window.

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

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

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

BATHROOM



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

The family bathroom suite on the first floor looks in average condition.

The en suite shower room within the first floor left hand bedroom looks to be unfinished and needs a larger extract.

The cloak room / shower room on the ground floor we believe needs a larger extract.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to confirm whether the en suite shower room will be completed prior to purchase or not.

Fit a larger extract to the cloak room / shower room and to the en suite.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified two inspection chambers / manholes.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One – To the Front of the Property

We duly lifted the man hole / inspection chamber cover and found the drain to be clear.



Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two – to the Left Hand Side in the Allotment

We were unable to lift this manhole.



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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

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

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGE AND PARKING



Garage

The garage is on the left hand side a few meters away from the property. Access to the allotment is between the garage and main house.

This is a brick built garage with what we believe to be a flat asbestos roof that has then been covered with a mineral felt.



Garage



Garage roof

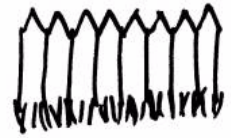
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments regarding the asbestos to the underside of the roof in the Executive Summary and in the Other Matters Section of this report.

Parking

You have off-road parking for two cars, one in front of the house and one in front of the garage, but there may be access requirements to the allotment.

During our ‘question and answer’ session with the owner we spoke about the allotment, as it is an unusual thing to have next to your property. The owner advised that she believed there were four allotments in total of which they had one and they really used it as an extension of their garden, although obviously it isn’t.

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

There is a reasonable sized front garden with a driveway and the rest of the area is grassed.



Rear Garden

There is a reasonably sized grassed rear garden with a timber fence and hedging to the back. There also looked to be an access passage from the allotment behind the back of the garden.



ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm if there is a Right of Way behind the garden.

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

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

We knocked on the door but no-one was in at the time of our inspection.

Right Hand Neighbours

We also knocked on this door but no-one answered the door at the time of our inspection.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
 - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - v) Roof and similar renewals.
 - vi) Central heating installation.
 - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses

Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components

*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings

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

House Builders Bible

By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was a reasonably pleasant summer's day (particularly considering the amount of rain we have been having) at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

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 limited as we could not open up the walls to confirm whether insulation has been added or not. Also we have been unable to access the floors due to floor coverings etc.

THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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