SPECIFIC DEFECTS REPORT

Relating to dampness in the roof, bathrooms and walls and damage to the car park

London
SE16

FOR

Mr H

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTION

We have been instructed by Mr H to prepare an independent report. We have met one of the directors of the property and we have been asked to look at and consider the most urgent problems:

1. Roof
2. Dampness in the bathroom
3. Dampness to the exterior walls
4. Waste pipe leaks
5. Car Park

We have carried out a visual inspection (non evasive) of the property.

The weather was warm and sunny at the time of the inspection.

We are Independent Chartered Building Surveyors and professional members of:-

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
and
The Independent Surveyors and Valuers Association (ISVA).

Report prepared by:

Chartered Building Surveyor

The work has been carried out as per our standard Terms and Conditions of Contract which have been emailed to you as part of the confirmation of our instructions. If you would like further clarification please do not hesitate to contact us.

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SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a four storey block of fourteen self contained apartments with balconies. There are communal areas including stair and lift access and shared internal and external corridors and gated parking area.

The buildings were part of a self build scheme, built in the mid to late 1980's. We were advised that there have been some problems with the building since its completion.

Date plaque showing opened by Queen Mother in July 1988

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Front View

Rear View

Left hand view

Right hand view

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

We have accessed some of the apartments as part of our survey and these have consisted off:

1) Main reception room with balcony

2) Kitchen (accessed from main reception room)

3) Double bedroom

4) Single bedroom

5) Internal bathroom

6) Adjoining corridor

SYNOPSIS

We were advised there have been persistent problems with the property since its completion and we have been shown these (as detailed within this report) and have been asked to advise. We are aware that a one off inspection such as this has limitations and further investigation / inspections may be necessary.

We were given a tour around the property with one of the directors and in addition have carried out a visual inspection and some tests (as detailed later within this report).

We have also inspected briefly four of the apartments and spoken to various occupiers. We have given our best indication of problems based upon this inspection and discussions with the occupiers and our general knowledge and experience of this age, type and style of property, relating specifically to the areas identified we would duly comment.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. Here we give a summary of the problems and our various recommendations:

We have been asked to comment on the following:

1. Roof
2. Dampness in the bathroom
3. Dampness to the exterior walls
4. Waste pipe leaks
5. Car Park

1.0 Roof

We had access to the roof via sets of ladders. We would comment you have:

Five pitched roofs
Four valley gutters
Three box gutters

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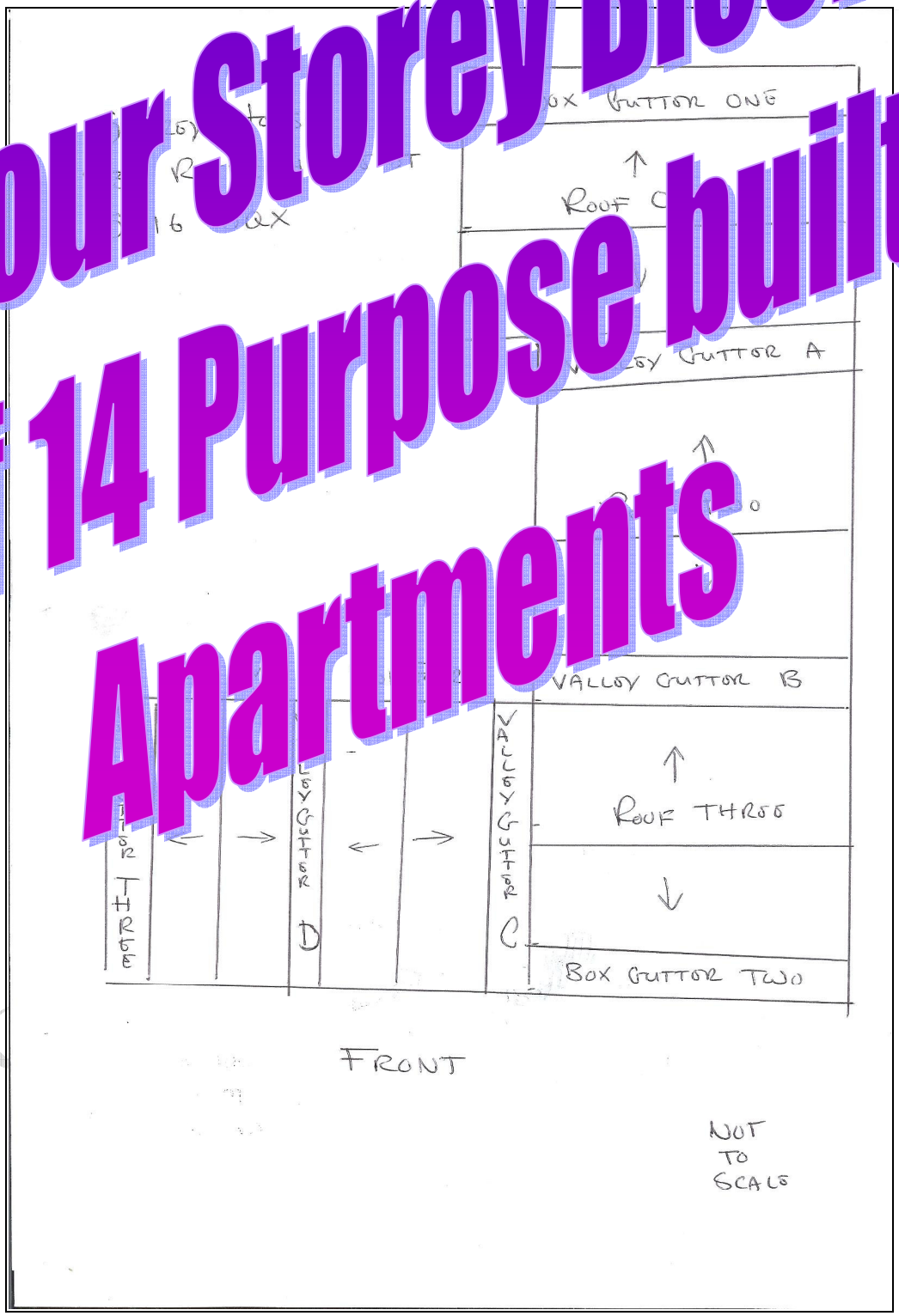
ROOF PLAN



Four Storey Block of 14 Purpose built Apartments

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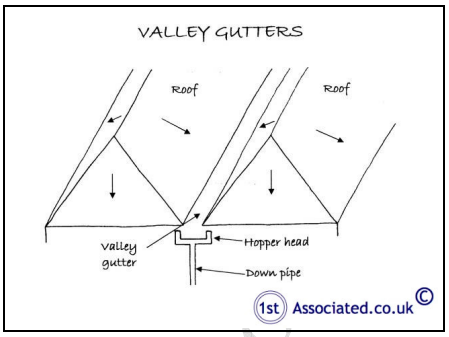
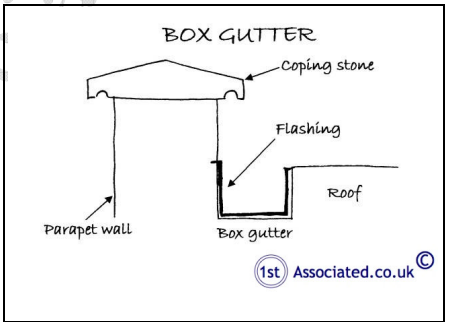
Example of valley gutter



Sketch of a valley gutter

Example of box gutter



Sketch of a box gutter

We were unable to see any of these as the cherry picker was not large enough.

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Both valley gutters and box gutters are renowned problem areas however we were pleased to see in this instance the valley gutters are wider than they typically are and in addition they have overflow drains.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would advise that we could see that the asphalt is deteriorating in some areas which could be leading to roof leaks. This type of roof leak is very difficult to identify as the water tends to travel and appear in a different point to where it originally started. We would particularly comment with regard to dampness in the bathrooms there may be water coming down the outside of the downpipe or alternatively the joints may be causing problems.

Overflow pipe from a distance

Overflow pipes from roof

We have not been able to identify exactly where the drains travel. In "our request for information" we have asked for any drawings you have of the property and from these we may be able to identify weak areas in the structure and therefore give a better indication of where the water is likely to go. Alternatively, we could with a return visit thermal image the property, which is best carried out during the colder months. We note that we were advised when carrying out the survey that you do not have any drawings of the property.

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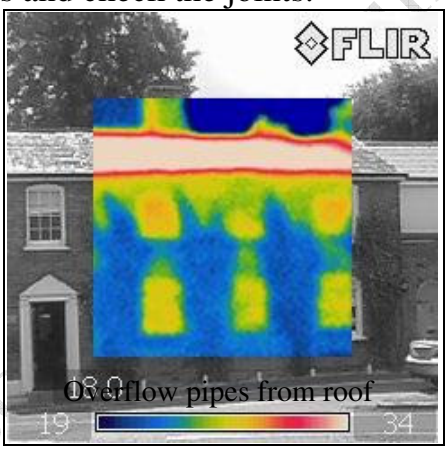
ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend carrying out a dye test (food dye) where each drain in turn is tested using a hosepipe (for water supply), any leaks would then show up as a coloured leak in the relevant area.

Alternatively, some people may not want to have different colours staining within their ceilings as sometimes they are difficult to get rid of, would be to open up the box gutters and check the joints.

Another alternative, which is less invasive or intrusive, is to thermal image the roofs which we will be happy to do.



Example of a thermal image

Another option would be to complete re-asphalt all the gutters and box gutters, although we feel this will be expensive and is not necessary at present. We would also recommend general repair to the box gutters and the valley gutters.

1.1 Water backing up underneath the slates

We have come across problems with these roofs where the water backs up and gets underneath the tiles and water gets in via this method. We have only had the benefit of seeing Apartment 13, there were no signs of problems to the ceiling within that room but we haven't visited any other top floor apartment.

Replacement slate could be asbestos

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1.2 Lack of fall to valley gutters

We would also comment there is a lack of falls on the valley gutters and it does look like you would have room to improve these should you decide to put a new asphalt covering on.

Repair to valley gutter

1.3 Asphalt onto wood decking

You have asphalt onto wood decking. It is generally considered best to put asphalt only onto concrete deckings as this is a more stable base. It would be more traditional to put lead in a valley gutter such as this. So you have to expect some problems due to movement in the wood decking.

Split in asphalt

2.0 Dampness/condensation in the bathrooms

Whilst we believe the dampness in the bathrooms around the service pipe is most likely to relate to roof issues or joint issues with the pipes.

We would also add that the extract fans to the internal bathrooms could be improved and currently would promote condensation in the apartments as a whole.

High level water leak occurring around boxing within bathroom

Internal bathrooms are never ideal but we appreciate why they have been necessary within this design.

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Internal fan within internal bathroom

We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans are added

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that all extract fans are set to over-run, the apartments that we inspected none of them had an over-run. We also feel that they would be better replaced with a larger extract fan that is humidity controlled, meaning that it would switch on and off itself when humidity got to a certain temperature. Alternatively a water leak occurring around the box gutter could be coming off an internal pipe weak joint.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds for extract fans; quotations required.

2.1 Extract fans to kitchens

We would also recommend adding extract fans to the kitchen areas. A drawback of doing this in the kitchen is that they can be draughty when windy but you do need to consider air circulation within these properties.

2.2 Air circulation

We noted that the property has electric heaters, most of which are not placed under windows. This means there is lack of air movement in the properties which also promote condensation.

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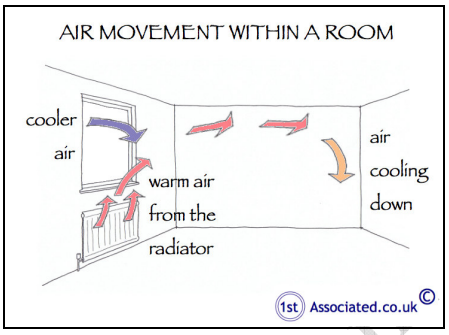
Electric heaters



3.0 Dampness to exterior walls

We were shown dampness to the rear of the property (all directions as you face the front entrance) and we were also shown dampness to the staircase area internally. At the time of the survey we could see no obvious reasons for problems in these areas however, having given it due thought and consideration; we believe that the dampness to the staircase may relate to a leaking valley gutter above. Please see our earlier comments with regards to repairs to valley gutters or box gutters above.

Dampness to rear of property within car park area

We believe the dampness to the rear car of the property may relate to a problem with the concrete balconies throughout where the balconies are holding water which is acting like blotting paper and being drawn into the property.

Efflorescence on brickwork to rear of property indicating wall is constantly damp

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to carry out investigations need to be carried out.

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4.0 Waste pipes leaking

We were shown waste pipes leaks to the left hand side of the property and also to the rear of the property and some of the history of the property was explained.

Leak to left hand side entrance to property from waste pipe

We believe the first thing to do is to clean the area and then check if the problem is still occurring. If it is then we suspect there is a joint problem with all major piping in the property which would involve the opening up of the service ducts within each bathroom. Ultimately you need to have a services record carried out of where the drainage pipes are within the property.

4.1 The cupboard for Apartment 14 on the ground floor

Water pipe added to Apartment 14 cupboard on ground floor

Both look like the downpipes have been damaged in some way. Apartment 14 could relate to where the new water pipe was put in. It may simply relate to poor joints on the downpipes.

ACTION REQUIRED: Explore the replacement of the wastepipes with new wastepipes and also look at making the wastepipes much more accessible for maintenance.

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5.0 Car Park

We were shown the block paved car park and we were shown where the block paved car park had settled in some areas. Whilst this may relate to poor workmanship as it is unusual to see such settlement, we believe it has also been promoted by the overflows that are constantly overflowing.

Two overflows at top of photo - sandy bit at bottom

Area of deterioration which looks a bit sandy which may be caused by overflow from next doors building

Close up of subsiding area in car park

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6. 0 Health and Safety

We will finish with a Health and Safety issue, the roofs currently do not have a safe way of accessing them. You can see there are some old wooden crawler boards on the roof. Replacing these would be ideal although we would recommend placing them centrally.

Crawler boards to roof not useable – and there are only two to five roofs and there should be ten

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SURVEY FINDINGS

A brief summary of what was found.

1.0 From our visual external inspection we noted:

1.1 roofs – man made slates
Some have been damaged and some have been replaced, ironically with what looked to be asbestos slates

1.2 walls – a light brick in a stretcher bond pattern in a cement mortar

1.3 windows – a mixture of timber double glazed windows with trickle vents and plastic double glazed windows without trickle vents.

2.0 From our visual internal inspection we noted

2.1 **Second floor apartment**

Dampness to the ceiling of one apartment's bathroom area, which looked excessive for water coming from a water pipe. We would have thought this would relate to a leak from an overflowing bath or similar from the bathroom above, although having said that we have had a lot of rainwater this year so it may relate to the downpipe.

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Part of bathroom ceiling in Apartment 8 has come down

Close up

Damp reading on ceiling

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2.3 First floor apartment (sits directly below second floor apartment)

Lot of water damage to ceiling

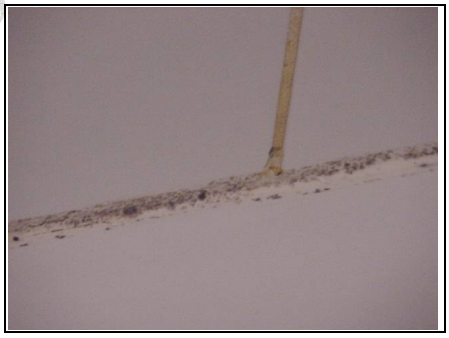
2.4 First floor apartment

Damp staining to corner of lounge and minor mould in the internal bathroom.

We noted a wall had been removed in the kitchen.

Dampness coming into corner of the apartment identified by pen

Internal extract fan in bathroom



Mould in bathroom mastic

Note: we have not moved furniture or fixtures and fittings.

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3.0 Resistance Meter Readings taken with a Gann meter

Location	**Readings Obtained**	**Typical Readings**
Perimeter walls/dry lined	From low 20's to high 20's	25
Concrete balcony	50's	

Gann meter

4. Surface temperature readings

Location	**Readings Obtained**	**Typical Readings**
Perimeter walls/dry lined	20-24	
Concrete balcony		

Surface temperature meter

5. We have not inspected the inside of the roof space.

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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 would add the following in this instance:

1. The roofs need repair
2. The downpipes need repair or possible replacement
3. The overflow pipes to the valley gutters and box gutters need cleaning and checking to ensure they are watertight.
4. We also consider there may be some lifestyle issues within the properties and these need to be addressed. These relate to drying of clothes internally, to steamy cooking and accidental overflows to baths and showers, and of course generally not venting the properties.

Items that need further investigation are all of the above but we would still draw your attention to the dry lining.

Dry lining

The property is dry lined which is quite an advanced technique for the era. Dry lining is a way of adding extra insulation into properties. It is also known as false walling which perhaps gives a better indication of what it involves. We have come across problems recently of inconsistent insulation in the dry lining/false walling which resulted in cold bridging and problems within the property of dampness. This is something we feel will be a future issue in this type of property.

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APPENDICES

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

INSPECTION

CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

FLOOR PLAN

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

TIME LINE

ESTIMATE OF BUILDING COSTS

LIMITATIONS

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1.0 Provide any original or as built drawings

2.0 Provide any specifications on the property

3.0 Provide a maintenance record.

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INSPECTION

Our inspection has been specifically related to the issues detailed below.:

1. Roof
2. Dampness in the bathroom
3. Dampness to the exterior walls
4. Waste pipe leaks
5. Car Park

Visual Inspection

Our inspection has taken the format of a visual inspection:

1. External of the property of the
   - i. Front
   - ii. Rear
   - iii. Left side
   - iv. Right side
   - v. Car park

   We have had the benefit of a x 16 lens on a digital camera

2. Internal of the property

   We have viewed:

   - i. Apartment 13 on top floor
   - ii. Apartment 8 on second floor
   - iii. Apartment 6 on first floor
   - iv. Apartment 4 on first floor
   - v. Communal stairway area
   - vi. Some of the communal corridors internally and externally

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3. Surrounding areas

   i. Front
   ii. Right hand side
   iii. Rear
   iv. Left hand side (car park area)

4. We have had the benefit of talking to some of the occupiers in the property.

5. We have utilised a Gann resistance meter for measuring dampness and also a surface thermometer.

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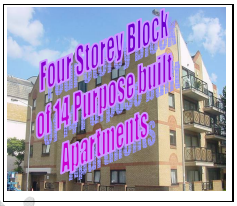
CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

External

Main Roof:	Steep pitched man made slate with large asphalt or felt valley gutters on timber decking, balconies and outside walkways asphalt covered
Roof Structure:	Not viewed, noted there were venting tiles
Gutters and Downpipes:	Internal and external plastic downpipes and overflows
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal plastic
Walls:	Stretcher Bond Brickwork (assumed)
Walls structure:	Concrete frame structure including concrete staircases
External Joinery:	Mixture of original timber with double glazing and trickle vents and replacement plastic double glazed without trickle vents.
Foundations:	Not inspected



Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard or proprietary board (assumed)
Walls:	Perimeter walls: Dry lined (assumed) Internal walls: A mixture of solid and studwork
Floors: Ground Floor:	Concrete

The heating is electric, the water is via a hot water cylinder which is factory lagged.

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

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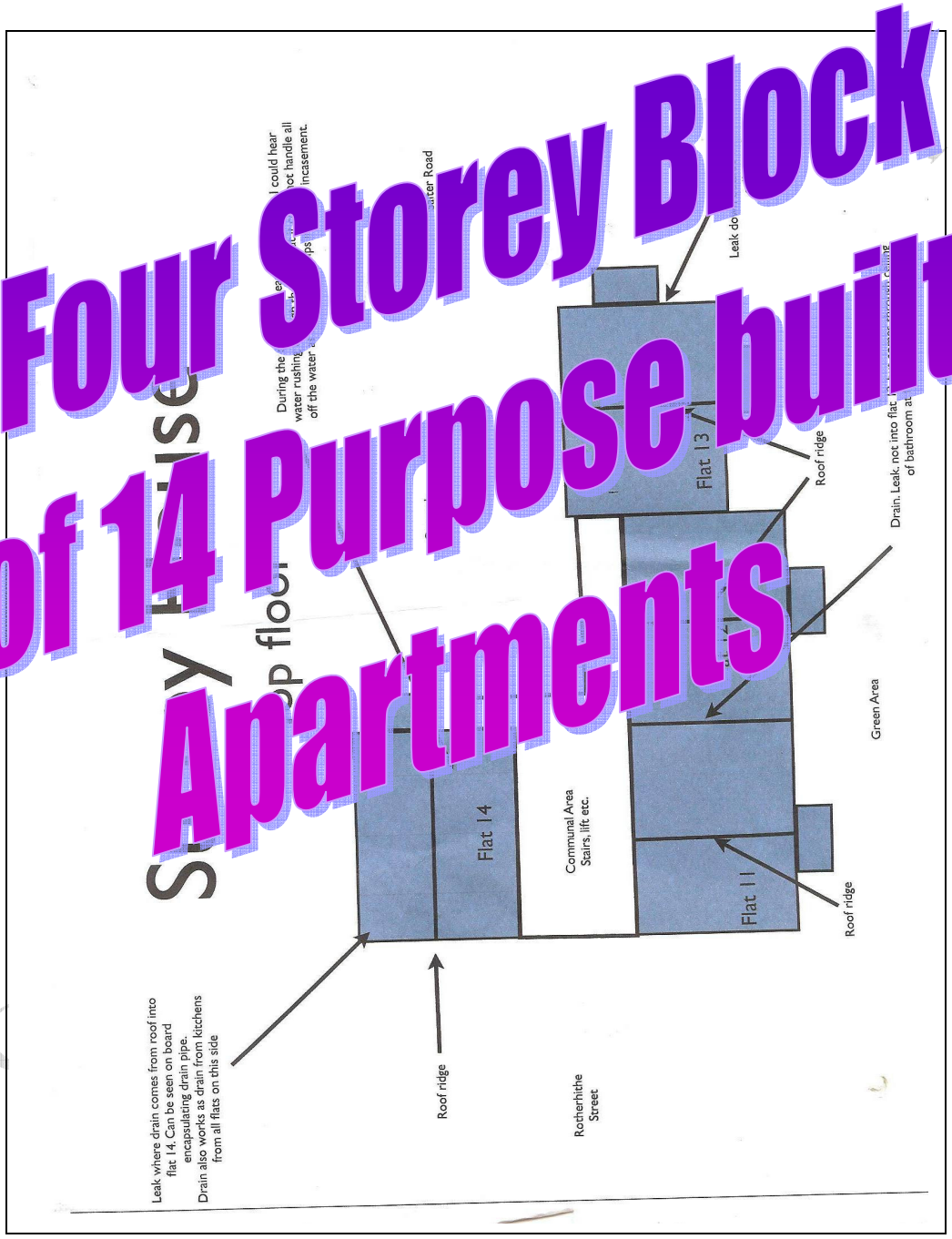
FLOOR PLAN



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ROOFS

Roof One

Roof one

Roof one

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Roof Two

Roof Two

Roof Two

Roof Two

Roof Two

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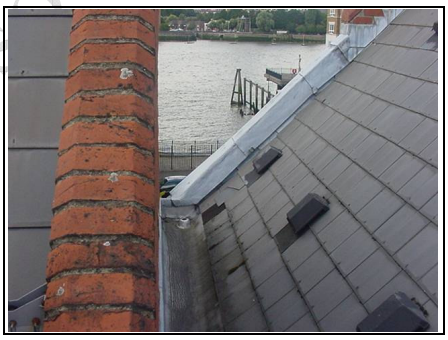
Roof 3

Roof Three

Roof 4

Damage to roof four



Roof Four

Damaged caused to slates by installation of satellite dish on roof four

Roof Four

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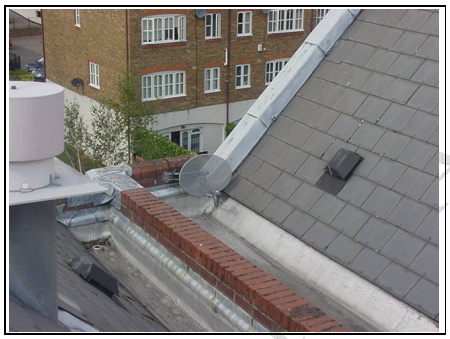
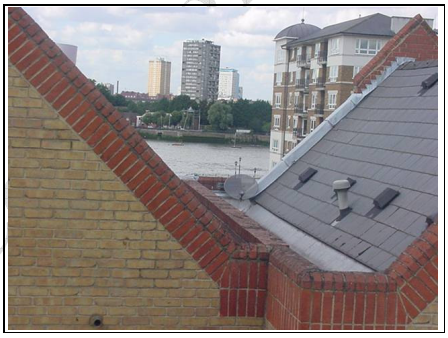
Roof four

Roof 5



Roof Five

Roof Five



Roof Five

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Valley gutter A

Valley gutter A

Valley gutter A

Valley gutter A

Valley gutter A –split in asphalt

Tiles that look to be asbestos in Valley gutter A

Deterioration to valley gutter A

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Valley Gutter B

Valley gutter B

Valley gutter B

Valley gutter B

Valley gutter B

Repairs to valley gutter B

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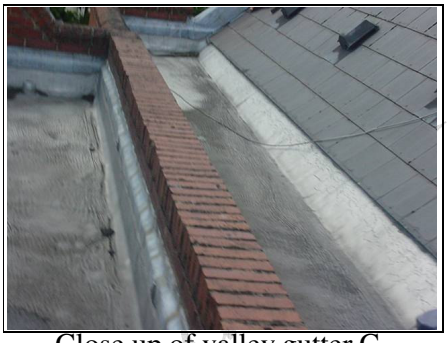
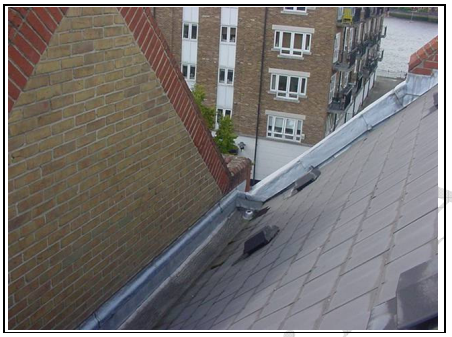
Valley gutter C

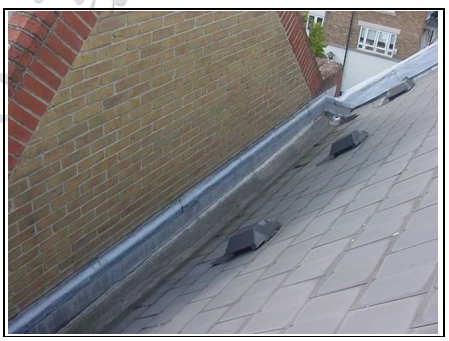
Valley gutter C



Close up of valley gutter C



Valley gutter C



Valley gutter C

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Valley gutter D

Valley gutter D and Roof Four

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PARAPET WALL

Previous repair to parapet wall?

Parapet wall to roof four

BOX GUTTER

We couldn't access box gutters to the of front right hand side, left hand side and rear. XXX to arrange for a cherry picker to return and take photographs and email to us for further comment.

Left hand box gutter

Left hand box gutter

Front right hand side box gutter

Rear box gutter

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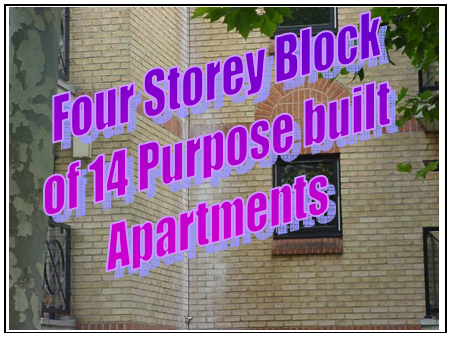
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



Overflowing on right hand side of property relating to water tan internally

Overflowed to ground level

Leaking downpipe to left hand side of property

This is the line of overflowing water from the box gutter – would this be causing the dampness in that wall?

Rear box gutter needs lead positioning properly

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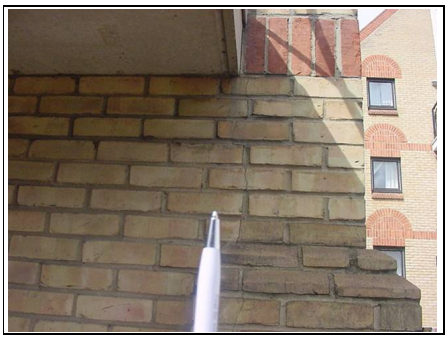
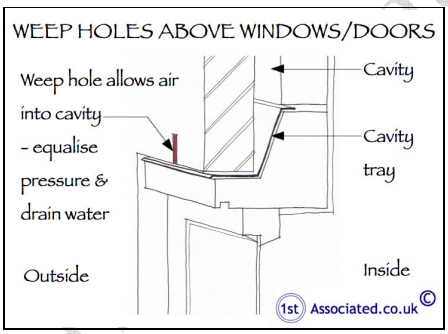
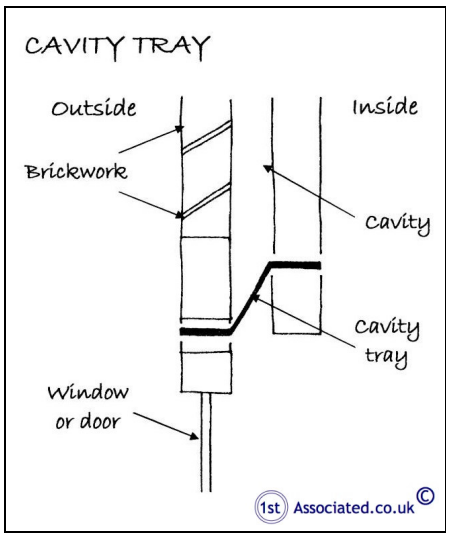
EXTERNAL WALLS



Stretcher bond brickwork -
Hairline crack to rear of property

Weep holes indicate there are cavity trays in the property which means the outer wall is expected to get damp but dry out. The cavity tray passes any dampness from the wall back out via the weep holes.





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BALCONIES

Reinforcement showing through on concrete balcony

Close up of reinforcement

Paint is flaking to rails of balconies, in some areas we can see the original blue paint, other areas have newer black paint

Flaking occurring to front fascia of concrete balconies

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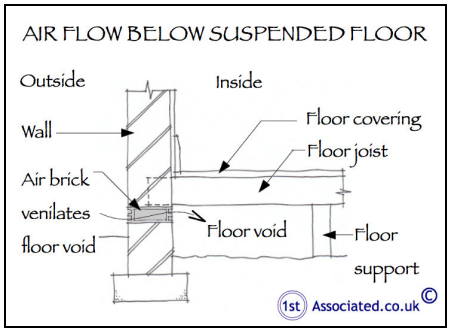
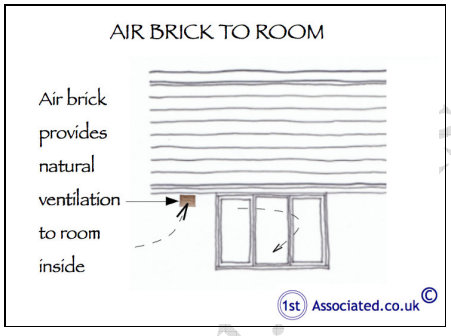
AIRBRICKS

We haven't been in the ground floor apartments, airbricks do indicate a suspended timber floor.



Close up of airbrick



High level internal air vent

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WINDOWS AND DOORS

Timber window with trickle vents

Bare timber to timber windows

Plastic window added without trickle vents

Brick window sills

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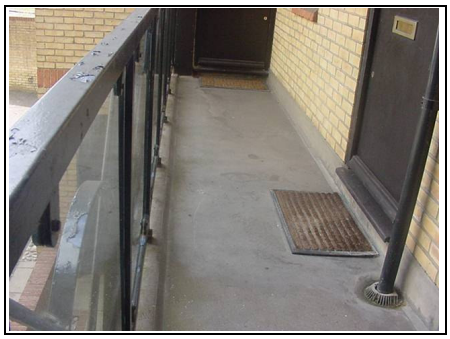
COMMUNAL AREAS



Asphalt covered walkways

Tiles have been added over asphalt walkway – we wouldn't recommend this as it can make the area slippy

Paint flaking to underside of one of ways in ground floor area which indicates that dampness is coming through

EXTERNAL AREAS

Plants growing out of boundary wall indicating it is allowing water in

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INTERNAL

WALLS

Dry lined walls

FLOORS

Floor at top of stairs

Floor runs out true

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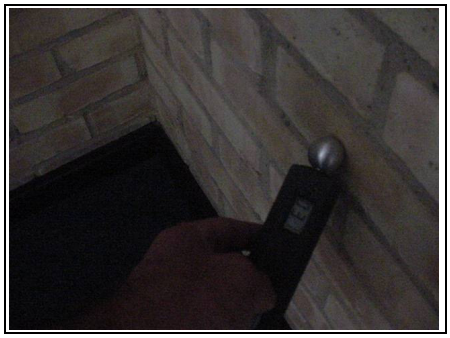
DAMPNESS



Looking for lateral dampness in internal wall, readings in 30's

Higher readings to concrete floors

Reading on asphalt

Reading on internal dry lined wall

Checking for condensation

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OTHER MATTERS

Security system we would recommend is updated

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Time Line – A brief history of the structure

This has been based upon a discussion with XXXX.

DATE	DESCRIPTION
	Dates of when problems occurred.

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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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LIMITATIONS

Specific Defects Report

1. Conditions of Engagement

Please note: references to the masculine include, where appropriate, the feminine.

Subject to express agreement to the contrary (which in this particular case has been none) and any agreed amendments/additions (of which in this particular case there have been none), the terms on which the Surveyor will undertake the Specific Defects Report are set out below.

Based upon a visual inspection as defined below the Surveyor will advise the Client by means of a written report as to his opinion of the visible condition and state of repair of the specific problem or problems only. In this instance relating to dampness in the roof, bathroom and walls and damage to the car park.

2. The Inspection

a) Accessibility and Voids

The Surveyor will base this report on a visual inspection and accordingly its scope is limited. It does not include an inspection of those areas, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. Our visual inspection will relate to the specific defects shown to us only.

b) Floors

We have not opened up the floor structure. We have only carried out a visual inspection and any conclusions will be based upon our best assumptions. We can open up the floor if so required at an extra fee and we recommend it in this instance.

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c) Roofs

We have inspected the roofs where it is safe to do so and we have been unable to inspect the box gutters.

d) Boundaries, Grounds and Outbuildings

We have walked the boundaries. We have not had any map to refer us to where the exact line of the boundaries are, although they do seem self explanatory with the walls around the property.

e) Services

No services inspected.

f) Areas not inspected

The Surveyor will have only inspected those areas identified within the report. His report will be based upon possible or probable defects based upon what he has seen together with his knowledge of that type of structure. If you feel that any further areas need inspection then please advise us immediately.

g) Specific Defects Report

As this is a report upon a Specific Defect we do not offer any comment or guidance upon reactive maintenance and/or planned or routine maintenance items.

h) Whilst we have used reasonable skill and care in preparing this report, it should be appreciated that the Chartered Surveyors cannot offer any guarantee that the property will be free from future defects or that existing defects will not suffer from further deterioration;

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3. Deleterious and Hazardous materials

a) Unless otherwise expressly stated in the Report, the Surveyor will assume that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property. However the Surveyor will advise in the report if in his view there is a likelihood that high alumina cement (HAC) concrete has been used in the construction and that in such cases specific enquiries should be made or tests carried out by a specialist.

4. Contamination

The Surveyor will not comment upon the existence of contamination as this can only be established by appropriate specialists. Where, from his local knowledge or the inspection he considers that contamination might be a problem he should advise as to the importance of obtaining a report from an appropriate specialist.

5. Consents, Approvals and Searches

a) The Surveyor will assume that the property is not subject to any unusual or especially onerous restrictions or covenants which apply to the structure or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the property.

b) The Surveyor will assume that all bye-laws, Building Regulations and other consents required have been obtained. In the case of new buildings and alterations and extensions, which require statutory consents or approval the Surveyor will not verify whether, such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the Client or his legal advisers.

Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor. It is the Clients responsibility to forward any drawings and specifications that he has or knows the whereabouts of to us to include information in our report. If these are not forthcoming we will make our best assumptions based upon the information available.

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c) The Surveyor will assume that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a Local Search and replies to the usual enquiries or by a Statutory Notice and that neither the property nor its condition its use or intended use is or will be unlawful.

6. Fees and Expenses

The Client will pay the Surveyor the agreed fee for the Report and any expressly agreed disbursements in addition.

7. Restrictions on Disclosures

a) This report is for the sole use of the Client in connection with the property and is limited to the current brief. No responsibility is accepted by the Chartered Surveyors if used outside these terms.

b) Should any disputes arise they will be dealt with and settled under English law;

c) This report does not fall under the Third Parties Rights Act.

8. Safe Working Practices

The Surveyor will follow the guidance given in Surveying Safely issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

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