

JOB REFERENCE: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

## RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXXXXXXXXXX,  
Winchmore Hill,  
London  
N21 xxx



FOR

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

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.

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# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

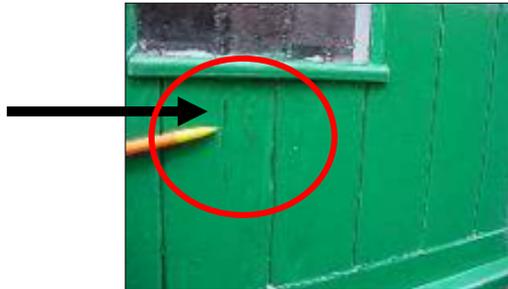
## **GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

## **A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS**



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow 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.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

### **SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION**

This is a two storey modern terraced property, in a cul-de-sac set in a residential area.

There is parking to the front and a garden/jungle to the rear with a number of trees; all sitting on a sloping site.

We believe that the property was built in the 1980's to 2000's. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

#### **Putting Life into Perspective!**

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

1979	Mother Theresa awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
1981	The Queen's second grandchild, Zara Phillips, is born to Princess Anne and Mark Phillips
1984	Live Aid Concerts
1986	Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson were married
1988	Margaret Thatcher became the longest serving British Prime Minister for this century
1990	Nelson Mandela is freed
1992	The Queen celebrated her Ruby Jubilee
1994	The Channel Tunnel is opened
1995	Joseph Rotblat won the Nobel Peace Prize
Late 1990s	The British Property Boom
2000	Broadband Launched

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear View



Cul-de-sac



Front parking space



Rear garden

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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

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

### **Ground Floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway
- 2) Cloakroom
- 3) Kitchen to front right side
- 4) Lounge to rear, which incorporates staircase to first floor

### **First Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Bedroom to front
- 2) Bedroom to rear, with en-suite shower room
- 3) Internal Bathroom to middle

### **Outside Areas**

There is parking to the front and a small very overgrown garden to the rear.

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

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## INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

### Ground Floor



Lounge looking to rear and left



Lounge looking to rear and right



Cloakroom



Kitchen

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**First Floor**



Front bedroom



Internal bathroom



Rear bedroom



En-suite shower room  
to rear bedroom

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## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with concrete tiles
Main Roof Structure:	Pre-fabricated roof
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Walls:	Stretcher Bond Brickwork (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Double glazed windows into a timber frame

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Studwork, perimeter walls are dry lined (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Suspended floor (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist and floorboard sheets; possibly on joist hangers (assumed)

### **Services**

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The electrics are in the ground floor cloakroom. The boiler is a wall mounted Prima profile, located in the kitchen.

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

Finally, your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 200 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

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

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

### **The Good**

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

1.0) The property is vacant.

2.0) It has potential.

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

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## **The Bad**

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

### 1.0) **Plant life growing from the rear gutters**

You can literally see grass growing from the rear gutters. This needs to be cleared and all the junctions and joints checked to the gutters and downpipes. We noted that some of them looked to be leaking from the staining on them.



Grass growing out of gutters

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Clear gutters and check junctions and joints.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** This is included in any gardening work but if left will allow dampness into the building; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.



Gutters and downpipe clearly leaking

### 2.0) **Cracking and minor movement to the rear**

We noted cracking over the rear door and stepped cracking adjacent to the rear window. This could again relate to the rainwater drains to the rear right corner, or it could relate to dampness being caused by the ivy to the rear which does not look to have been maintained for a very long time.



Crack to rear of property

**ACTION REQUIRED:** This should be monitored as we believe this

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relates to the drains. Please see our following comments about having the drains pressure hosed and a closed circuit TV camera report carried out.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £200 to £500; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

### 3.0) Drains slow to run away

The drains were very slow to run away. We made enquiries with a neighbour, Marie, in the end property (who you met) who advised that they were not aware of any problems with their drains.

We double checked the drains and still found them slow to run away. In fact, they seemed to be going slightly uphill.



Water was slow to run away from the drains, in fact water sat in the drains

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ideally live with these and if they are still not working we would recommend they are pressure jetted and have a closed circuit TV camera report.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £200 to £500 (as above); please obtain quotations.

A worst case scenario would involve re-laying the drains but we assume as the property has been let, meaning that usually tenants would complain about this sort of issue, that it works satisfactorily but nevertheless does need checking.

Please see the Main Drains Section of this Report.

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#### 4.0) External Redecoration

You have timber windows which are in need of redecoration. We tend to find that this era of timber double glazed windows tends to be relatively poor quality timber that has to be very well maintained to stop it from rotting.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Carry out Redecoration.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £1,000 to £2,000; please obtain quotations.

Checking the condition of the timber window sill

We would add that the Fascias and Soffits will also need some redecoration.

Please see the External Decoration Section of this Report.

#### 5.0) Poor decoration and laminate floor

Generally the property needs redecorating throughout. Also the laminated floor is poorly fitted and is starting to wear in high use areas, such as the hallway entrance to the property.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would ultimately recommend that this is replaced with properly fitted good quality laminate flooring.

Laminate flooring in lounge

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

Please see the Flooring Section of this Report.

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## 6.0) Services

### 6.1) Heating

The Prima profile wall mounted boiler in the kitchen looks to be coming to the end of its natural life. You may experience difficulty in obtaining parts with an older boiler such as this.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend the boiler is serviced and then look to replace it as soon as possible. The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Prima boiler has seen better days

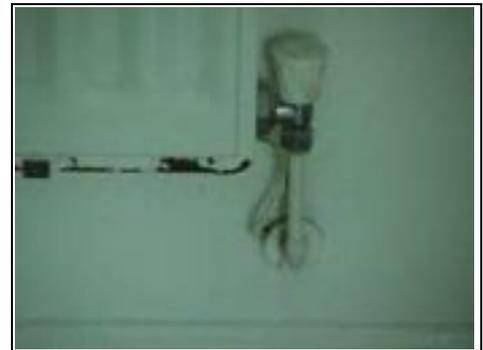
**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £2,000 to £3,000 to ultimately replace the boiler; please obtain quotations.

### 6.2) Radiators

The radiator in the hallway looks to have been disconnected and is not working. We also noticed staining in the rear bedroom which looks like it has come from a leaking radiator.



Hole in wall and disconnected radiator



Rusting radiator

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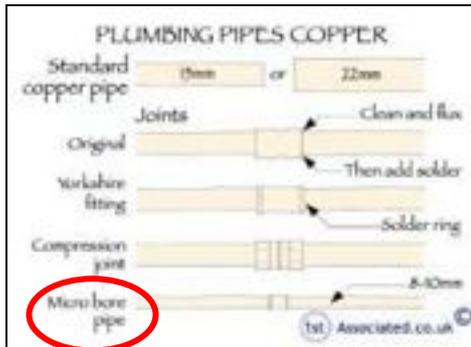
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**ACTION REQUIRED:** The heating needs to be looked at and switched on before exchange of contracts or assume that it is not working and that you will need to modify it. We also noted it had micro bore pipes which do tend to block.

Micro bore pipe defined

This is a modern piping system with a narrow gauge. These tend to get blocked more easily than a traditional heating system that uses a 12/13mm pipe. Micro-bore pipes are a cheaper more economical solution than a traditional system and easier to put in from a plumbers point of view, which is why they are popular with plumbers.



Microbore pipes



Micro bore pipe

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We would set aside the sum of £1,000 to £2,000 for pressure jetting the system and repairing the damaged pipe.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

**7.0) Extract fans not working correctly**

We noted the extract fans did not seem to be working that well and this has resulted in mould and moss that has been painted over in the front bedroom. There has also been some painting over in the rear bedroom.



Knife pointing at mould in front bedroom (difficult to see in photo)

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Replace all the extract fans with large humidity

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controlled extract fans in the kitchen, bathroom and en-suite shower room.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £150 to £250 per extract fan dependent upon wiring required; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

### 8.0) Garden/Jungle

The garden is overgrown. It is particularly important that the ivy is taken off the rear of the property as it looks to be damaging the walls, the fascias and getting into the gutters.



Overgrown garden/jungle



Ivy growing out of gutters and down the walls

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The garden needs clearing. Cut back plants, particularly the ivy where it is on the wall and in the gutters.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We would expect fairly major costs on the garden, between £1,000 to £2,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Outside Areas Section of this Report.

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## **The Ugly**

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this section providing you are happy with the characteristics and associated costs of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report.

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

### **Maintenance**

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

### **Services**

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services. We also need to advise you of the following:

#### **Heating**

As mentioned the boiler is dated and there are problems with the radiators. We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

#### **Drainage**

Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes we are concerned that water is sitting in the drains and would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report is carried out to be certain of the condition of the drains.

### **ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES:**

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

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### **DIY/Handyman Type Work**

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

### **Purchase Price**

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

### **Every Business Transaction has a Risk**

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

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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 £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

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## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**



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

We were surprised at the condition of the property given its age as there seems to have been a lack of general maintenance and cheaper solutions carried out to the property for some time. We would particularly draw your attention to the drainage and the replacement of the boiler as well as the general decoration internally and externally that is needed to bring the property up to standard.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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

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

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## **MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT**

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

### **TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)**

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

### **ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?**

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). We are employed as Independent Chartered Surveyors and offer an independent point of view.

### **SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

### **TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS**

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

### **OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION**

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

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



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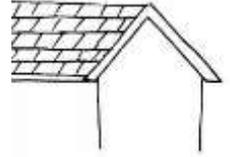
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## EXTERNAL

### ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in two areas; the main roof and the front porch canopy roof.

#### Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and clad with a concrete tile and from ground level, this looks in average condition (with the exception of where the ivy is growing over it to the rear) considering the roofs age type and style. There is also some light moss on it.



Main roof

#### Step in the roof

There is a step in the roof where we can see a lead flashing in place. Overtime these do tend to deteriorate.

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

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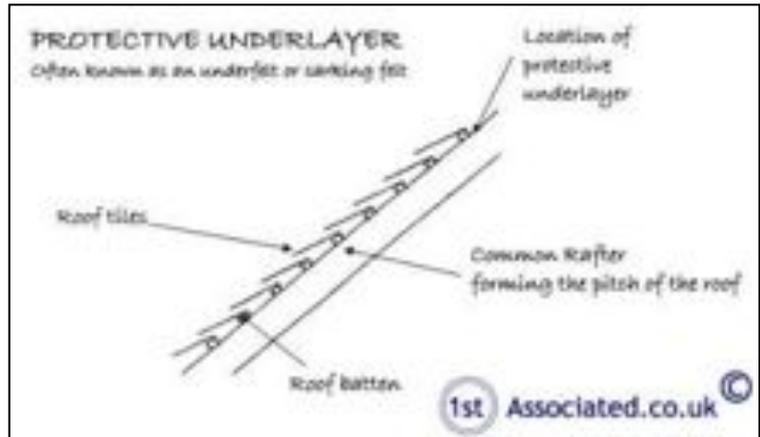
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## **Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)**

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



Protective Underlayer

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



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

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## **Porch roof**

This roof is pitched and is covered with a manmade slate. To the base of it is some moss, for which there does not appear to be an explanation for unless the gutter above is blocked. We were pleased to see a lead flashing where the roof meets the main building. Normally we find with newer buildings such as this that the lead flashing does come away over time.



Porch roof



Moss on porch roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Clear the moss.

## **Party Walls**

The party wall relates to shared items, such as firewalls. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

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.*

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

Finally, we were only able to see approximately seventy percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder. Part of the roof is hidden by the ivy and part because of the angle. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

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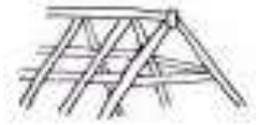
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## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**

### **(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)**

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

### **Main Roof**

#### **Roof Access**

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is a loft ladder, an electric light and some secured floorboards. We recommend that secured floorboards are added throughout (preferably with insulation), as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

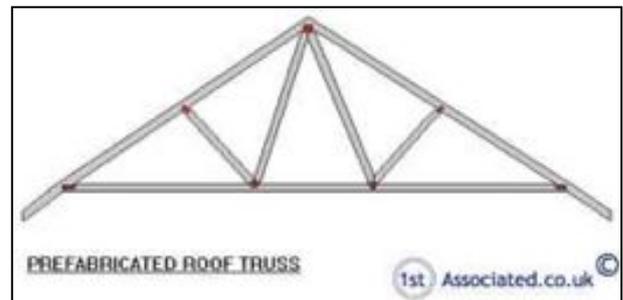
The loft perimeter has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.



Ladder to loft

#### **Roof Structure**

The property has a pre-fabricated trussed roof rafter. These are made in a factory and transported to site and then lifted into place. Without the manufacturers' calculations and installation details we cannot comment categorically on the roof.



Pre-fabricated roof truss

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## Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

1. Serious active woodworm
1. Structurally significant defects to the timbers
2. Structurally significant dry rot
3. Structurally significant wet rot



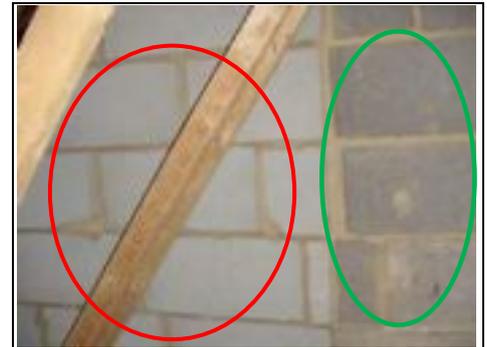
General view of inside of roof

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

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

## Fire Walls

The property has two blockwork firewalls which are located one to the left side and one to the right side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewalls are also Party Walls. They are slightly unusual as they are in different blocks.



Blockwork firewall – note the different blocks

### Fire Walls Defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

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### Water Tanks

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



Water tank

### Ventilation

There is no ventilation to the roof. Ideally we would prefer this age of property to have ventilation in it.

**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 it due to the mass of insulation.

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

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

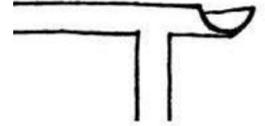
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## GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

### Gutters and Downpipes

The gutters and downpipes are plastic. Some of the guttering to the rear has been hidden by the ivy.

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



Ivy and grass in gutters  
(photo taken from neighbour's property)

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Remove/cut back ivy from gutters and see our comments within the Executive Summary.

We would always recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints. We also 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.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

### Soil and Vent Pipe

The property has internal soil and vent pipes.

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

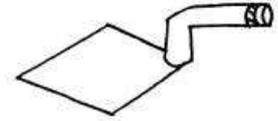
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# WALLS

*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 property is built in a brick known as 'Stretcher Bond' brickwork.

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



Stretcher Bond brickwork

## Cavity Walls

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



Weep hole



Weep hole in soldier course of bricks above windows

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## Wall Ties

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

## Efflorescence

We noted some efflorescence on the brickwork.

### Efflorescence Defined

This is where salts appear on the surface of the brickwork in a white dust or crystal formation



Efflorescence

## Cracking

We noted cracking to the rear of the property. This is under and around the windows.

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

We would remind you that any hairline cracks that appear need to be sealed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in and causing blisters and hollow areas.

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.

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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.

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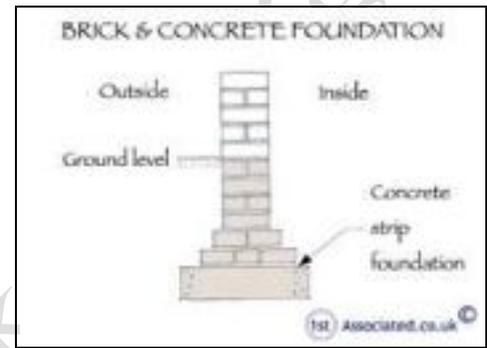


# FOUNDATIONS

*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

We would expect to find a concrete foundation typically known as a 'strip concrete' foundation going down to a meter or slightly deeper dependent upon the age of the property.



Concrete foundation

## London Clay

As with most properties in the London area, this property stands on London Clay. It is therefore more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

## Building Insurance Policy

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

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this.

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## Cracks

Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection; the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

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

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.

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

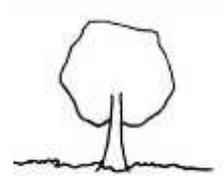
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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# TREES

FOUNDATIONS

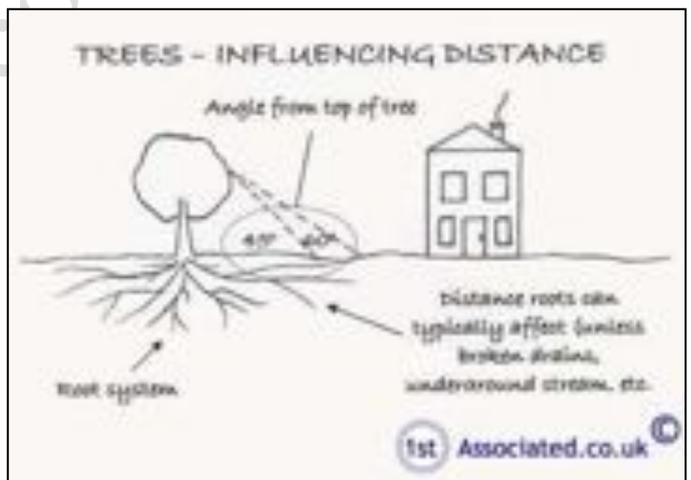
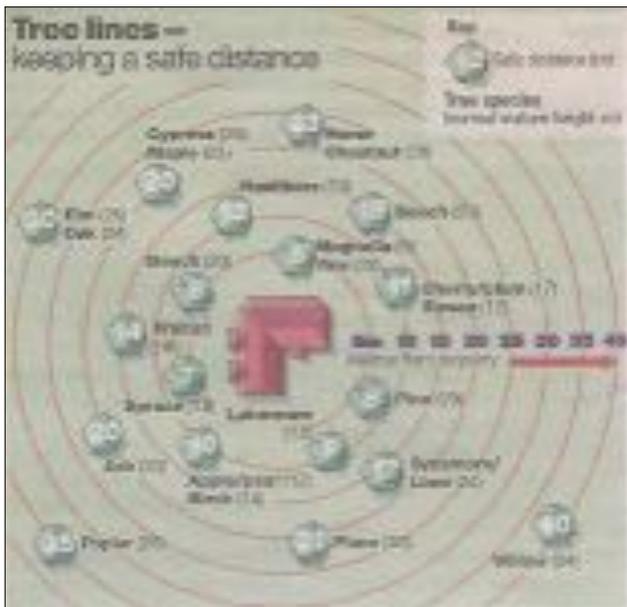
*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There are trees within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You do need to cut the trees back considerably and then review. Ultimately you may need an Arboriculturalist (not a tree surgeon) to view the trees and give an opinion on whether the trees will affect the property or we will be happy to revisit.



Trees (taken from neighbour's garden)



Influencing distance of trees to a property

## Influencing Distance Defined

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

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Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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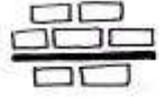
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## DAMP PROOF COURSE

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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, we could not physically see it but given the age of the property it is likely to have been built in.

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

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

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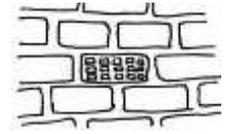
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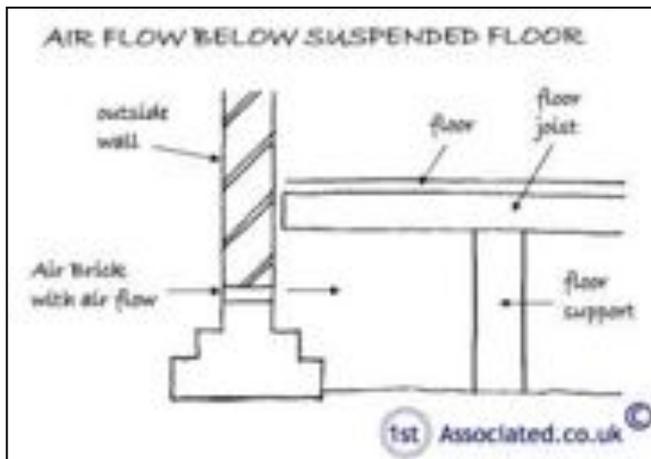
## AIRBRICKS



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

### Low Level Air Bricks

We are unsure whether the property has a timber or concrete floor due to the laminate flooring. In this age of property it is often a concrete floor. Air bricks are essential to have a through flow of air.



Air brick

Suspended floor, likely to be concrete but we cannot confirm.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ensure the air bricks are clear.

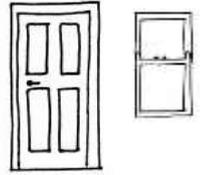
Finally, we have made our best assumptions based upon our visual inspection of the outside of the property and our general knowledge of this age, type and style of construction. We have not opened up the walls/floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

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## FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

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

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

### Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are timber. They are painted and we would comment they are in below average condition for their age, type and style. A fascia has dropped down to the rear which is why the window was hitting it when we opened it. We noted that the ivy is around the fascias and soffits.



Ivy on fascias and soffits

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Remove ivy, re-secure fascias and soffits and redecorate.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** High level work likely to be in the region of £500 to £1,000 dependent upon problems found.



Fascia board dropped down and the window hits it when it is opened

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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## Windows and Doors

The property has timber double glazed windows with trickle vents, which generally look to be of an average quality.

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 the knife test showed the timber to be in average condition. Often with this age of property we find that the timber goes soft very quickly.

Some of the ironmongery needs replacing and the trickle vents did not work very well.

### Trickle Vents Defined

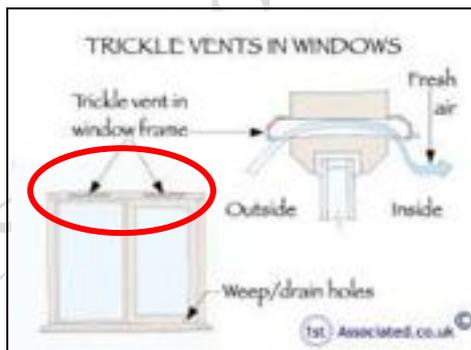
Trickle vents allow a trickle of air through, therefore stopping/reducing the likelihood of condensation occurring within the property.



Knife test on window sills



Ironmongery to double glazed window



Trickle vents



Trickle vent

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## **Transferable 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.

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.

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## **EXTERNAL DECORATIONS**

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

The external decorations need work carrying out. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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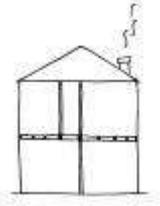
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## INTERNAL



# 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 or there may be some proprietary boarding as this was fairly common in this era of property.

### Plasterboard Defined

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

## Internal Walls and Partitions

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

Hairline cracks internally indicate some movement to the property which can be initial settlement but as mentioned it may relate to the drains in this particular era of property.



Hairline cracks inside are not normally a problem



Crack to rear of lounge

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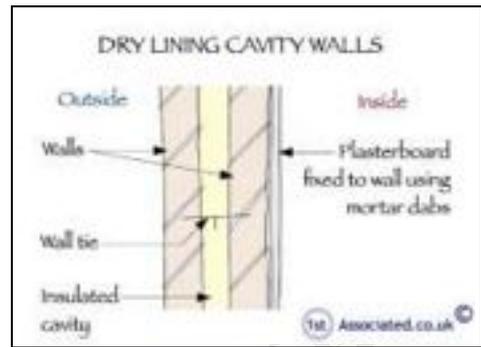
## Perimeter Walls

These are predominantly dry lined.

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

We can also see in the roof that block work has been used.

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



Cavity dry lining

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# FLOORS

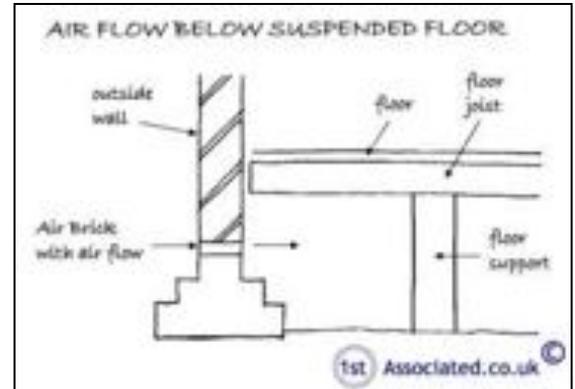


*Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.*

## Ground Floor

The ground floors of the property are suspended and are likely to be concrete.

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



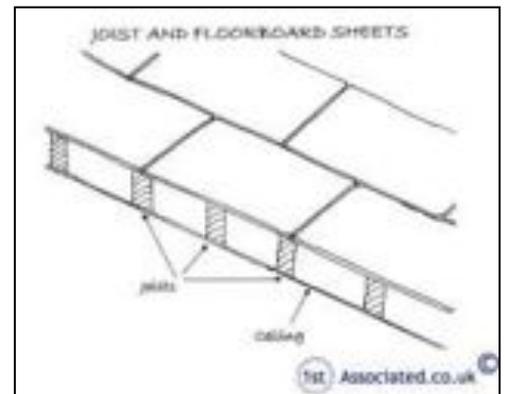
Suspended floor

## First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboard sheets; possibly on joist hangers, which are typical in this age of property.

### Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



Joist and floorboard sheets

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets, floor coverings, 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.

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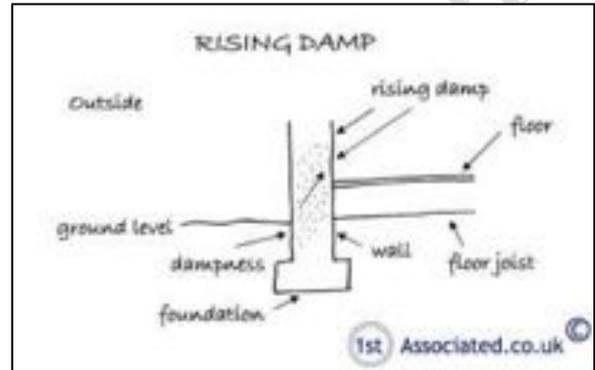


## DAMPNESS

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

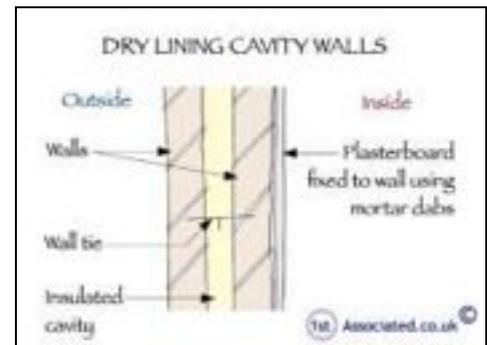
### Rising Damp

*Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.*



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we are unable to test for rising damp as the walls are dry lined.



Walls are dry lined

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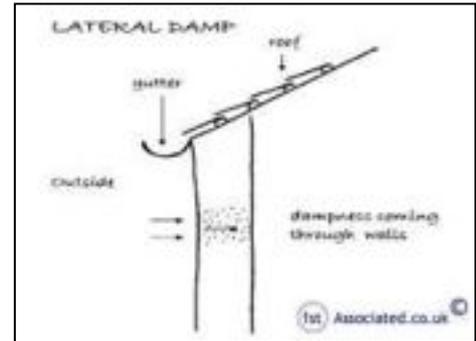
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## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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

We have not been able to obtain damp meter readings due to the walls being dry lined.



Lateral dampness

## Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there appeared to be signs of condensation on the window sill. We were surprised at this, particularly with double glazing, and it may be from where the extraction in the bathroom is not working well enough.

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



Peeling paint noted on the window sill- this is a sign of condensation

## Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans with large humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens and bathrooms and also in any areas where you intend to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas.



Insufficient extract fan in bathroom

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans be added to the kitchen, bathroom, en-suite and any areas used for laundry/drying of clothes.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

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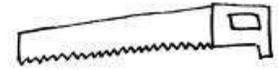
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## INTERNAL JOINERY



*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 modern hollow egg box construction doors. We noted some damage to the doors and some of the ironmongery needs repairing or replacing.



Modern door



Damage to door



Ironmongery needs repair/replacing

### Staircase

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

### Skirtings

The skirtings are coming away on the staircase, again indicating some movement in the property; please see our comments on the drains in the Executive Summary



Skirting coming away from stairs

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## **Kitchen**

We found the kitchen in below average condition, subject to some wear and tear as one would expect. We assume you are looking to refurbish this.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

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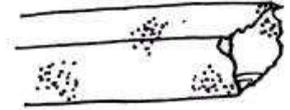
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## **TIMBER DEFECTS**



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

### **Dry Rot**

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

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

### **Wet Rot**

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

We have not visually seen any signs of significant wet rot during the course of our inspection.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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## **Woodworm**

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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property.

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

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

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## INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

Internal decorations are in below average condition. We assume you will be re-decorating from our discussions with you.

It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place. This very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, within hallways this tends to be greater than for example within 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.

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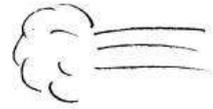
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# THERMAL EFFICIENCY



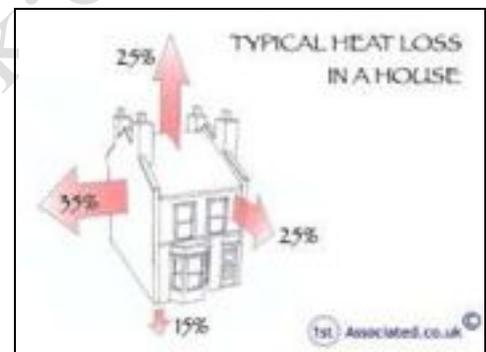
*Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation.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

## HIPs

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

## Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this instance there is about 200mm.



Typical heat loss

## Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction. In this age of property there is usually insulation.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Adviser to check and confirm if there is insulation within the walls and whether it was installed originally or not.

## Windows

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

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## Services

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

## Summary

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

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

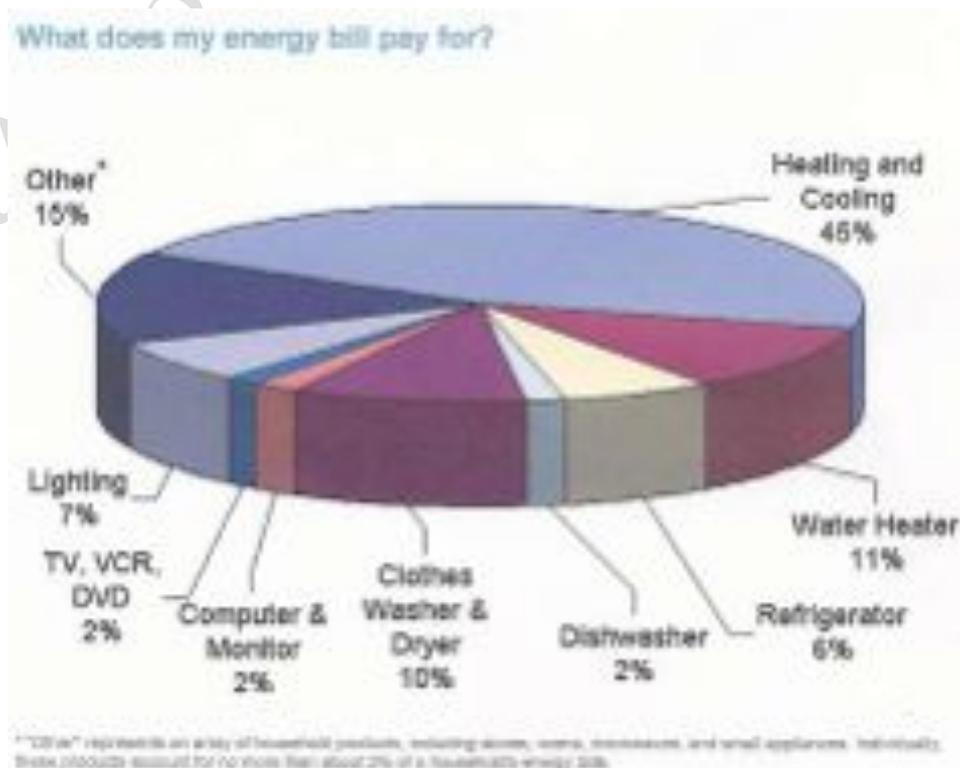
*[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.*

*or alternatively [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk)*

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

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay [HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp2IXs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp2IXs)*

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





## **OTHER MATTERS**

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

### **Security**

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

### **Fire / Smoke Alarms**

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

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

### **Insurance**

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

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

### **Asbestos**

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have not noted asbestos.

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Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the UK in the last ten years or so. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

Our insurance company requires us to advise that we are not asbestos surveyors.

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

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## **SERVICES**

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

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

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# ELECTRICITY



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

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

## Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the cloakroom on the ground floor. The fuse board looked to be original and better are now available.



Fuse Board

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you are carrying out a lot of refurbishment then we would recommend that this is upgraded at the same time.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £200 to £400.

## Earth Test

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



Earth Test

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

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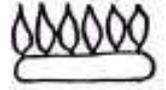
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## GAS



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

We are advised that the property has mains gas.

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

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

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## PLUMBING AND HEATING

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

### Water Supply

The controlling stopcock was not located. It is usually under the kitchen sink.

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ask the owners or Estate Agent to show you where it is, although we would not expect most Estate Agents to know where it is.

### Water Pressure

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

### Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

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## Hot Water Cylinder

There is a factory insulated hot water cylinder located within the airing cupboard on the first floor. This cylinder will therefore have a good thermal efficiency, although not as good as the more modern hot water cylinders.



Hot water cylinder

## Plumbing

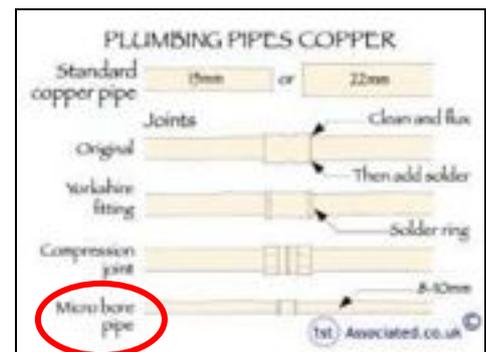
The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

## Micro bore pipe

We noted micro bore piping to the radiators. This tends to block.

### Micro bore pipe defined

This is a modern piping system with a narrow gauge. These tend to get blocked more easily than a traditional heating system that uses a 12/13mm pipe. Micro-bore pipes are a cheaper more economical solution than a traditional system and easier to put in from a plumbers point of view, which is why they are popular with plumbers.



Micro bore pipe

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## Heating

The wall mounted boiler was located in the kitchen and is a Prima profile. 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.

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### **Ten Minute Heating Test**

There was no owner / occupier at the property and therefore we do not turn the heating on in case there is a problem with it. You need to have this tested/switched on by the Estate Agent when you are at the property.

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

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

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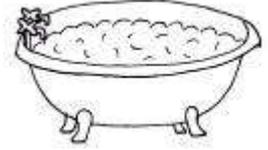
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## **BATHROOM**



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

### **Internal Bathroom**

The property has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition, subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect. We noticed that the mastic seals have deteriorated and if the bath is to be used then you need to re-new the seals.



The bath needs to be re-sealed

### **En-Suite Shower Room**

The rear bedroom has an en-suite shower room. We would comment this is dated and again would recommend the seals are re-newed before it is used.

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

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## MAIN DRAINS

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

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

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the kitchen. There was a build-up and back up noted. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

### Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole to the front of the property on your land and one in the adjoining neighbours to the left.

#### Manholes Defined

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

### Inspection Chamber / Manhole One (front)

We duly lifted the cover and found the water slow to run away / sat in the drain at the time of our inspection.

From what we could see it is plastic built.

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



Water sitting in manhole after we turned the taps on

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

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

### **Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage**

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal. Normally in a property of this age the rainwater drains discharge into a soak away.

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

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

### PARKING



The property has a parking space to the front but the bins may need to be moved as it is a slightly tight space definitely aimed at the smaller car.



Front parking space

### REAR GARDEN

The rear garden is very overgrown.

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



Rear Garden

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

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

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## **Neighbours**

### **Left Hand Neighbours**

We knocked on the door but no one answered.

### **Right Hand Neighbours**

We knocked on the door but no one answered.

### **Other Neighbours**

As you are aware we spoke to Marie on the corner and we also spoke to Chris in the adjoining house so that you could see what alterations and improvements had taken place in their houses.

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## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ii) Rising damp treatments.
  - iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
  - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - v) Roof and similar renewals.
  - vi) Central heating installation.
  - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - viii) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
  - ix) 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

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Designated Planning Area.

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

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the [www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

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

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

For and on Behalf of  
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
Independent Chartered Surveyors

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## **REFERENCES**

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

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

House Builders Bible  
*By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press*

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## **LIMITATIONS**

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

## **CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

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

## **ENGLISH LAW**

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

## **SOLE USE**

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

## **ONLY HUMAN!**

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

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

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## **WEATHER**

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

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

## **NOT LOCAL**

It should be noted the surveyors may not be local 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.

## **EMPTY PROPERTY**

The property was empty at the time of our survey, we were therefore not able to carry out our usual question and answer session or have our questionnaire filled out.

## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited:

- 1.) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor.
- 2.) The property was empty we did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or the previous tenants.

We did have the benefit of meeting you at the property, thank you for your time.

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## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

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

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

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

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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

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# APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market

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## **THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS**

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

### **Work You Cannot do Yourself**

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

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## **INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET**

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

[www.landreg.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.halifax.co.uk) and [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://www.nationwide.co.uk)

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

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[www.hometrack.co.uk](http://www.hometrack.co.uk)

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

[www.motleyfool.co.uk](http://www.motleyfool.co.uk)

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

[www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

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

[www.zoopla.co.uk](http://www.zoopla.co.uk)

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

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