

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Edgware, Middlesex

Post War
End of Terrace
Property

Post War
End of Terrace
Property



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INTRODUCTION

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

The Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

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

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

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

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

REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

A two storey end terraced property situated on a corner plot in a residential area of similar properties on a sloping site. There have been extensions and alterations carried out to the property.

There is a garden to the front which has been given over mainly to car parking with a garage access and a garden to the rear.

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

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1939-1945	World War II (6 June 1944 D-Day)
1948	The Manchester Mark 1 developed (arguably the first computer)
1948	Olympic Games held in London
1950	The concept of artificial intelligence for computers was developed by Alan Turing (MOD)
1960	The Internet was developed as a communications system for the defence industry
1963	President Kennedy assassinated in Dallas
1965	The Death Penalty is abolished
1966	England win the football World Cup

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Post War
End of Terrace
Property



Front view

Post War
End of Terrace
Property



Left and side view

Post War
End of Terrace
Property



Rear view

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance area
- Through lounge
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Shower room
- Access to the garage

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Two double bedrooms
- One single bedroom
- Bathroom to rear

Outside Areas

A garden to the front which has been given over mainly to car parking with a garage access and a garden to the rear.

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



Front of lounge



Rear of lounge



Kitchen



Conservatory



Shower room

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First Floor



Double bedroom



Double bedroom



Single bedroom



Bathroom

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	One brick chimney
Main Roof:	A hipped roof clad with clay tiles
Extension Roof:	Clad with clay tiles
Conservatory Roof:	Polycarbonate
Garage Roof:	Flat roof
Porch Roof:	Flat roof (not accessed)
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast Iron/Plastic
Walls:	Predominantly painted render with a brick built extension.
External Joinery:	Double glazed without trickle vents

INTERNAL

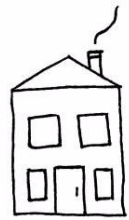
Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard
Walls:	A mixture of solid and hollow
Floors:	Ground Floor: A mixture of a suspended timber floor to the front and a concrete floor to the rear (assumed). First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

SERVICES

We assume that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas. The boiler is a Vaillant model and is located in the garage. The electrics are dated 1990's and are located under the stairs.

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report. We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 250 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.

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

The Good

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

- 1) The property has potential albeit there are a number of problems.
- 2) It has been extended to make it a larger property.
- 3) It has the benefit of off-road parking.

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

The Ugly

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

1) Movement

There has been movement to the property with cracking indicating problems to the rear left hand corner (all directions given as you face the front of the property). The movement may have something to do with drainage problems.



We would add that when we were in the roof we could see that there has been movement to the hips of the main roof. It is very unusual to see this amount of movement and it did look like the purlins may have been replaced.



Cracking to the rear

ACTION REQUIRED: Existing owner to put in an insurance claim with regard to subsidence, by doing this you will have a limit on your liability of the excess, typically a few thousand pounds. The insurance company will monitor for a year as recommended by the Building Research Establishment which is far better than our one off inspection.



Movement to front of garage

ANTICIPATED COST: A few thousand pounds, whatever the excess is. You need to have this reduced from the price of the property, if not more to allow for the inconvenience of sorting out the problem and the risk you are taking. We therefore recommend you double the figure.

However we would not recommend purchasing this property as there are a number of issues that we can see with it.

Purlins Defined

The horizontal timbers that support the common rafters which are the ones that form the pitch of the roof.

Please see the Roof Structure and Walls Sections of this Report.

2) **Possible drainage problems and has this property got Building Regulations approval?**

The rear man hole has had additional waste put into it, possibly from the shower and W.C. We don't believe this is up to Building Regulations standards. We would also comment that the smells from this could filter into the conservatory.



Internal manhole not to building regulations

There is also an internal manhole, these are not ideal for obvious reasons. We could also see when we were on the roof of the garage that some of the rainwater downpipes are discharging into the foul water downpipes.

In addition, there is a hopper head within the rear conservatory which is not ideal.

ACTION REQUIRED: As we feel the drains may be a problem that is causing cracking in the property we would recommend a close circuit TV camera report of the whole drainage system. Your solicitor needs to check to ensure that Building Regulations and Planning Permissions have been obtained for this rear extension.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £500; quotations required.

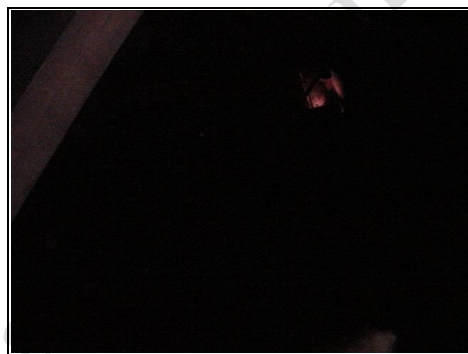
Please see the Main Drains Section of this Report.

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.

3) Main roof work

This age of roof doesn't have a protective underlayer; it relies on the tiles only to protect the property. You can see that light is coming through in the photo.



Light coming through indicating work is required in roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a roofer spends two days at the property checking and aligning all the roofs.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £300 - £500 depending on what materials he uses; quotations required. We would also negotiate the price for re-roofing the property and adding a protective underlayer. Although we don't think this is essential at the moment we do think dependent upon wind and weather conditions it is feasible that it may be needed in the next five to ten years so it is a risk that you are taking on.



No felt in roof

Please see the Roof Coverings and Roof Structure Sections of this Report.

4) Leaks to side roofs

There is a very poorly detailed side roof, dampness is coming in and can be clearly seen within the conservatory/shower room area.



Looking down from garage roof at leak

ACTION REQUIRED: Make watertight and then replaster and redecorate. You will have to redecorate all of that area to match in.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 - £1,000; quotations required.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.



Dampness

5) Garage roof

We would term the garage roof as being lightweight supported on metal bars with a sterling board (composite board) as the decking. We could feel it moving underfoot. We would also comment that the parapet wall detailing is poor and we would say prone to allow some dampness in.



Garage roof

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.



Metal joists in garage roof

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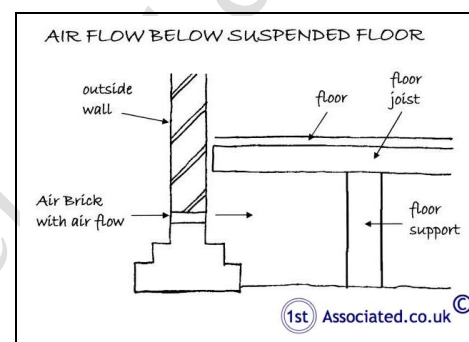
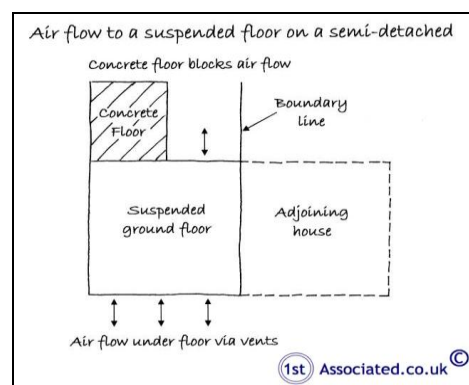
6) Airbricks

The property has a suspended timber floor. We can see airbricks to the front of the property but not to the rear.

ACTION REQUIRED: The air needs to go under the floors all the way to stop wet rot and dry rot. We recommend the floors are opened up to see if there is an air vent and underneath the concrete floor. If not a running air vent needs to be provided.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would set aside the sum of £1,000 - £2,000; quotations required.

Please see the Airbricks Section of this Report.



7) Boundaries

The boundaries do not line up to the rear right hand side. The end wall of the conservatory has been taken to next doors extension yet the fence still sits in to the property.



ACTION REQUIRED: Check to see if a Party Wall notice has been agreed and of course Building Regulations and Planning Applications have been approved. You may have to come to some form of agreement with the neighbour who unfortunately wasn't in at the time of our survey.

Please see the External Areas Section of this Report.

8) **Sloping site**

As the property slopes from the rear to the front water will need to get from the top of the garden down to the road. We can see no simple route for the rainwater to do this and it may well sit on the patio or actually get into the house.

Any property on a sloping site is more susceptible than one on a flat site; it is simply the laws of gravity. Foundations normally allow for such occurrences, particularly in new properties. There can still be some minor movement.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to check this next time it rains heavily. You may need to put a drain through the garage to get rid of heavy rainfall.

Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

9) **Staircase**

The staircase balustrade doesn't meet current Building Regulations as it is 100mm diameter.

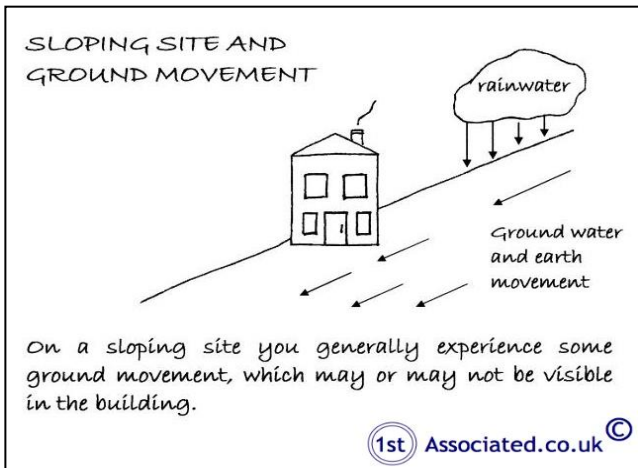
ACTION REQUIRED: You need a new balustrade if you are not happy with the existing one.



Balustrade to staircase

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 - £1,000 or more depending upon what you want or whether you are happy to repair this one; quotations required.

Please see the Internal Joinery Section of this Report.



SERVICES

10) **Electrics**

We noted an unusually large amount of surface mounted electrics to the conservatory area. As you are aware we are concerned about how this has been constructed. Has this been checked to Institute of Electrical Engineers standards?



Surface mounted electric wiring

ACTION REQUIRED: Check that there has been an electrical certificate on the whole of the property. The Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor carry out an inspection, test and report.

Please see the Electricity Section of this Report.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of the property's overall character and style. Such defects are considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report.

This type of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair and a budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

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

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Costs

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

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

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 are concerned you may be buying a property where the structural movement is intentionally being hidden without carrying out proper repairs for example to the drains and this is what you need to consider when looking into buying this property. You need to be very sure that you do get your finance correct for this property and ideally open up the ground floor before you purchase it. We would be more than happy to comment on photographs if they are emailed to us.

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 and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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

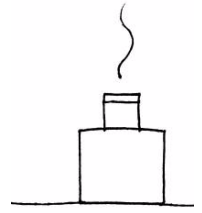


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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, PARAPET WALLS



Chimney Stacks

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

This property has one chimney, which is located to the front right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

Chimney One – located to the front right hand side

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see the chimney is in slightly below average condition and the lead flashing looks to have lifted slightly. In addition we have found that the wires that hold aerials can sometimes cut into chimneys like cheese wires.



Unfortunately we were unable to see the very top of the chimney, we therefore cannot comment upon it.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend periodic inspections are carried out.

Flashings Defined

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

Parapet Walls

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

In this case there are parapet walls to the poor roof detail and this is a poor parapet wall detail. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about the side roofs and the garage roof in general.



Poor detail to parapet wall

Party Wall

Earlier we have used the term Party Wall in relation to the chimney and also to the rear of the property where it has been extended there is a party wall which could be very important. Here is some general information on party walls.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

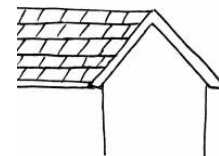
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

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

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

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in five areas, the High Level Main Roof and the Low Level Roofs of the conservatory, rear extension, garage and porch.

High Level Roofs

Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad with a clay nibbed tile often known with this pattern as Roman tiles. From ground level, this looks in average condition however from looking at it internally we believe there are some problems. With this age of roof there will usually be a few missing or displaced tiles, this is nothing unusual.

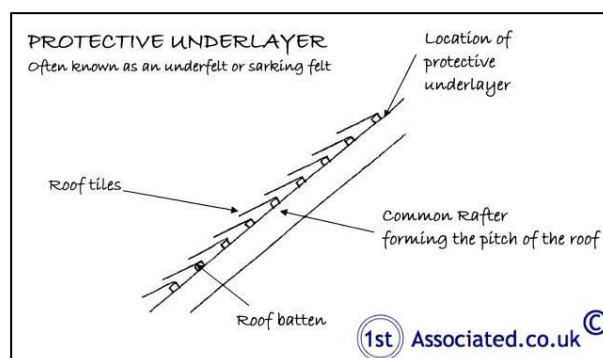


Main roof

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

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

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



When we inspected the loft space we found there was no underfelt and it is therefore possible that during periods of heavy and prolonged driving rain some water penetration could take place through the roof coverings.

At the time of our inspection it was not raining and we could see light shining through indicating that rain could get through too.



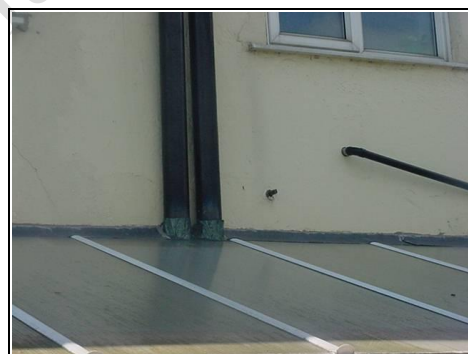
No underfelt in roof

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

Low Level Roofs

Conservatory roof

The polycarbonate roof generally looks in average condition and we did not notice any staining which often indicates there are problems. We generally find that polycarbonate roofs that have a reasonable fall on them tend to be the most watertight in this case the roof fall is shallowish. We would also be concerned about the quality of the flashing.



Conservatory roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would expect leaks in this roof sooner or later.

Garage Roof

The property has a felt flat roof, typically this type of roof has a life of between 20 and 30 years, depending upon the quality of workmanship, materials and decking.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. We feel this flat roof should have more of a fall for the water to get off the roof.



Garage roof

Low level roof to rear

There is a low level tiled roof to the rear above the shower room.



Low level tiled roof to rear above shower room

Porch roof

There is a small felt porch roof. We haven't inspected this as our focus has been on the main roofs.



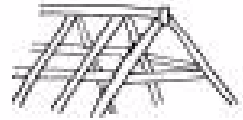
Porch roof

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

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately eighty percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

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.

Loft Access

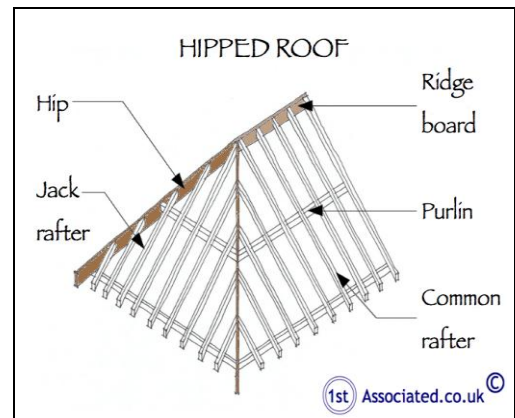
The main roof is the only accessible roof. The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. We had difficulty accessing the loft as we couldn't get the loft ladder down therefore we had to access beside the existing loft ladder. However assuming that it does work there is an electric light and some partial boarding throughout. The loft perimeter has been viewed by torch light which has limited our viewing slightly.



We couldn't get loft ladder down

Roof structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut hipped timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects however we would comment given the condition of the roof that some wind driven rain may get in and cause deterioration and there is also a twist in the roof.



Hipped roofs are renowned for slippage/movement

Hipped roofs are known for slippage/movement which in this case has occurred which is why it leads us to believe that there may have been structural movement in this property and your seller needs to be very honest with you about this.



Slippage in main roof

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



Purlins look newer than main timbers

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

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Fire Walls

The property has one brick firewall which is located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property).

Fire Walls Defined

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

Water Tanks

We don't recall seeing a water tank in the roof. If there is one, we would always recommend that water tanks be drained down and cleared of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks). As you are cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!

Ventilation

The way roofs were built approximately a hundred years ago allowed natural ventilation under and around the roof covering. As technology improved we introduced underlayers which prevented wind driven rain and snow from coming into the roof. This underlay effectively reduced ventilation by sealing the roof from the outer elements.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.



Lack of roof insulation

Electrical Cables

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

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

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

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be plastic and appeared in average condition. There are a few repairs.

There is a hopper head within the conservatory which is not ideal. We noticed rainwater and foul water using the same pipe system over ground which isn't normally the case.



Hopper head within conservatory

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

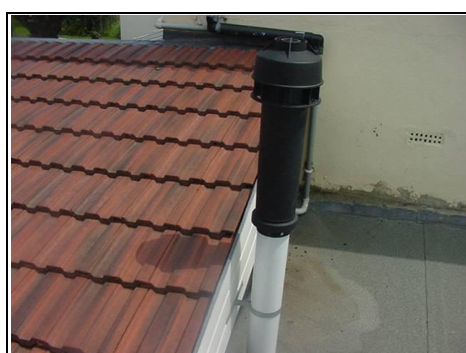
Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Soil and Vent Pipe

A cast iron soil and vent pipe remains to the rear of the property which has had the conservatory built around it. There is also a plastic soil and vent pipe to the side roof which we assume relates to the shower area.



Soil and vent pipe



Plastic soil and vent pipe to side roof

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

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WALLS



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

The property has a predominately render finish with a brick built extension to the rear.

Render

The walls to this property are finished in a smooth faced painted render. We would say it is in average condition.

We have carried out a tap test to the render at low level (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer) to try to establish if there are any hollow areas. We have found some areas but not too many.

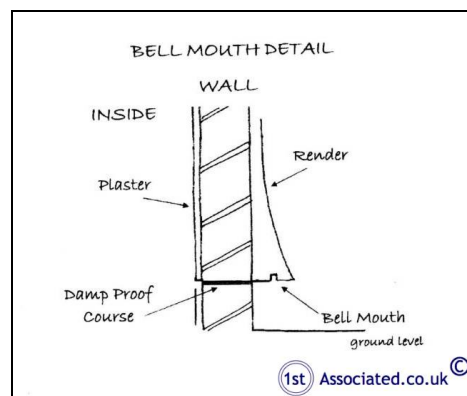


Painted render

We discussed work to ensure the situation did not get worse and we feel roof, box gutter repairs and redecoration will help considerably.

Render Detailing

A good indication of the quality of rendering, we have found over the years, is by the quality of detailing above the windows and to the base of the property such as a bell mouth. In this case there isn't any detailing. Ideally we would require a bell mouth to the ground section of the property.



Cracking

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary about the cracks to the property.



Cracks to render

Brickwork

There has been a small amount of brickwork used to the rear extension in a Stretcher Bond formation.

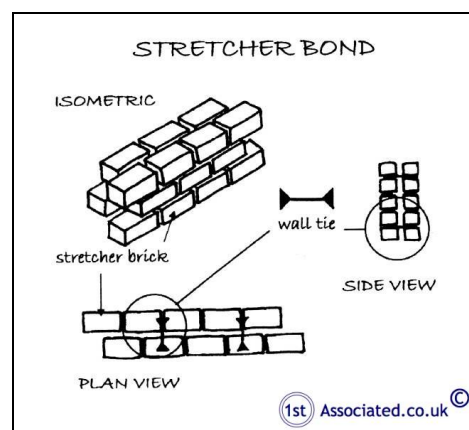
The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property, you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher". This pattern would repeat throughout.



Brickwork to rear extension

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

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. 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.



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 painted render / brickwork / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels, rubbed

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

Our comments have been based upon how the painted render / brickwork / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the painted render / brickwork / plasterwork 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.

Foundation Material

Given the age of the original property, we would expect to find a shallow stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar to this area.

London Clay

This property stands on London Clay, as with the majority of properties in London. 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.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. The Building Insurance must monitor this property for a year as recommended by the Building Research Establishment to check it is not still moving.

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

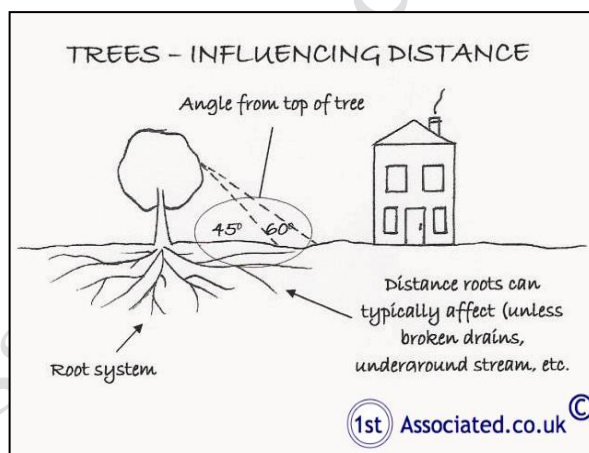
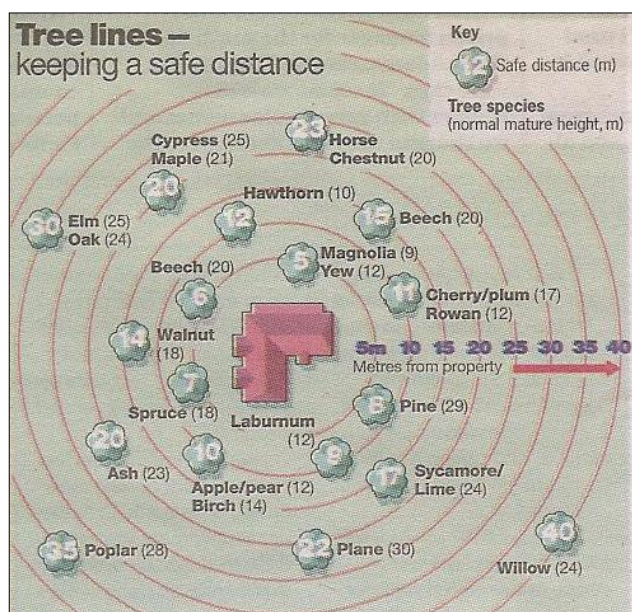
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



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

There are no trees within influencing distance of the 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.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.



DAMP PROOF COURSE

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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, we can see a damp proof course to the rear of the property. Unfortunately to the older part which is far more important, we couldn't see a DPC due to the render.



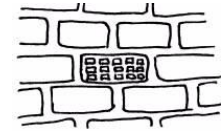
Unusual detail as no mortar in some of the joints

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

Please see the dampness section of this report.

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.

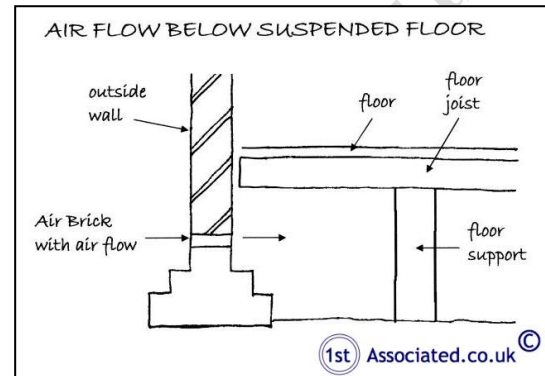
AIRBRICKS



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.

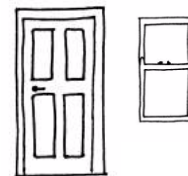
Airbricks give air ventilation to the wooden floor; an extension has been built with a concrete floor. We were unable to conclude if ventilation has been carried on through the concrete floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: Open up the floor and check the condition of the timber floor.



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 floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

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 & Soffits

The property has painted timber fascias and soffits and these are in average condition, (which means there is likely to be some rot) although much of the fascia is hidden by the guttering. There may be some minor leaks which have caused deterioration to the fascias but we couldn't see anything specifically as they are hidden by the gutters.



Timber fascia

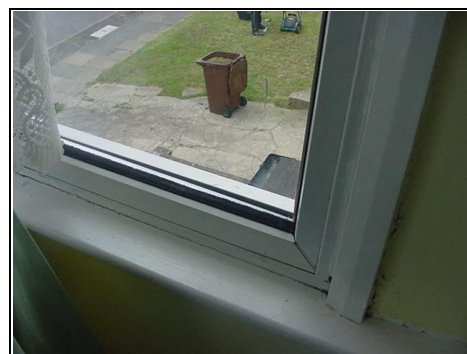
If you are doing any high level work then it would be worth carrying out this work. Equally it may be worth your while buying a tower scaffold and use this.



Tower scaffold

Windows

The property has plastic casement windows, which are double glazed. However, we believe they are from the cheaper end of the market. With this type of window some minor settlement often occurs. The windows do not have trickle vents.



Windows

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

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

Trickle vents defined

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

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



EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

There is a lot of render to re-paint in due course, we would say before the winter of 2012.

Cracks and painting

Where cracks are visible they need sealing as soon as possible to stop dampness getting in and the plaster degrading.

Where generally overall the external decorations are in average to good condition and we would expect some redecoration to be required within the next few years.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL



CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

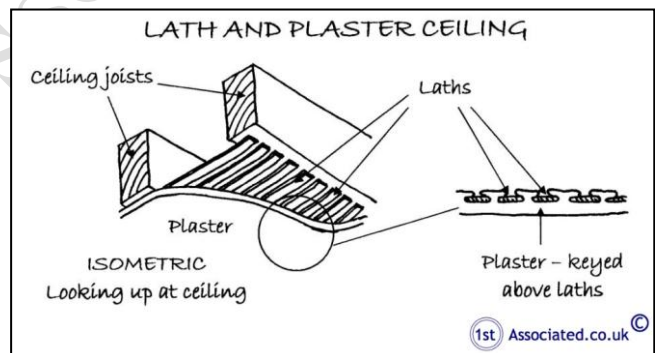
Our investigations found the ceilings to be formed in lath and plaster. There may be some deterioration and there is likely to be plasterboard used in the new extensions.



Lath and plaster

Lath and Plaster Defined

Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.



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

A mixture of solid and hollow walls.

Perimeter Walls

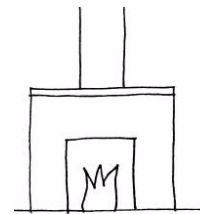
It does look like the property hasn't got the original lime based plaster but has been re-coated with a skim coat of plaster.

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

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

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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts have been removed poorly or rather we could say that the plastering that has taken place after them is in a poor and uneven condition which is a shame when the fireplaces are taken out unprofessionally.

ACTION REQUIRED: Airbricks to be added as soon as possible.



Tidying up required and vents to be added to stop the sulphate causing damage as it needs airing

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £500; quotations required.

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

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

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

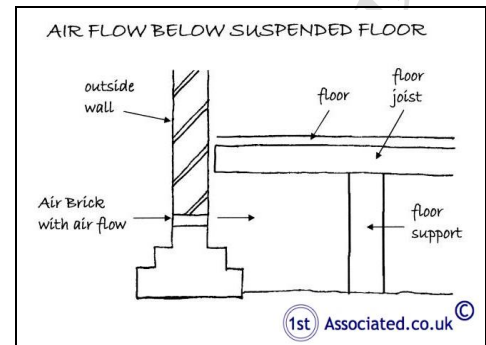
FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

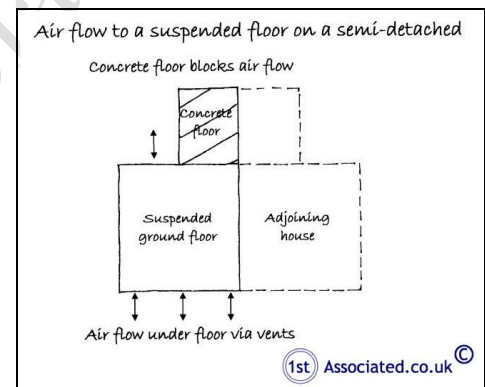
Based on our knowledge of this age of construction we believe that the ground floor construction is predominantly a suspended timber floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections.



The remainder of the floor, kitchen onwards, is solid underfoot and assumed to be concrete.

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

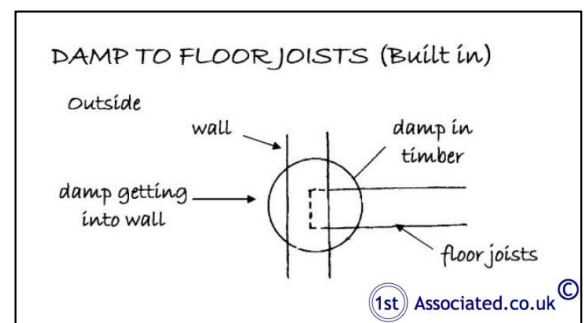
Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined



A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via airbricks within the walls.

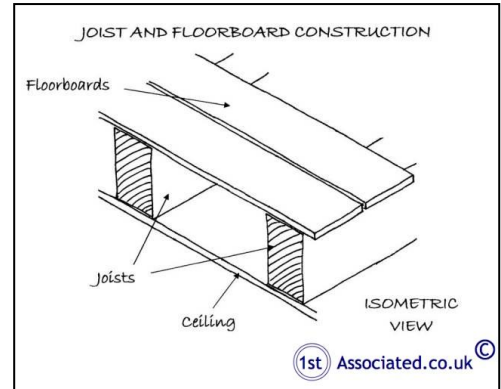
First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property. The floor is likely to have embedded timbers.



Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



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

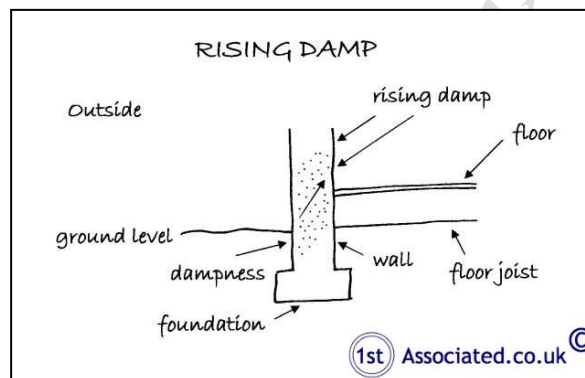


DAMPNESS

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

Rising Damp

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

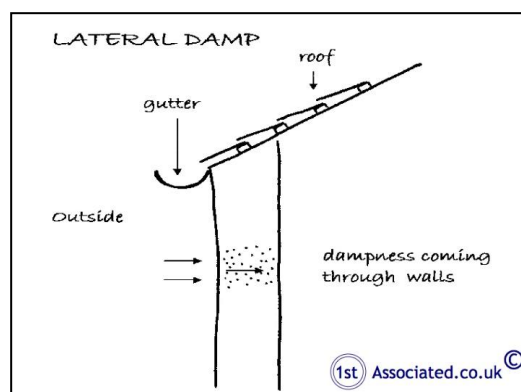


A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls. No significant dampness was found, only what we would expect in this age of property.

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. We did get readings which we believe relate to the poor quality detailing of the flat roof, etc.



Checking for lateral damp

Condensation

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

We would recommend extract fans are added in the bathroom/shower room and the kitchen as we believe that the shower room in particular will be prone to condensation as it's a colder area and relatively close to the kitchen. If the back door is left open many areas could suffer from condensation.

We could see no obvious signs of condensation, however, it depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

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

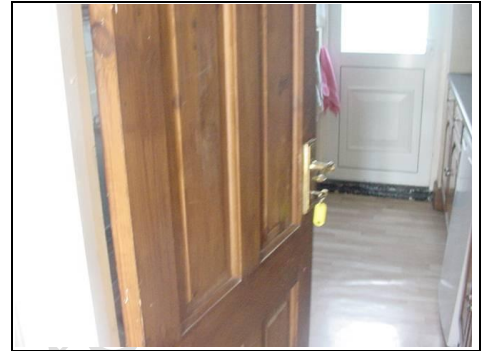
INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The property has an older style door, you may or may not like them and you may like to keep them as a feature of the house or not!



Internal doors

Staircase

We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor in a worse case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.



Staircase not lined

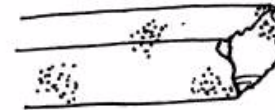
ACTION REQUIRED: Line the stairs.

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the galley style kitchen looked in average condition. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please remember we have not opened up the floors.

Wet Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant wet rot. We would add that it is likely wet rot is under the floor due to the dampness found. Please remember we have not opened up the floors.

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.

In many properties of this age, there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted in the roof by insulation covering some of the timbers and in this case the roof being lined to the front roof, as it is restricted throughout the property (for example the floors) by general fixtures and fittings.

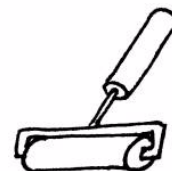
If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when it is empty of fixtures and fittings, etc.

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

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

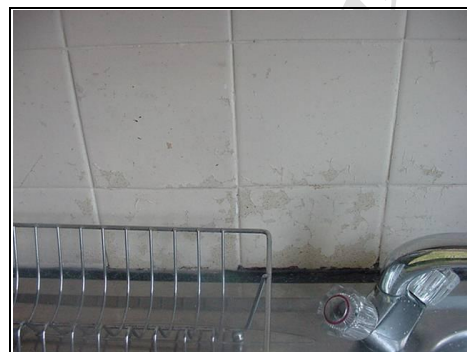


With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The decoration is below average to poor.

Kitchen upgrade

The current kitchen has painted tiles which are never ideal.



Kitchen tiles have been painted

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

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

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 Regulation requirements of 300mm. In this instance we found approximately 100mm.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid and will have a relatively poor thermal efficiency. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in solid wall construction without major alterations which will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space.

Windows

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

Services

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

Summary

The properties thermal efficiency would be greatly improved by adding insulation in the roof.

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

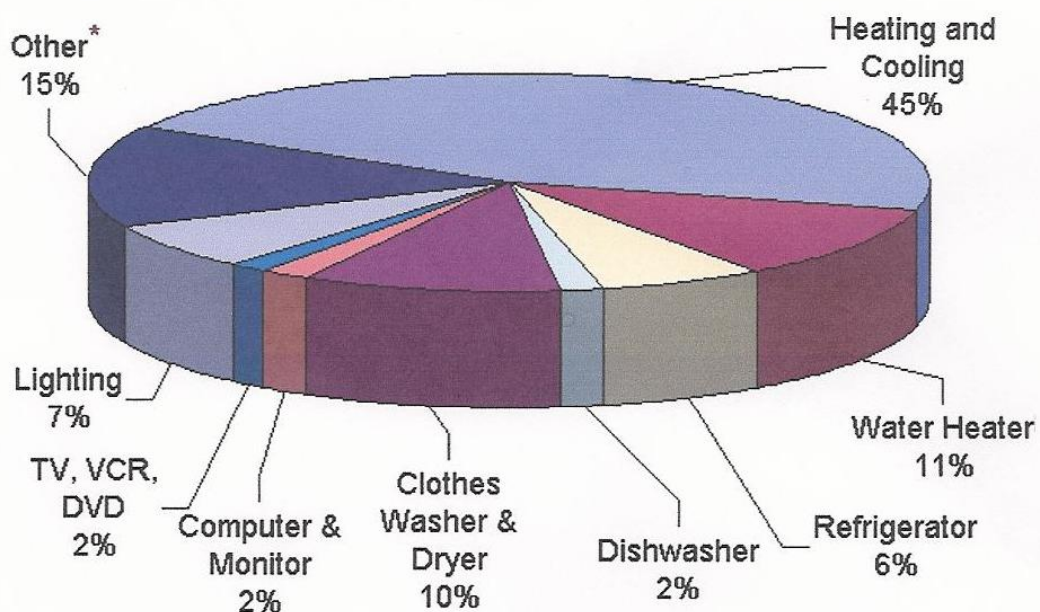
HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



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

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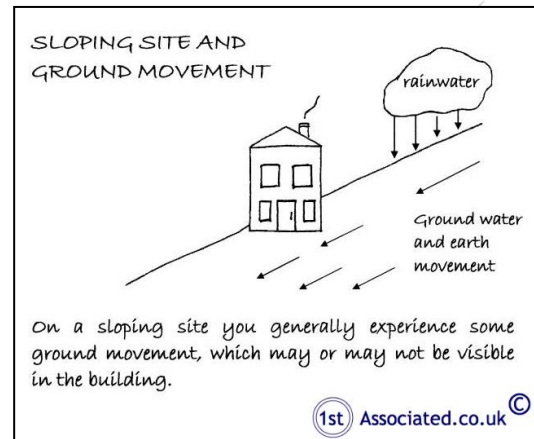
OTHER MATTERS



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

Sloping site

Any property on a sloping site is more susceptible than one on a flat site; it is simply the laws of gravity. Foundations normally allow for such occurrences, particularly in new properties. There can still be some minor movement.



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, they were however covered over at the time of our inspection. 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.



Smoke alarm

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

We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is

switched on, providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year. We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

As mentioned earlier we would ask the existing owner to put in an insurance claim with regard to subsidence, by doing this you will have a limit on your liability of the excess, typically a few thousand pounds. The insurance company will monitor for a year as recommended by the Building Research Establishment which is far better than our one off inspection.

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

Asbestos

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

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

SERVICES

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

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

We are advised the property had tenants and should therefore have the services regularly checked, both legally and for insurance.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Solicitor to investigate and provide a copy of the certificates to us (scanned via email please).

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located under the stairs. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1990s and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the fuse board is replaced.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the unusual amount of surface mounted electrics.



Electrics

Earth Test

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle and this did not cause the electrics to trip.

Neither of these indicators can give certainty as to the condition of the rest of the wiring.



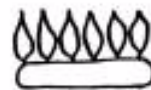
Earth test

ACTION REQUIRED: It is recommended that the installation be tested by a competent electrician (NICEIC registered) and all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be re-tested every five years.

Also note that Building Regulations require certain electrical work to be certified by an approved contractor. Please see the appendices at the end of this survey for further details.

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

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



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

We are advised that the property has mains gas. The consumer unit is located under the stairs.

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.



Gas meter

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.

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

Water Pressure

When the taps 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

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

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the garage; it is manufactured by Vaillant and looks relatively new. Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects, however 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.

Single radiators

We noted that there are a fair number of single panel radiators. These may not warm the property to the heat that you desire. In most modern installations double panel radiators are used and often double panel convection radiators, which are more efficient, are utilised.



Single panel radiators

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.

Ten Minute Heating Test

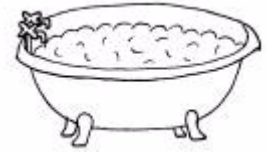
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present so the heating has not been tested.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owner to confirm the heating is working satisfactorily and provide any guarantees or/ and annual inspections.

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

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

BATHROOM



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

Bathroom

The bathroom suite looks in average condition, however it is small, and therefore could be prone to condensation.

Shower room

There is a shower room on the ground floor. We have mentioned previously that whilst this is a good addition it will be prone we believe to condensation.

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

MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We assume that the property has the benefit of mains drainage although we do have doubts about the drainage. From the man holes we have seen the drainage run is to the rear of the property, although this should be confirmed by your legal advisor's enquiries.

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be free flowing at the time of our inspection. From what we could see it is brick built. There is a very unusual feed-in pipe.



Internal manhole – not to building regulations

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

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

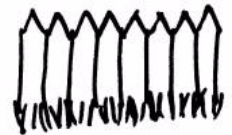
GARAGES / PARKING



There is a garage and a parking area to the front of the property



EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

Predominantly for parking as above.

Rear Garden



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

Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

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

Neighbours

Neither neighbour spoke to us during the course of the inspection.

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) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - iv) Roof and similar renewals.
 - v) Central heating installation.
 - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

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

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the www.1stAssociated.co.uk Home Page.

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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**.

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

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

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

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APPENDICES

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THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

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INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

Motleyfool.co.uk

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

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

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

www.globrix.com

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

Cracks In My Wall

If you would like to talk to a chartered surveyor or chartered engineer about any structural problems you may have or require and engineer's report please phone 0800 298 5424 for a friendly chat.

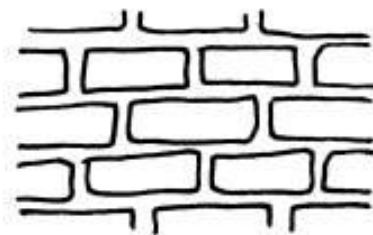
Introduction

We thought an example of a problem that we have come across would be a good way of showing you what we do and what cracks can mean.

Structural cracks overview

The property is a 1920's built semi-detached property.
Its construction is:

- a pitched roof clad with a concrete tile
- the walls have a painted render finish
- the windows are plastic double glazed
- fascias and soffits boards are painted timber
- gutters and downpipes are cast iron and plastic



Cracking problem

Recently whilst carrying out gardening work the householder noted that there was cracking in the property, which they had not seen before. Concerned about this, the owner therefore called us to give an independent assessment.

Inspection of the cracks

Initially we carried out an external extension of the cracks, photographing the cracks and recording their position and sketching them. Whilst we were carrying out all this work we were thinking about what the problem could be. We carried out the same exercise internally and noted that the cracks were predominantly around the windows. The cracks ranged from hairline cracks to cracks of a few millimetres wide. The action required is that we would recommend anyone with an older property to think carefully before having plastic windows installed.



Question and answer session with the homeowner

We then had a general chat with the homeowner and a specific one about the cracks and about the history of the property. This, combined with our general knowledge of 1920's properties, brought us to a conclusion, but before we give you that let us explain a bit more about the thought process.



The thought process behind the conclusion

1920's buildings or around the war year buildings had many characteristics, one of which is that there was a limited supply of tradesmen at the time and that materials were rationed. Defects in both are common and often houses were built in, what we would term as, a lightweight style, utilising the minimums due to the rationing that existed. Since that time there have also been major alterations and additions in most houses, the first relating to how the property is heated. Originally in years gone by the heating would have been via coal fires so there were coal store houses, and also over the years central heating has been added to properties, which had meant that floorboards have needed to be lifted and cut into to run the pipes, etc. This means that construction that was already lightweight may in addition have been cut into, causing further problems.

Also at the time the properties were constructed it was not standard to treat all timbers, accordingly woodworm is more prevalent in this age of construction.



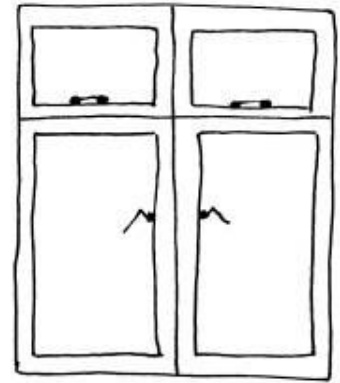
There are many other, what we would term as, characteristics of this age of construction that we could mention but we hope these examples give you an indication of the type of things that surveyors look for. However, in this instance due to the way the cracking was being formed pointed to there being problems around the windows. This was confirmed when we did what we refer to as a timeline.

Timeline explained

The timeline that we carry out when we look for that specific defect is a history of as many alterations and amendments as the householder can advise us of. We then also add into this things that we have noted that may be the householder is not aware of or has forgotten about or that happened before they came to the property. This builds up a picture and a history of the construction, so in this case we were very pleased

when the householder advised that they had had the windows replaced about a year ago.

The original timber windows had been replaced with a plastic double glazed windows and whilst this had benefits on the thermal properties and acoustic, as they had some quieting properties too, they certainly did not help the structure. This is because the original timber windows (as we did check they were timber windows previously) also had structural properties, which meant in part they supported the structure. They were also flexible and moved with the structure as it moved throughout the year, because all properties of this age have some element of movement.



These two factors meant that the building adjusted over the different seasons and therefore the cracking didn't occur. With the new plastic windows that are much more rigid the wall and the render couldn't move as much and therefore cracked and this is the hairline cracking that the owners was getting concerned about. In this case it was just surface cracking.

Action required

We would recommend that the surface cracks are sealed with a filler that allows for movement (a hard filler would simply fall out sooner or later) and then redecorate. We also recommend that one of the cracks is opened up and the render hacked off, just to check that it doesn't carry on through the brickwork beneath.



If you would like to talk to a chartered surveyor or chartered engineer about any structural problems you may have or require and engineer's report please phone 0800 298 5424 for a friendly chat.

Please note we are independent chartered surveyors.

We hope you found the article of use and if you have any experiences that you feel should be added to this article that would benefit others, or you feel that some of the information that we have put is wrong then please do not hesitate to contact us (we are only human).

LIMITATIONS

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

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

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

Our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from relatively mid range. A few interesting facts in Britain over the years have been:

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
2009	Third wettest August since 1956
2010	Heaviest snowfall in march since 1991
	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years

References BBC News www.bbc.co.uk

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted that we are not local surveyors to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefit 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 very limited as we haven't opened up the floors and had difficulty in accessing the roof. We didn't have the benefit of having a question and answer session with the owner and them filling out a questionnaire and we haven't had the benefit of meeting you at the property to discuss your various requirements.



Difficulty in getting into roof as couldn't get ladder out

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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