

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

**Bedford  
Bedfordshire  
MK41 xxx**



FOR

**Mr xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx**

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



Marketing by:

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

## ***GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION***

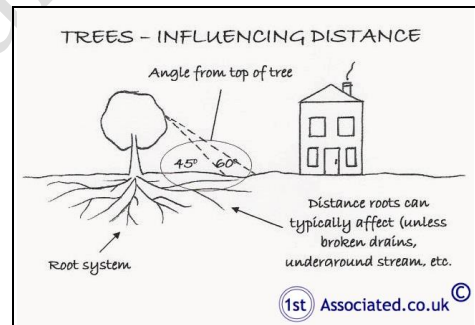
*This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.*

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

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

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



Influencing distance of trees

## **ORIENTATION**

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

## **ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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

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## SYNOPSIS

## SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey semi-detached property which has been much extended and altered by the present owner, including ground floor extensions, roof extensions and internal configurations / alterations. The loft was converted in 2004 and the house was extended in 2007.

There is off road parking to the front of the property and also roadside parking on a first come first serve basis. The property has a garden to the rear with access into the adjacent park.

We believe that the property was built in the 1950's to 1960's. If the age of the property interests, you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your legal advisor needs to check and confirm all of the above.

### Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1952	Princess Elizabeth became Queen at the age of twenty-five
1954	First Atomic Submarine was launched
1960	The average house price in England is only £2,500
1966	England beat Germany to win the 1966 World Cup at Wembley
1969	Neil Armstrong takes man's first steps on the moon

### As the house was to as it is currently



Front view of the property in 2003



Front view of the property in 2016

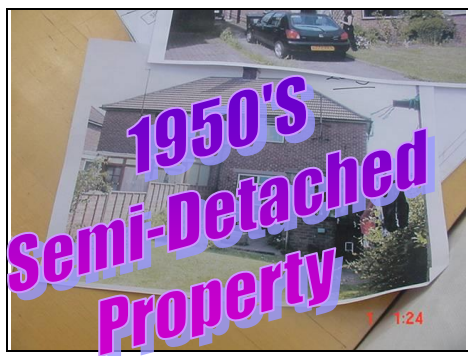
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Rear view of the property in 2003



Rear view of the property in 2016

## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



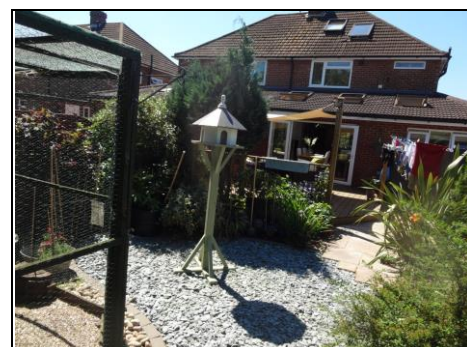
Left view



Right view



Front driveway—— Marketing by: ——



Rear garden

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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

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

### **Ground Floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance lobby
- 2) Hallway and stairs
- 3) Front reception room
- 4) Rear Left kitchen
- 5) Rear Right breakfast room / dining room
- 6) Middle Left utility room
- 7) Middle internal Shower room and toilet



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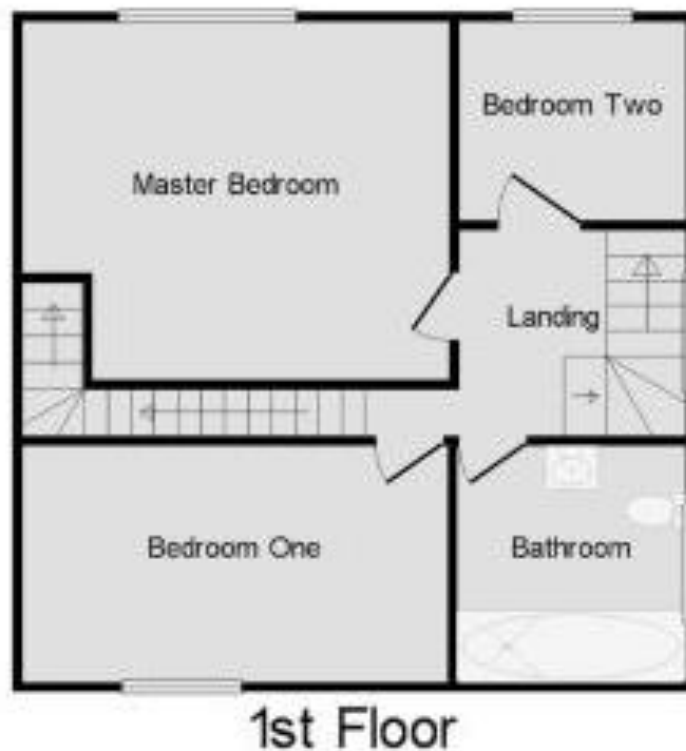
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## **First Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Landing area
- 2) Front Left bedroom
- 3) Front Right bedroom
- 4) Rear Left bathroom
- 5) Rear Right bedroom
- 6) Staircase to the top floor between the front right and rear right bedrooms



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## **Second Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Open plan large bedroom



2nd Floor

## **Outside Areas**

There is off road parking to the front of the property and a garden to the rear. There is also roadside parking on a first come first serve basis and on the day on the survey the parking was reasonably good.

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

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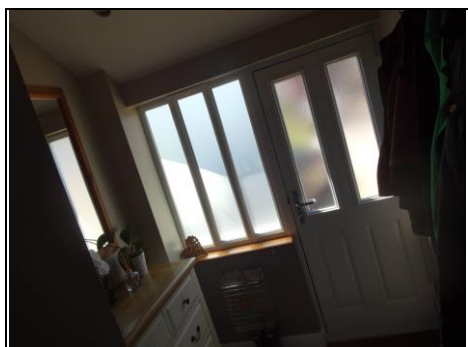
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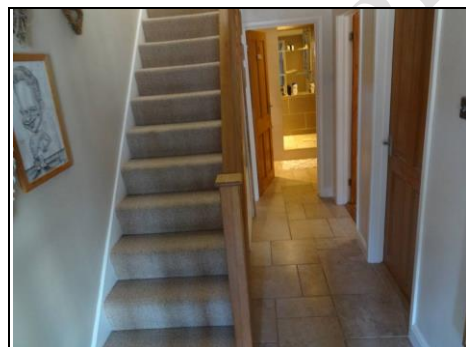
## INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

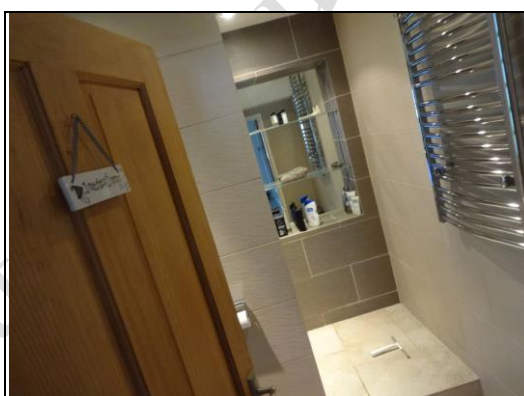
### Ground Floor



Front lobby area



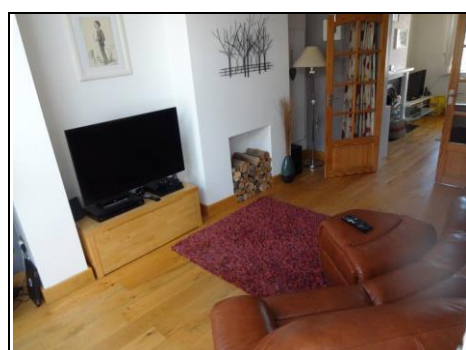
Hallway and stairs



Middle internal shower room



Front reception room



Rear reception room

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Rear Right breakfast/dining room



Rear Right breakfast/dining room



Rear Left kitchen



Middle Left utility room



Left garage

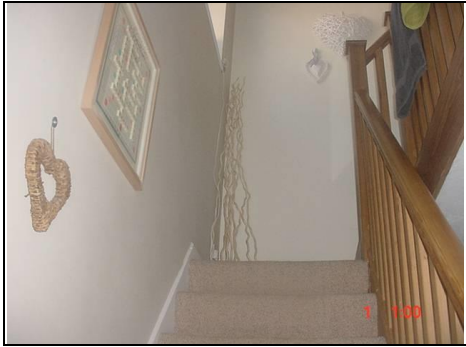
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## First Floor



Stairs to first floor



Landing area



Front Left small bedroom



Front Right double bedroom



Rear Left bathroom



Rear Right bedroom

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## Second Floor



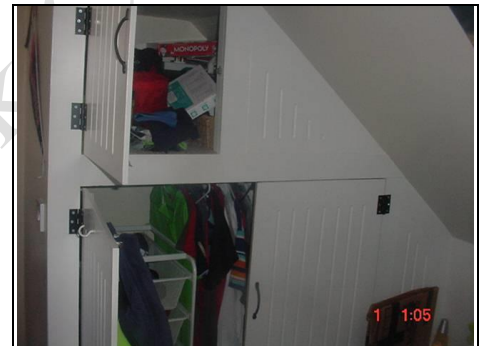
Stairs to top floor



Top floor open plan bedroom



Top floor open plan bedroom



Storage cupboards



Top floor bedroom



Thermal photo  
Showing the warm roof in red

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## SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

### External

Chimney:	Brick chimney to the right
Main Roof:	Pitched with concrete tiles
Main Roof Structure:	Cut timber roof (assumed)
Single Pitch roofs to the rear and left side:	Concrete tiles
Roof windows:	Two high level Six low level
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Stretcher Bond Brickwork / Painted render (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Plastic
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed windows

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## Internal

Ceilings:	Modern plaster (assumed)
Perimeter Walls:	Modern plaster finish and dry lined (all assumed)
Internal Walls:	Modern plaster (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Solid underfoot, assumed concrete
	First Floor: Joists and floorboards on joist hangers (assumed)

## Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed).

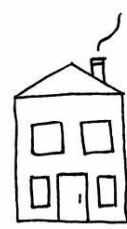
Heating:	There is a Glow worm boiler located in the utility room.
Electrics:	The electrics are 1990's to 2000's and are located under the stairs
Gas:	The owner advised the consumer unit was on the outside porch wall
Drainage:	The manhole is located to the front of the property

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 300 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

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

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

### **The Good**

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

- 1.0) The property has been extensively developed and you do not have to deal with planning permission / building regulations and builders.
- 2.0) The building work and the extension was carried out with the neighbour which means the semi-detached property matches with the neighbour.
- 3.0) You have rear access to the park which we thought was a nice addition to the property, you just need to check and confirm you have a legal right of way to the park area and if you have any maintenance charges with regard to this area.

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

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## **The Bad**

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

### **1.0) Flat roof to the front**

There is a flat roof to the front over the box bay window which will need replacing in the next few years or it could be patched repaired indefinitely. It may be worth adding some insulation when it is replaced.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend replacing the roof as soon as you get in the property otherwise we tend to forget things like this and ensure that you use the best quality felt such as a high performance elastomeric felt.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £250 - £1,000 depending on whether it is repairable or it needs to be replaced.

We would ask the roofer for photographs for before and after for any work they carry out as it does look like some work has already been carried out on this; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.



Flat roof to the front  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Split in the felt to the front  
flat roof  
Ariel view – 360 photo

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## 2.0) Shallow pitched rear roofs

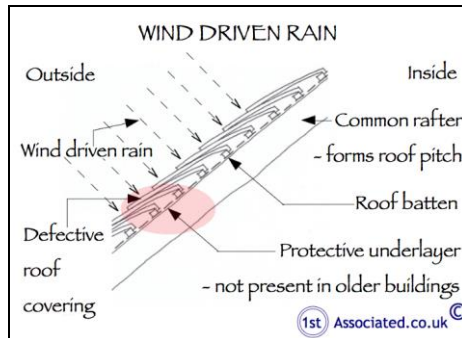
The property has shallow pitched rear roofs. This is not so much a problem just a comment. The Single pitched shallow roofs such as these can suffer from wind driven rain getting into them.

There were no signs of this at the time of our inspection and in our experience it tends to be something that happens over a long period of time. We do appreciate this is an interlocking tile which we would say are about the best you can get for a shallow pitched roof.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Periodic inspection.



Shallow pitched roof to the rear of the property  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Wind driven rain example



General view of the shallow pitched roof to the rear of the property  
Ariel view – 360 photo

## 3.0) Hairline cracking in old buildings with considerable new extensions

Where a building has been considerably altered such as this you can get movement starting to occur. When an old building has been altered so much we do find you tend to get hairline cracking in the plaster particularly where supporting walls have been removed or altered.

In this case there are a few hairline cracks which we feel we should mention as they may be noted when you look to sell the property and you can identify them as already being there when you originally brought the property.



Hair line cracking to the rear reception room

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Monitor.

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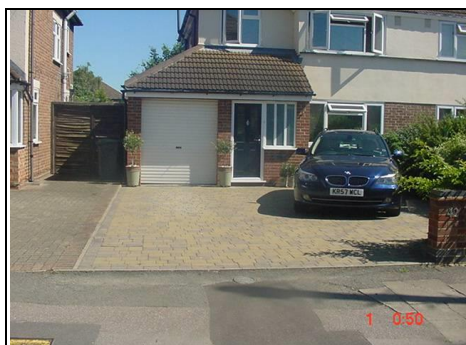
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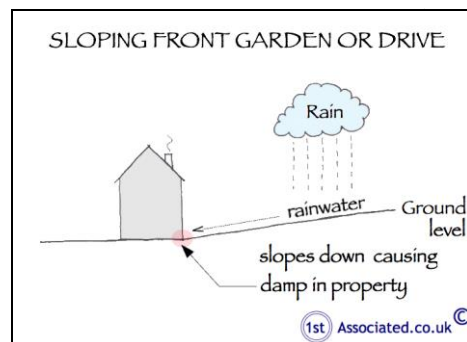


#### 4.0) Sloping site

There is a slight slope towards the front of the property and there is a running gully just in front of the garage.



Light slope towards the front of the property



Sloping site to the front of the property

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ensure this is kept clear otherwise you will get dampness into the property.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** DIY type work, you do need to remember to do it particularly if you keep anything precious in the garage area; please obtain quotations.



Running gully to the front of the garage

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

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## 5.0) Solicitor to confirm permissions and extensions and approvals have been obtained for the work carried out

To carry out the work they will have required planning permission approval and Building Regulation sign off and Party Wall agreements where they have built close to the neighbours of the adjoining property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your solicitor to check and confirm the above information and the paperwork has been completed.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** This should be part of your typical solicitor's costs; please obtain quotations.

## 6.0) Overheating of buildings

We are finding that modern extensions, particularly ones like this where there have been considerable extensions to an older property, ~~which~~ are getting over heating from solar gain (when it is sunny) during the summer months. This does of course depend on upon how warm you like to live in this property.



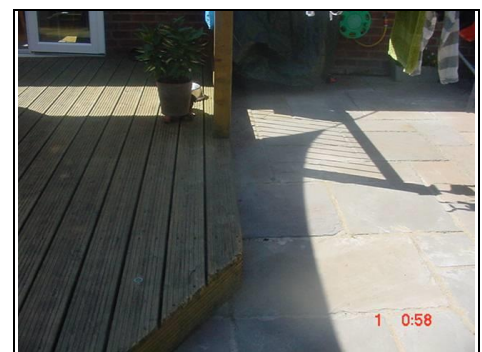
Thermal image  
Ariel view – 360 photo

**ACTION REQUIRED:** There is little you can do about this, you need to consider it the character of this era and type of building and building extension.

## 7.0) Decking

To the rear of the property is decking. We are finding over the years that decking is becoming slippery when not regularly maintained.

Also, it is an ideal space for wildlife to live under (mice, etc).



Decking to the rear garden

In this particular case the decking is against the property which can cause dampness problems.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to consider if you want decking.

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## 8.0) Noise from the nearby recycling centre

We did during the course of the survey think we could hear some noise from the nearby recycling centre. You may want to check when you next visit the property and see if you can hear any noise from the recycling centre and if this is acceptable to you.

## 9.0) Services

### 9.1) Manhole

We only found one manhole to the front of the property. There may well be manholes hidden underneath the extended property.

The owner has advised us in the question and answers sheet that there are rodding eyes / access points underneath the cooler and sink area.



Manhole to the front of the property

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend you ask the existing owner to show you where the rodding eyes / access points are and ideally have the manhole lifted to check the condition of the drains.

Buildings that have been extended can suffer more from blocked drains.

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## 10.0) Battery fire alarms

Some smoke detectors were noted; we were disappointed to see these were battery operated. The current Building Regulations require that they be hard wired into the main power supply.

### Hard Wiring defined

This is where the electrics are directly into the power supply meaning that they will always be on. Some of them in addition will have a battery back-up.



Battery fire alarm

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend, for your own safety, that additional smoke detectors are installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are that you are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £250 - £750, this is slightly difficult as you may have wiring showing; please obtain quotations.

## The Ugly

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

## Characteristics of this type of property

There is nothing which we feel falls within this section providing you are happy with the characteristics and associated costs of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report and that you are happy to carry out the work and the investigations that we have recommended.

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Maintenance**

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

## **Services**

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

### **Electrics**

The electrics are located under the stairs. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

### **Heating**

The heating system was located in the utility room. We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

### **Drainage**

We were unable to lift the only manhole cover to the front of the property. We were surprised to find only one manhole but there may be some underneath the building. The owner has advised us in the question and answers sheet that there are rodding eyes / access points underneath the cooler and sink area and that the drainage starts at number 44. Other information would be useful on any drains to the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend you ask the existing owner to show you where these are and ideally have the manhole lifted to check the condition of the drains.

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Buildings that have been extended can suffer more from blocked drains.

The only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains.

### **Water Supply**

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

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

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

The house is generally we feel in good order however you may wish to carry out decoration to change it to your style of decoration.

### **Purchase Price**

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

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

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

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## **Estimates of Building Costs**

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

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## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**



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

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

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

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

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# **MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT**

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

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

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

## **ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?**

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

## **SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

## **TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS**

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

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

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

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



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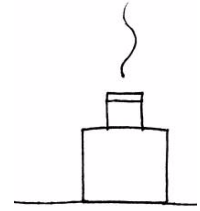
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## EXTERNAL

# CHIMNEY STACKS AND ROOF WINDOWS



### Chimney Stacks

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

There is one chimney to this property which is located to the right side and sits on the Party Wall. (all directions given as you face the property).

### Chimney One – to the right

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

We noted a satellite dish is attached to the chimney which we are not keen on as it cuts into the brickwork rather like a cheese wire cutting into cheese.

There does look to have been something happening to the flashing but we could not be certain from ground level.



Brick chimney to the right side



The flashing to the chimney needs to be checked  
Ariel view – 360 photo

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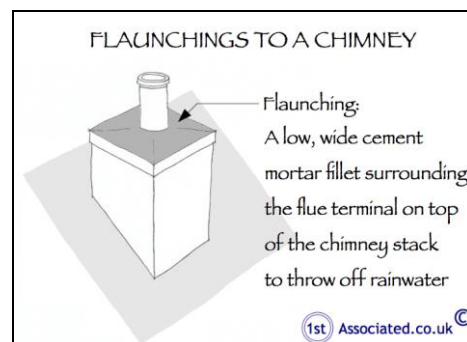
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Unfortunately, we were unable to see the top of the chimney properly known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Periodically inspect the chimney.



Flaunching

#### Flashings Defined

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

#### Flaunchings Defined

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

#### Capping Defined

Capping is a practice used when chimneys are no longer in use to prevent moisture from entering the structure in the form of rainwater via the chimney. This usually involves the closing of the chimney with a tile or slab positioned across. It should include vents to allow air circulation.

### **Roof Windows**

**(Also known as roof lights or**

**Velux windows which is the trade or generic name)**

The property has eight purpose made roof lights, which looked in average condition. The important factor with roof lights is the flashing around them, in this instance they all looked in average condition.

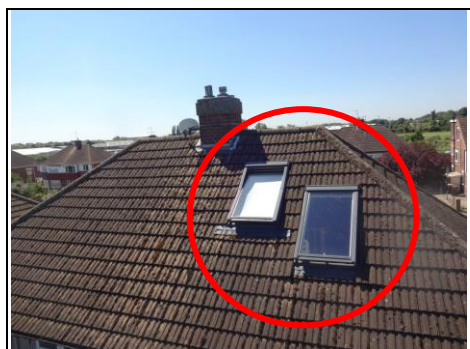
It seems inevitable with roof windows that they will sooner or later leak. You can sometimes get condensation to roof windows that are put in the kitchen. Keep a cloth handy!

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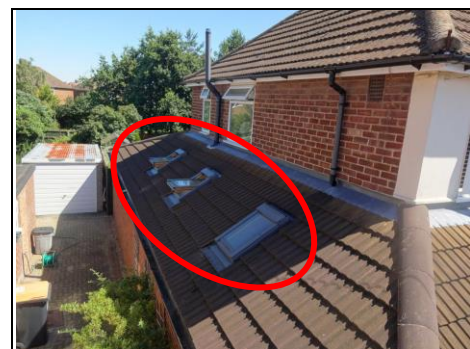




Two main roof windows  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Five rear roof windows  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Three roof windows to the left  
shallow pitched roof  
Ariel view – 360 photo

## **Party Wall**

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

### Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

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

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

Specifically, in this case there should have been a party wall agreement awards in place when the building work was carried out.

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

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

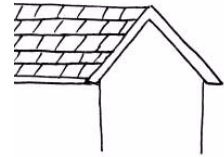
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# ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in three areas:

- 1) Main roof
- 2) Flat roof to front boxed bay window
- 3) Single storey pitched roofs to the front, the left and the rear

## Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and clad with a concrete tile and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roofs age type and style.

This is a hipped roof and integrally unstable as they literally lean upon themselves. This is probably the most prone to roof spread of all the roof designs that we come across.



Main roof

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

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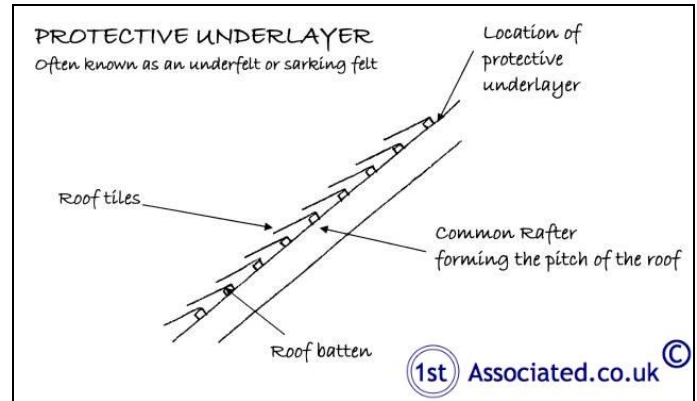
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## **Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)**

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



Protective underlayer

We can hardly see any of the roof because the room is being formed in the roof. From what we could see via the small cupboards in the top floor bedroom that it was lined with plasterboard so we were unable to see the protective underlayer.



Unable to see the protective underlayer due to the plasterboard in the roof



The underside of the roof which was lined with plasterboard

## **Flat Roofs**

*Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.*

*Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.*

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## Flat roof to the front boxed bay window

From what we could see there looks to be splits in the felt to the front boxed bay window roof.

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



Flat roof to front boxed bay window

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and aerial photographs. The flat roof has been inspected from ground floor level.



Split in the felt to the front flat roof above the boxed bay window

## Low Level Roofs – Single Storey Roofs

### Shallow Pitched Roofs

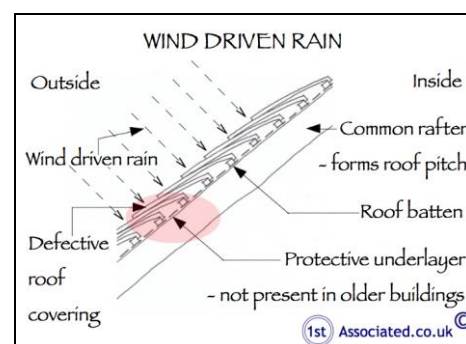
These are about as shallow pitch as we would like to go on pitched roof as you can get wind driven rain problems.



Low level pitched roof to the rear  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Low level pitched roof to the front and left side  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Wind driven rain example

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

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

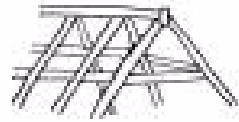
For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

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## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**

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

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

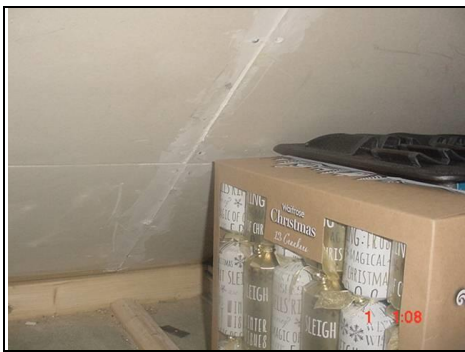
### **Main Roof**

#### **Roof Access**

As a room has been formed in the roof then access is via some small access doors. Within these accesses we could see that the loft has been completely boarded / plastered which means we cannot see any of the roof structure.



Small access doors to the roof



Roof completely boarded / plastered

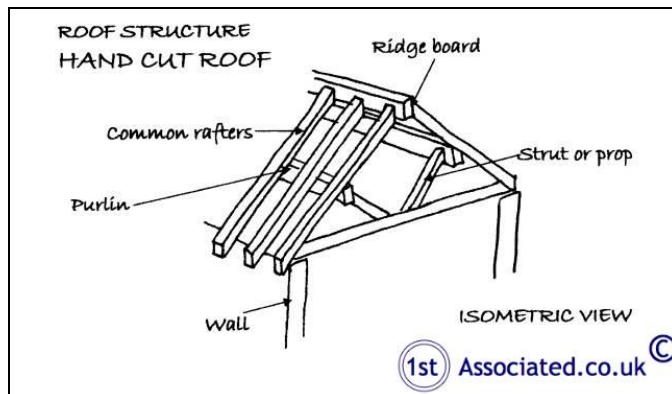


Roof structure cannot be seen due to plasterboard

### **Roof Structure**

A room is formed in the roof. We have taken an educated guess that this roof structure is probably a cut timber roof as they were typical in this era of property, although we have had a limited view of it possibly ten percent.

In this case the room in the roof may have been part of the original design but we are not certain.



Cut timber roof

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From the small percentage area that we could see within the roof which was about ten percent, we could not actually see anything of the roof structure. This makes it very difficult to comment on it.

We can only make assumptions that the roof was purpose made and hand built on site as where many of these.

We would normally look at the following in roof timbers that we have inspected:

- 1) Serious active woodworm
- 2) Structurally significant defects
- 3) Structurally significant dry rot
- 4) Structurally significant wet rot

In this instance we had no view of the items.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be 100 per cent certain would be to have the boarding removed so we can actually inspect the roof structure.



Stored items in roof space



General view of inside of roof which is boarded over

## **Fire Walls**

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

### Fire Walls Defined

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



Brick firewall to the right side

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## **Ventilation**

No ventilation was noted; we could not see it due to the mass of boarding.

## **Insulation**

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

## **Electrical Cables**

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case the loft has been boarded over.

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

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

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# GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

## Gutters and Downpipes

### Plastic

The gutters and downpipes are plastic. They are in average condition for their age, type and style.

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



Gutters and downpipes

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

We also recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

### Soil and Vent Pipe

The property has plastic soil and vent pipes.

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.



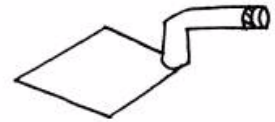
Soil and vent pipe  
Ariel view – 360 photo

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# WALLS



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

The walls are finished in painted render to the front and brickwork and rear.

## Brickwork

The property is built in a Stretcher bond brickwork in a lime based mortar originally.

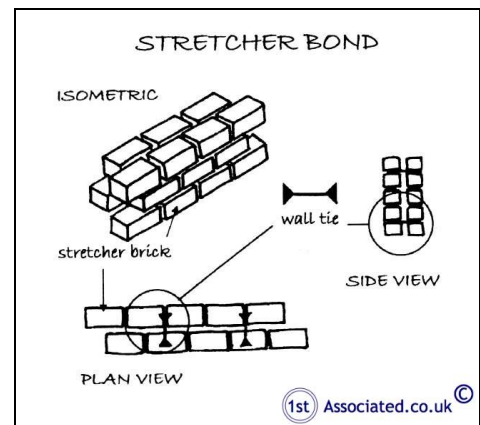
The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property, you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher". This pattern would repeat throughout.



Stretcher bond brickwork

## Cavity Walls

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



Stretcher Bond brickwork

## Wall Ties

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

From what we can see externally it appears not to have any problems.

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We usually look for horizontal lines where there is older style stretcher bond brickwork, such as this, to see if the wall ties are rusting and forcing open the brickwork. In this instance we could not see horizontal lines.

## **Render**

The external walls to the front at high level are finished in a painted render.

We are always wary when we see rendered properties as the render can hide a lot of problems.

In this particular case we believe from looking at the surrounding buildings it is part of the original aesthetics.

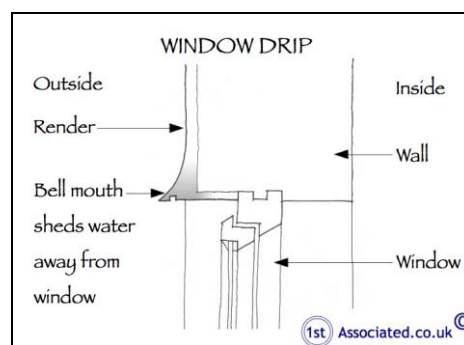
We have not carried out a tap test to the render as it is at high level.

## **Render Detailing**

You can normally tell whether the render is good or not by the drip detail over the windows.

## **Window Drip Detail**

In this case we found no drip detail to the windows.



Window drip

## **Painted render/painted walls**

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive.

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Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork, painted render and plaster we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, 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 brickwork, painted render and plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork, painted render and plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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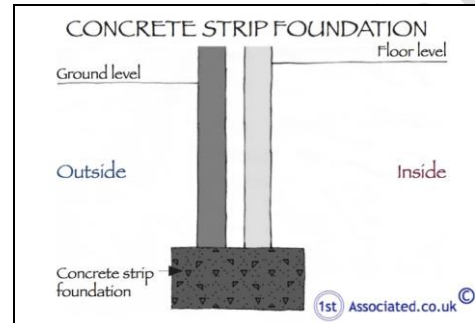


# **FOUNDATIONS**

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

## **Foundations**

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



Strip concrete foundation

## **Box Bay Window**

The property has a box bay window to the front and these often did not have foundations.

## **Clay**

This property stands on clay. Clay has two properties; one of which is it retains water and the other is that it moves depending upon its water content. It is therefore more susceptible than most conditions should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow, or if it is within a water course, etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in properties built in clay.

## **Building Insurance Policy**

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

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

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## **Cracks**

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

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

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

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

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

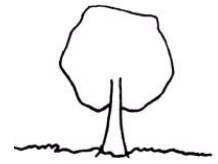
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# TREES



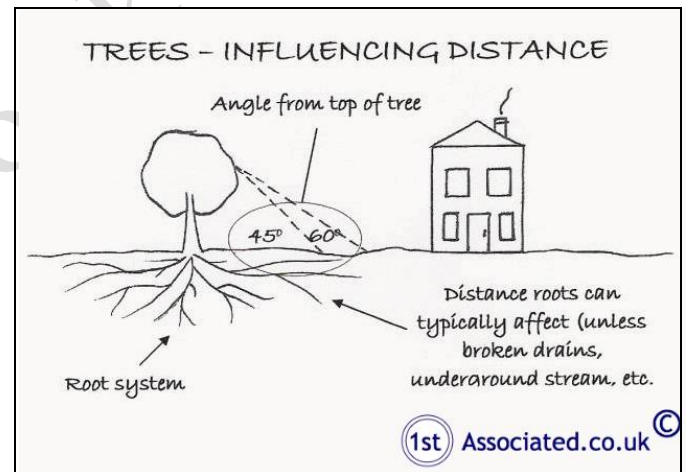
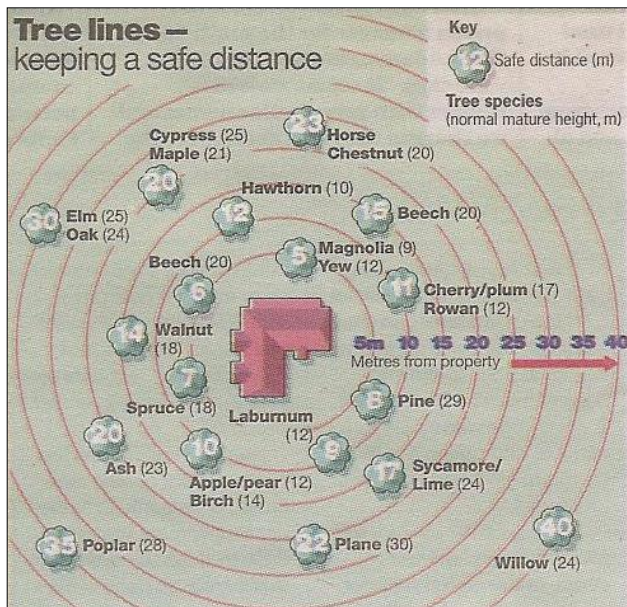
*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There are trees overhanging to the end of the back garden from the nearby park.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would ask existing owners how recently the trees get cut down. Interestingly when we were carrying out the survey one of the neighbours asked us were we here to cut down the trees or were we here doing a survey about cutting down the trees.



Trees overhang in the back garden from nearby park



Influencing distance of trees to a property

## Influencing Distance Defined

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

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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## **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, there is one likely to have been built in as the property was built.

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

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

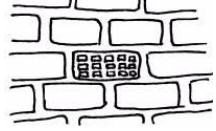
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# AIRBRICKS

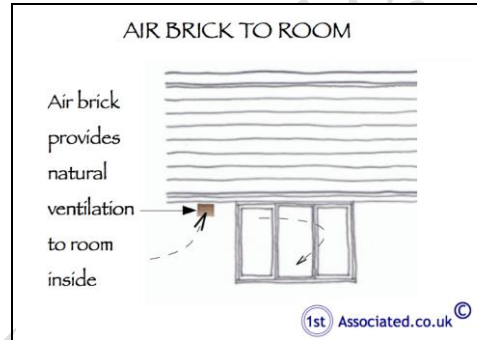


## High Level Air Bricks

There are vents at high level. High level air bricks are to help air circulation within the property.



High level airbrick to the front  
Ariel view – 360 photo



High level airbrick



High level airbrick to the left side  
Ariel view – 360 photo



High level airbrick to the rear  
Ariel view – 360 photo

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ensure all airbricks are clear and are not blocked internally.

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

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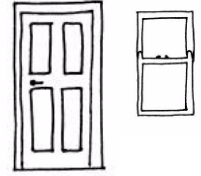
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# FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



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

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

## Fascias and Soffits

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

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



Vents to the soffits

## Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows, which generally look to be of an average quality.

The windows to the old part of the building are without trickle vents and the windows and doors to the extension do have trickle vents.

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



Plastic double windows



Plastic double glazed door with trickle vent

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In this case they looked in average condition.

## **Transferable Guarantees**

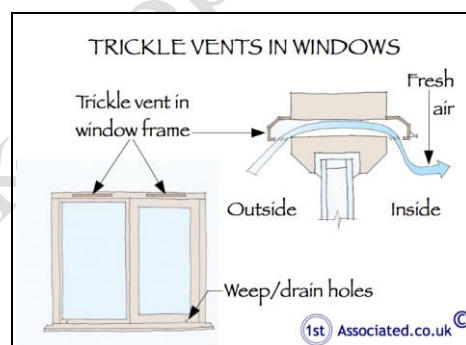
Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees by your legal advisor. Generally, it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years.



Plastic double glazed windows  
with trickle vents  
Ariel view – 360 photo

## **Trickle Vents Defined**

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



Trickle vents

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

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## **EXTERNAL DECORATIONS**

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

You do have the render to redecorate but it looked like it has a few years before this is necessary at the time of the survey.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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## **INTERNAL**



# **CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES**

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

## **Ceilings**

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be plasterboard or there may be proprietary boarding as this was fairly common in this era of property to be moving away from using lath and plaster. We have not physically been able to check this though.

### 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.

## **Plasterboard Cracks**

You do get plasterboard cracks in older properties particularly where they have been extended and altered such as these. They tend to be very straight cracks.

## **Internal Walls and Partitions**

These are, we believe a modern plaster. It is impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

## **Perimeter Walls**

The perimeter walls from their smoothness looked to be a modern plaster finish and some of them a dry lined to the extension.

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

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

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

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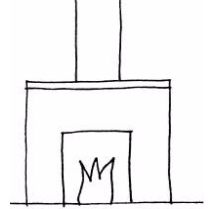
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# CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



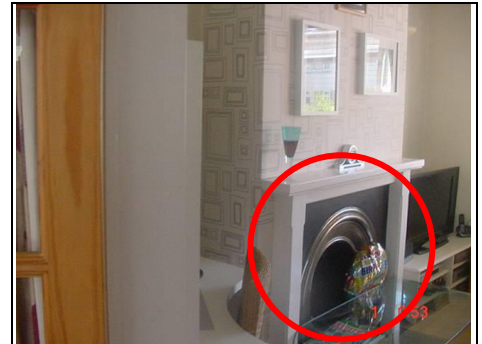
*With the advent of central heating fireplaces tend to be more a feature than an essential function in most properties.*

The chimney breasts are located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

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.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend you ask the existing owners when or if they have used the fire in the front reception room.



Feature fireplace to the front reception room



Decorative fireplace with timber stored in it to the rear reception room

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

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

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

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues Section of this report.

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# FLOORS



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

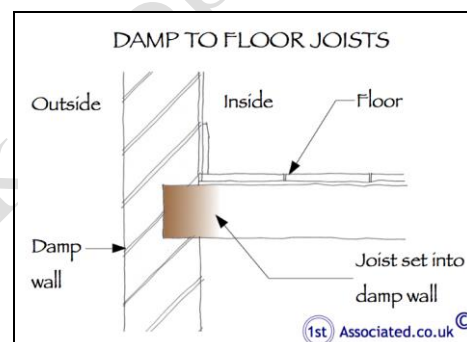
## Ground Floor

The ground floor of the property is solid underfoot, so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete.

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

## First Floor

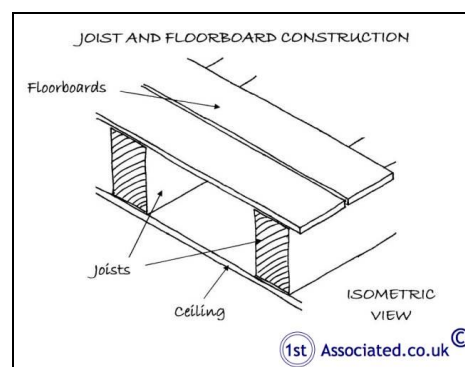
We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards on joist hangers with embedded timbers as this is typical in this age of property.



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.



Joist and floorboards

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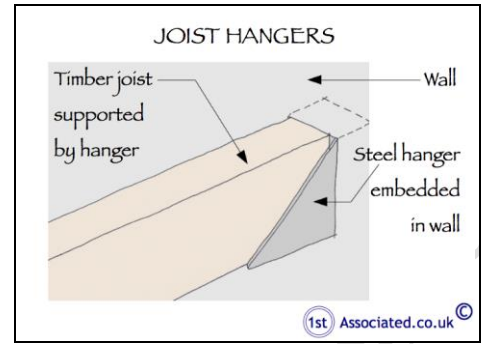
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## **Second Floor/Room in the Roof**

The second floor of the property is likely to be on joist hangers.



Joist hangers

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.

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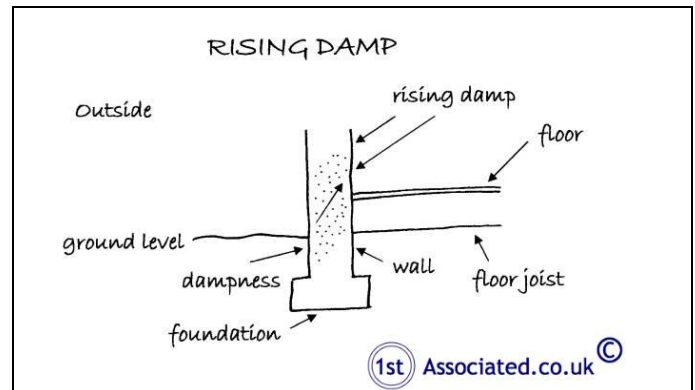


# DAMPNESS

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

## Rising Damp

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



Rising damp

A visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls.

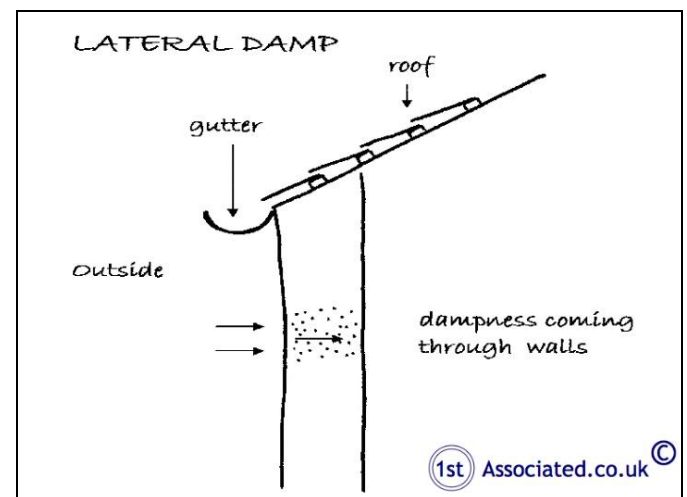
In this particular case we have found no significant rising damp.



Testing for rising damp

## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Lateral damp

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We used a resistance meter on the external walls.  
We have not found significant dampness.

We found it to be in line with what we would expect for this age, type and style of property.



Testing for lateral dampness

## **Condensation**

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

At the time of the inspection there were no significant signs of condensation. However, we did see what seem to be slight signs of possible black mould to the internal shower room. It is not that unusual to have internal shower rooms or shower rooms and bathrooms without windows to get some black mould.



Black mould in the internal shower room

However, it depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.



Lack of windows that could be used in the bathroom

## **Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas**

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You may have to improve the extraction in both the shower room and the bathroom to large humidity controlled extract fans.

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**ANTICIPATED COST:** We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required. We always recommend quotes are obtained before work is agreed/commenced.

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

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## 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

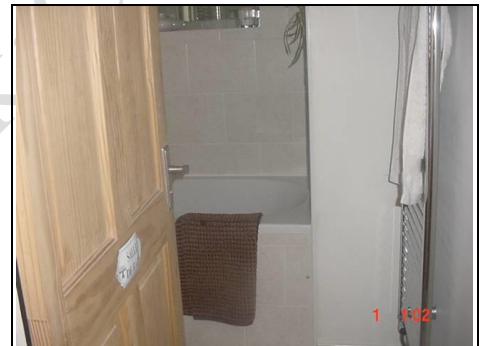
The property has a mixture of laminated doors, glazed panel doors and panel doors.



Laminated door



Glazed panel door



Panel door

### Staircase

We cannot comment further upon the stair structure as we did not manage to check in this instance. We can, however, say that it should be lined in all areas as lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Check and make sure that the staircase is lined as it will give extra time to escape in the worst case scenario of a fire.



Panel door

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## **Kitchen**

We found the kitchen in average to good condition, considering its age type and style and subject to some wear and tear as one would expect.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.



Kitchen area

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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

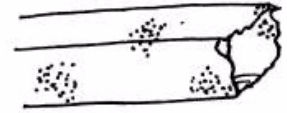
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# **TIMBER DEFECTS**



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

## **Dry Rot**

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

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

## **Wet Rot**

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

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

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

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## Woodworm



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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm.

In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection was very limited and restricted as the loft has been completely boarded over.

Even in the garage where we would normally see the roof it has been boarded over.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish we can expose the timber to the main roof which is where the older timbers will be.



Boarded roof to the garage

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

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

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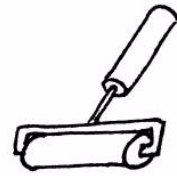
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## **INTERNAL DECORATIONS**



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

Internal decorations are in average to above average condition.

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place. This very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, within hallways this tends to be greater than for example within a spare bedroom.

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

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# 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.*

## Thermal Imaging

We would comment as follows on this specific property:

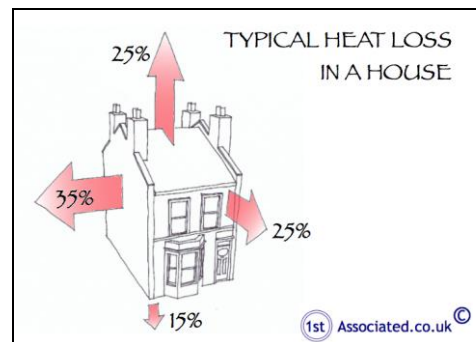
The red patches show heat loss from the property, namely from the roofs.



Thermal image photo

## Roofs

Current Building Regulations require 300mm of insulation. In this instance we cannot see the insulation as everywhere is lined.



Typical heat loss

## Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction. In this age of property, it was not usual to have insulation.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Adviser to check and confirm if there is insulation within the walls as there can be problems with insulation added at a later date and we do need to be advised further.

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## **Windows**

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

## **Services**

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

## **Summary**

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see. Please note we have not seen the Energy Performance Certificate.

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](http://www.cat.org.uk) (Centre for Alternative Technology)*

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

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay – can be viewed on YouTube*

## **HIPs**

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

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

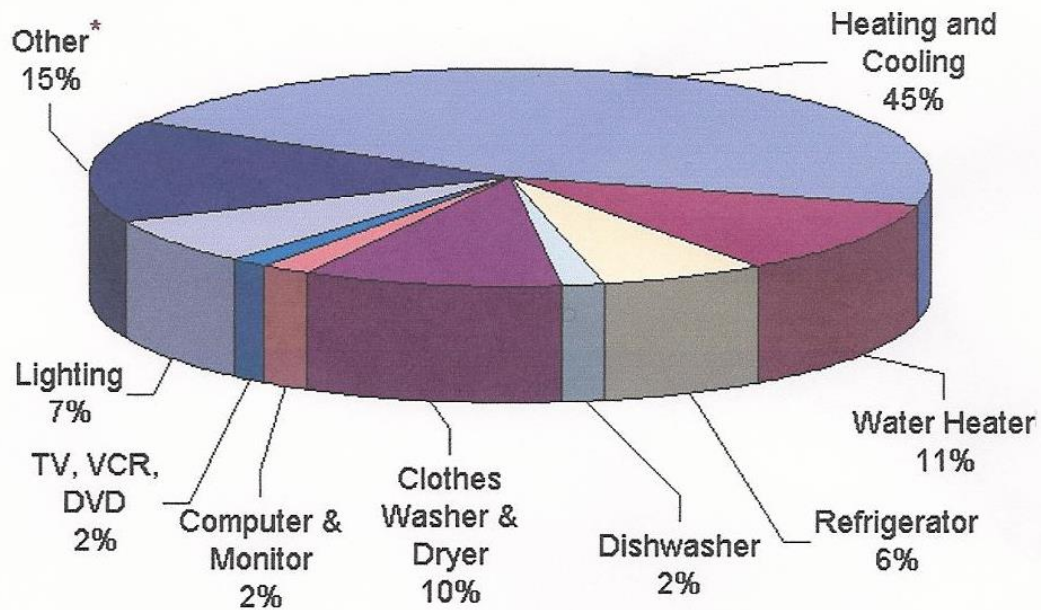
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## What does my energy bill pay for?



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

## Security

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

## Fire / Smoke Alarms

Some smoke detectors were noted we were disappointed to see these were battery operated. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply.

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

## Insurance

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

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

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## Asbestos

The property has textured paint to the ceiling (commonly known as artex). Early versions of this are said to have had asbestos, this looks like a later version but you do need to be aware of this.

Our insurance company requires us to advise we are not asbestos surveyors and advises us to recommend asbestos surveyors are instructed and that you have your own asbestos survey carried out.



Textured paint to the ceiling

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that a plaster coat is applied to it (specialist plasters are available) and an asbestos report carried out.

We are Building Surveyors and not Asbestos Surveyors and as such the only way to be a hundred per cent certain with regards to Asbestos in a property is to have an Asbestos report carried out.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Asbestos can be difficult to remove. Also, it can be plastered over. Asbestos costs can vary considerably; we are forever surprised at the variety in quotes. Please obtain quotations.

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## **SERVICES**

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

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

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# ELECTRICITY



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

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations is important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) 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. The fuse board looked newish.

During our question and answer session we were advised that all of the new electrics were tested to building regulations Part P standard.



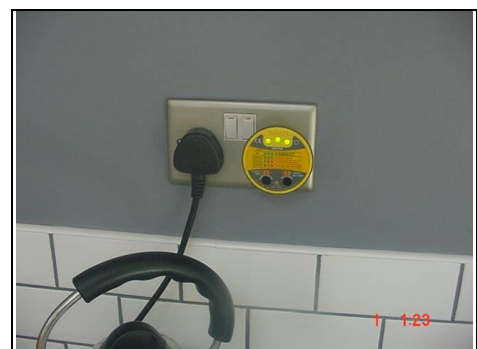
Fuse Board

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your legal advisor to check and confirm this.

## Earth Test

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As the property is changing occupancy an Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) test and report and any recommendations should be carried out by a NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.



Earth test

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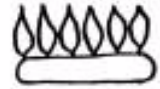
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In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1<sup>st</sup> January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

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

## GAS



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

The owner advised the consumer unit was on the outside porch wall.

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

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

### Carbon Monoxide

No carbon monoxide monitors were noted.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It is recommended that an audible carbon monoxide detector is fitted (complying with British Standard EN50291) within the property. Carbon monoxide detectors are no substitute for regular servicing of gas installations and their flues.

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## **PLUMBING AND HEATING**



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

### **Water Supply**

We were advised by the owner that the controlling stopcock is located internally by the garage and externally on the path.

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

### **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.

### **Hot Water Cylinder**

There is no hot water cylinder.

### **Plumbing**

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

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## Heating

The boiler was located in the utility room, it is manufactured by Glow worm and the model type is Ultracom 38.

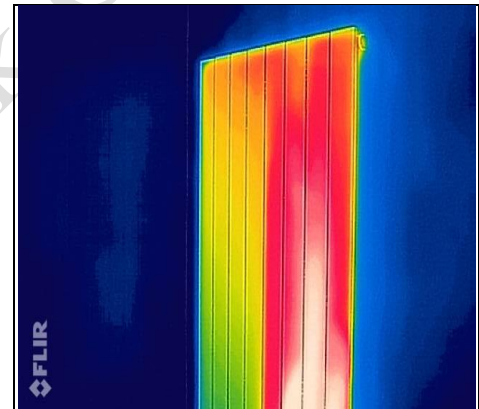
Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.



Boiler

## Ten Minute Heating Test

The owner at our request turned on the heating for approximately ten minutes. We checked the radiators on the ground floor and these were warm.



Thermal image of the radiator

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

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

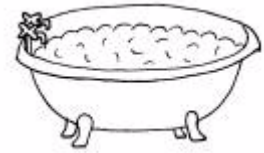
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# BATHROOM



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

## Internal Ground Floor Shower Room

The property has an internal three-piece shower room to the ground floor, which looks in average to above average condition. We did notice some minor mould to the shower tray which we would comment it may be necessary to improve the extract fans.



Internal ground floor shower room



Mould to the shower tray in the shower room

## First Floor Bathroom

There is also a three-piece bathroom suite on the first floor, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition, subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect. We could not see how this area could be vented easily.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend a large humidity controlled extract fan is added. By large extract fans we mean 150mm.



Boiler

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required. We always recommend quotes are obtained before work is agreed/commenced.

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

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## MAIN DRAINS



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

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

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

### Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole to the front of the property.

#### Manholes Defined

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

### Inspection Chamber / Manhole One

We were unable to lift the manhole cover to the front of the property. From what we could see it is brick built.

We were surprised to find only one manhole but there may be some underneath the building. The owner has advised us in the question and answers sheet that there are rodding eyes / access points underneath the cooler and sink area.



Manhole to the front of the property

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend you ask the existing owner to show you where the rodding eyes are and to have the manhole lifted to check the condition of the drains.

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The only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains.

We have only undertaken a visual inspection of the property's foul drains by 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. It is likely to be into a shared drain however we noted on the plans that we briefly saw that a soak-a-way was marked on them so a soak-a-way may have been added. We are also aware that just because it is on plans it does not mean it has actually happened.

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.

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## OUTSIDE AREAS

### GARAGE/PARKING



#### Garage

There is a garage to the front with a running gully in front of it, this needs to be kept clean if you want to keep anything of value in there.



Garage to the front left of the property

#### Drop Kerb Defined

A drop kerb is where a kerb is lowered between the road and the pathway/entrance to the property which means there is official access and official parking approved by the Local Authority / Council. The reasons the Local Authority/Council would not approve a dropped kerb is where it is close to a junction or traffic is considered to be fast moving or it is not appropriate to access the road.

#### Parking

There is off road parking to the front of the property.



Off road parking to the front of the property

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## OUTBUILDINGS

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. We have taken a cursory inspection of the outbuilding and would be happy to return and carry out a survey if so required.

There was a chicken shed. You need to confirm whether this is staying or going.

## EXTERNAL

### Rear Garden

The garden to the rear has access to the park.

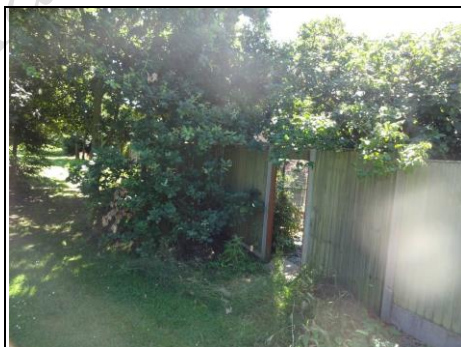
You need to check and confirm that this is a legal right of access that you have even if it may or not be important to you.



Rear Garden  
Ariel view – 360 photo



General view of the rear Garden  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Gate access to the park at the rear  
of the garden  
Ariel view – 360 photo



Park  
Ariel view – 360 photo

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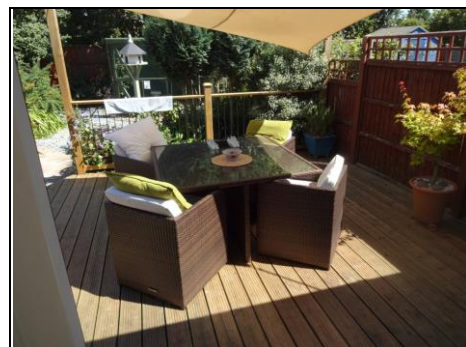
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## Decking

We are finding decking is becoming slippery over the years when not regularly maintained and can be an ideal space for living under for wildlife.



Sitting out area to the rear Garden  
Ariel view – 360 photo

## Boundaries

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

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

## Neighbours

### Left Hand Neighbours

We knocked at the time of the inspection but there was no response.

### Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked at the time of the inspection but there was no response.

### Other Neighbours

Did not speak to any.

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## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
  - ii) Certificates confirming chimneys have been swept
  - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
  - iv) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
  - v) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
  - vi) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - vii) Drainage repairs
  - viii) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ix) Rising damp treatments.
  - x) Asbestos
  - xi) Central heating installation and maintenance.
  - xii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - xiii) Have there been any structural problems referred to insurance companies, any insurance claims, monitoring or underpinning, etc.
  - xiv) 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.

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

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

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

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

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

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

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed or indeed any that have not been discussed!

Please do not hesitate to contact us on

For and on Behalf of  
Independent Chartered Surveyors

**This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx**

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## **REFERENCES**

The repair and maintenance of houses  
*Published by Estates Gazette Limited*

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

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

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

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## **LIMITATIONS**

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

## **CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

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

## **APPROVALS/GUARANTEES**

Where work has been carried out to the property in the past, the surveyor cannot guarantee that this work has been carried out in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations, British/European Standards and Codes of Practice, Agreement Certificates and statutory regulations.

## **ONLY HUMAN!**

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

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

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## **LAYOUT PLAN**

We have used the estate agents floor plan as a guide to the layout of the building. We have not checked it for scale and accuracy.

## **WEATHER**

It was the warmest day of the summer so far on the day of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

## **OCCUPIED PROPERTY**

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

## **JAPANESE KNOTWEED**

We have not inspected for Japanese Knotweed. We would advise that we are finding that some mortgage valuation surveyors are setting valuations at zero on any property with Japanese Knotweed and are reluctant to lend where it is present.

Due to the problems associated with Japanese knotweed there is a legal requirement (Anti-Social Behaviour Crime Policing Act 2014 and amendments) where you can be required to control or prevent the growth of Japanese knotweed.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to carry out your own investigations on this matter before you commit to purchase the property and be aware that it could be in neighbouring properties which you do not have direct control over.

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## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately, in this instance our inspection has been limited as:

- 1) We did not have any view of the roof structure due to the boarding.
- 2) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.
- 3) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.
- 4) We did not have access to the drains which we normally like to see.
- 5) We would like to thank the owners for answering our question and answers.

We would like to thank you for taking the time to meet us during the survey.

## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

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

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

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

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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

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## APPENDICES

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

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## **THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS**

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

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

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

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

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## **INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET**

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

[www.landreg.org.uk](http://www.landreg.org.uk)

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

[www.rics.org.uk](http://www.rics.org.uk)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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