

JOB REFERENCE: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

xxxxxxxxxx,
Beckenham,
London
BR3 xxxx



FOR

xxxxxxxxxx

Prepared by:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey semi-detached property which has had a roof extension (vertically) and a rear extension together with alterations and amendments throughout.

The property has off road parking with a dropped kerb to the front. To the rear is a fair sized garden with timber decking adjacent to the building and an old prefabricated garage to the rear right.

We believe that the property was built in the late Georgian/early Victorian era. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1868	Last public hanging in Britain
1870	British Red Cross Established
1880	Commencement of 1st Test Cricket England v Australia at the oval.
1884	Colchester earthquake four die in the UK's most destructive earthquake.
1890	The longest bridge in Britain, the Forth Bridge is opened
1899-1902	Boer War between Britain and Boers in Southern Africa

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear View



Right view



Right hand side



Street view



Front garden



Rear garden decking and patio



Rear garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway and staircase (front)
- 2) Through lounge (left)
- 3) Kitchen/living area (rear)
- 4) Utility room (middle right)
- 5) Cloakroom off of utility room (middle right)

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Landing
- 2) Bedroom (front left)
- 3) Bedroom (front right)
- 4) Bedroom (rear left gives access to flat roof)
- 5) Bedroom (rear right)

Second Floor

The second floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Bedroom
- 2) En-suite shower room

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Outside Areas

To the front of the property there is off road parking with a dropped kerb. To the rear is a garden with timber decking and a stone patio leading to a grassed area which was slightly overgrown at the time of the survey.

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

(All directions given as you face the property)

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.

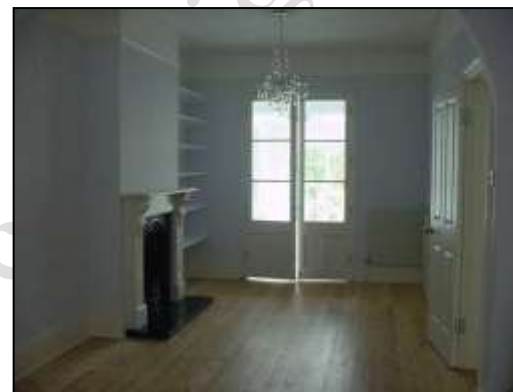
Ground Floor



Hallway



Lounge (front)



Lounge (rear)



Kitchen (rear left)



Kitchen (rear middle)



Kitchen (rear right)



Utility room (middle right)



Cloakroom (middle right)

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First Floor



Landing



Bedroom (front left)



Bedroom (front right)



Bedroom (rear left)



Bedroom (rear right)



Bathroom



Bathroom

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Second Floor



Stairs to the second floor



Bedroom (room in the roof)



En-suite shower room



En-suite shower room

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Two brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, gabled (originally hipped) clad with part quarried slate and part manmade slate. Parapet wall (left)
Front Roofs: Bay window roof:	Manmade slate
Porch roof:	Manmade slate
Rear Roofs : Flat roof:	Felt with central double glazed roof window and parapet wall.
Dormer roof:	Flat, felt (not viewed)
Main Roof Structure:	Cut timber roof with amendments incorporating roof windows.
Rear flat roofs structure:	Timber decking possibly with structural supports
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork, re-pointed in modern cement mortar (assumed), originally in a lime bed
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Modern double glazed sliding sash windows

Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Suspended floor to the front with concrete floor to rear (assumed)
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed).
Second floor:	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed). Additional structural support added

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The 1970's/1980's electrics are located under the stairs and the floor mounted Worcester boiler is located in the utility room.

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

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 350 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) Older properties typically have more space than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms.
- 2.0) The property has been extended, amended and altered (which can be a good and a bad thing).
- 3.0) The property is vacant and ready to move into.
- 4.0) There is off road parking to the front of the property. There is also a garage although you did say that you may be building a studio here which we feel is the best thing to do here.

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) Parapet Walls

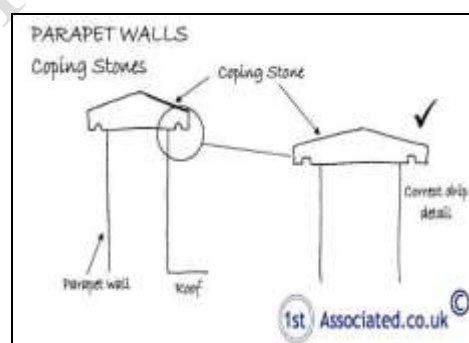
The parapet wall detailing on the rear flat roof is incorrect as far as we could see. The coping stones do not sit correctly on the walls and do not have a sufficient drip. This means that this drip will allow water to drip into the walls ultimately causing dampness.



Rear flat roof



The coping stone does not have a sufficient drip



Coping stone – correct drip

ACTION REQUIRED: Whilst the coping stones are not causing an immediate problem in the long term we think that dampness will get into the parapet walls. We believe you should be able to obtain a coping stone that would position the drip correctly.

ANTICIPATED COST: If it is simple as buying a coping stone then we would expect costs to be in the region of £500 to £1,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Parapet Walls Section of this Report.

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2.0) Large flat roof over the dormer

We do not like flat roofs that we have not been able to see. We would recommend that you form an access hatch so that the roof can be viewed from within the room in the roof bedroom. We have in the past formed roof windows in these roofs but sometimes this means too much sun gets into the roof space. A hatch of some sort would be of benefit to you.



Flat roof over dormer

We assume that the flat roof is as old as the roof extension. Typically felt roofs depending on the quality and the workmanship will last ten to twenty years with high performance felts lasting twenty years. However we do not generally see these unless contractors are forced to use them as they are expensive.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add a roof access.

ANTICIPATED COST: To add a roof access in the region of £500 to £750; please obtain quotations.

3.0) Fascias and soffits

There is a gap between the wall and the fascias and soffits. We are not certain if this was done intentionally because of the loft conversion or poor workmanship originally or whether it is due to movement in the property. We do feel we should mention it as the gap between the main walls and the fascias and soffits is larger than we would expect.



There is a gap between the wall and the soffit.

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ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically ask the existing owners for copies of the drawings relating to the roof conversion and also to specifically ask them with regard to this issue.

ANTICIPATED COST: We do not see any problems regarding this but would comment that it is unusual.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.



Soffit board a fraction away from the building. Is this intentional for the room in the roof or due to movement?

4.0) Walls and movement

There are hairline cracks visible in the walls that have probably been caused by the structural alterations that have taken place and the removal of the rear main walls. However it cannot be discounted that there may still be movement as there are larger cracks than we would expect to see.



Cracking to the rear of the property

ACTION REQUIRED: To be on the safe side we would recommend that the existing owners take out an insurance claim with regard to the cracking (this is usually at no cost to them). You would then take over the insurance claim when you purchase the property using the same insurance company. Your Legal Advisor needs to check that this is legally correct. This will then limit your liability to the excess on the insurance policy. Again your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm (we have used this system several times before). Monitoring of the cracking should then take place. Typically a year's monitoring is recommended by the Building



Hairline cracking

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Research Establishment (BRE) to check if the movement is progressive or not.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

5.0) Cement pointing

The property has been re-pointed in cement rather than in a lime mortar. In addition to this the cement that has been used is relatively hard and is starting to crack already. If you recall we showed you where it was cracking on the flashings.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to remove all the cement mortar (it will eventually fall out on its own but a stiff brush will help it). We recommend you find the oldest, time served brick layer that you can who is able to carry out the re-pointing in lime mortar and to gradually replace sections of the cement mortar with lime mortar over the years.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds every year until re-pointing is complete; please obtain quotations.

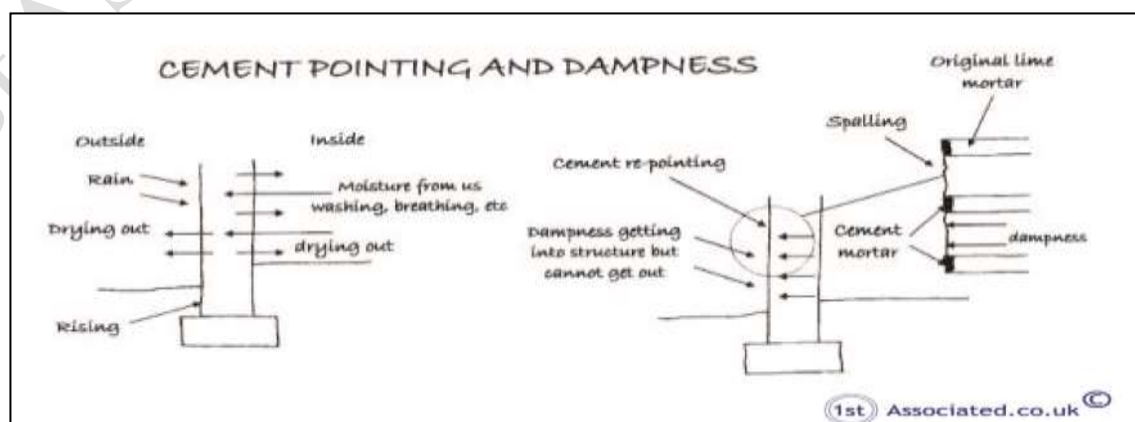


Re-pointed in cement mortar instead of lime



Cement mortar has been used to point in the lead flashing. We much prefer mastic as it's longer lasting

Lime every time – a bit more information



How old walls need to breathe

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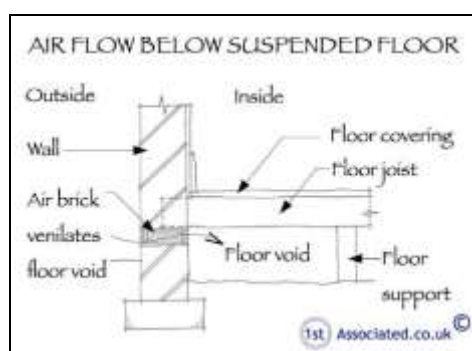
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Unfortunately the cement re-pointing, whilst well meaning, is not appropriate for this type of construction. This has been used instead of a lime based mortar. We recommend you use lime mortar in any future repairs regardless of what the builders say! Using lime mortar will limit further damage to the brickwork, which is almost impossible to repair successfully. We would add that many, if not most, of the properties that are re-pointed now are re-pointed wrongly; it is only in recent years that we have discovered the problems that can occur from it.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

6.0) Suspended timber floors

The property has suspended timber floors which need airflow underneath them to minimise wet rot and dry rot. We can see air bricks to the front area (but not enough).



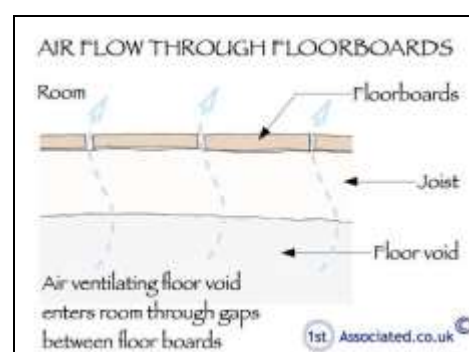
Suspended timber floor



Air brick to front bay window area with air flow underneath

You advised us that the owners have had insulation put under the suspended timber floor. This is beneficial with regards to minimising drafts coming up through the floor boards; however this does limit the airflow making it more important that you have air bricks.

As mentioned we noted some air bricks to the front of the property. We noted only one air brick to the right side of the property (this is partially blocked) compared with several air vents on the neighbouring property.



Air flow through floorboards is usually blocked when insulation is added so it is important that air can flow underneath the floor.

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Partly blocked air brick on this property (right)



Two of several air bricks to the neighbouring property

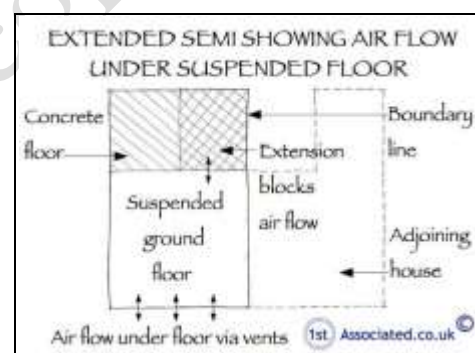
We also noted one air brick to the rear which may be a vent through the concrete floor that is blocking the timber floor.



Steps down into the kitchen.
Possible vent running through
the concrete floor



Air brick to the rear



Air flow under extended semi-detached property

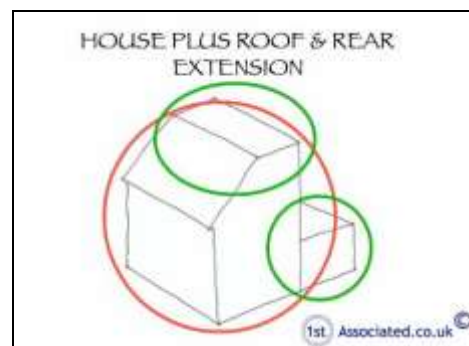
ACTION REQUIRED: In summary we would say that there are not enough air vents and more need to be added. We would add them to the side of the property and to the step and underneath the stairs. When the opening underneath the stairs is made you need to check the condition of the floor beneath.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,500 to £3,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Air bricks Section of this Report.

7.0) Cold bridging/thermal bridging and what happens when old properties have been extended from a heat point of view?

We have come across quite a few instances where properties that have been extended (such as this) with highly insulated new extensions (in this case to the rear and to the roof) on to a relatively poorly insulated old building have resulted in condensation problems.



House with extensions

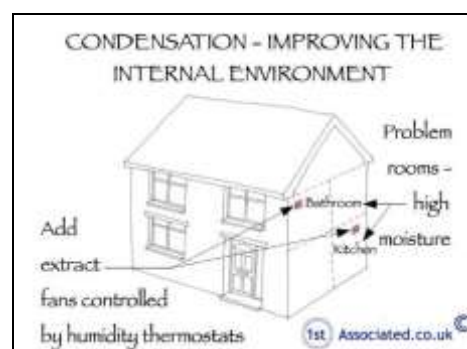
Cold Bridging Defined

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure more quickly when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element



Cold bridging

ACTION REQUIRED: We would add that condensation is caused by humidity in the air coming into contact with colder surfaces. Therefore it is important to remove the humidity as soon as possible. This is why we would always recommend that large, good quality, humidity controlled extract fans are added to areas where humidity can be generated such as kitchens, utility rooms, bathrooms and en-suites. This we feel reduces the chance of any problems.



Condensation

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 to £500 per fan dependent upon wiring required; please obtain quotations.

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7.1) Heating a large open plan kitchen

If you recall we discussed the difficulties of heating the open plan kitchen which apparently has under floor heating. This may or not be warm enough dependent upon how much heat you require.

We would also mention that whilst the sliding folding doors are very popular at the moment we have heard complaints that it is relatively cold near them in the winter months (which we have a fair number of). We have seen wooden shutters being used on these glass sliding doors or good quality thick curtains.

There is also a glazed area/ roof window in the roof that as well as letting light through can also let a considerable amount of heat out during the winter months even though it is double glazed.



Glass sliding, folding doors



Glazed area/roof window in kitchen

We would recommend that you look at some sort of blinds or shuttering system. However, in our view, we are aware that blinds can be surprisingly expensive for what they are.

8.0) Rising damp

There was rising damp found to the right hand side of the property with meter readings in the 80's and the 90's. We suspect it will also be to the rear but the construction is dry lined (false walls) meaning that we cannot carry out tests with an electronic damp meter without opening up the structure.



High damp meter reading

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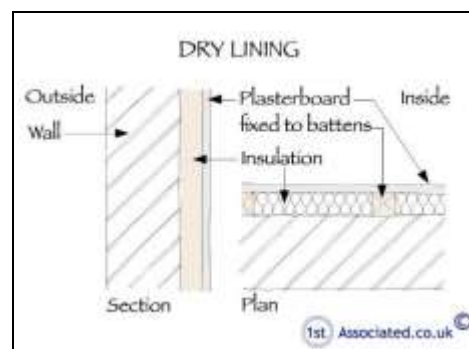
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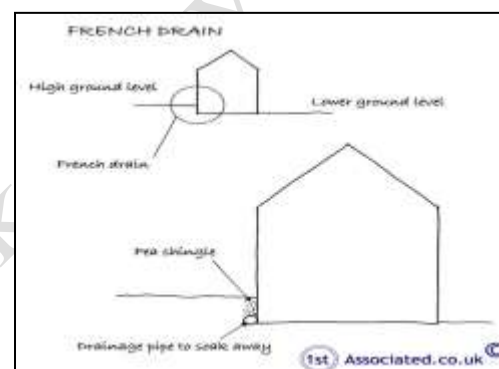


We could not take damp readings because the walls are dry lined here



Dry lining

ACTION REQUIRED: A French drain (please see our article in the appendices) to be run along the right hand side of the property as well as air vents being added. We suspect the suspended timber floor may be in poor condition which is why we are recommending that you open up the floor underneath the staircase to check its condition. Ideally this should be carried out before you purchase the property.



French Drain

ANTICIPATED COST: For a proper French Drain that discharges into the nearby drainage run we would expect costs in the region of £2,000 to £5,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

9.0) Asbestos roof on garage

We discussed the garage in general and the Asbestos on the roof. You advised that you will be taking the garage down to create a studio which we would recommend you do. Please remember that Asbestos is a dangerous material and does have to be taken down in a safe manner. The Local Authority will usually have a



Asbestos roof on garage

list of approved Asbestos contractors that you could use.

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

10.0) Services

10.1) Heating this size of property

There are a few single panel radiators some of which are internal. These may not warm the property as quickly as you would wish or indeed warm the room as how that quickly.

Internal Radiators defined

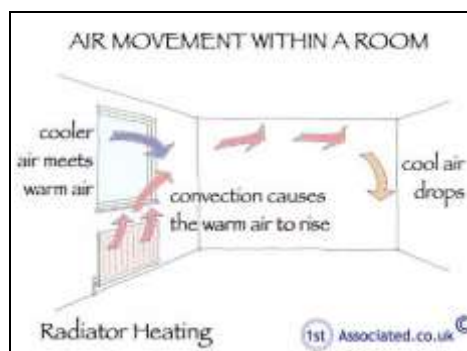
These are radiators on internal walls of the property rather than on external walls such as under windows. Radiators located underneath windows on external walls help air flow in a property as warm air rises and hits the cooler air above the windows it then circulates around the room and helps the air circulation in the property as a whole.



Internal single panel radiator

ACTION REQUIRED: We feel the house will benefit from having new modern double panel convection radiators.

However we also think you may need to add blinds or shutters to the sliding doors and the roof window in the kitchen to keep this area to a reasonable temperature without running up large bills during the winter months. This is particularly as this area is only heated with electric floor heating.



Air movement

We would also ask you to see our comments (and our article within the appendices) with regard to cold bridging in properties such as this

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where you have the original old building and a large open plan new extension.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds per radiator. With regard to the blinds and shutters this is specialist work and you will need to obtain quotations. We have heard that they can be surprisingly expensive.

10.2) Electrics

Relatively speaking the electrics are quite dated circa 1970's to the 1990's. Better fuse boards are now available.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend an upgrade is carried out.

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 to £500 for a new fuse board plus the cost of an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report and any work recommended; please obtain quotations.



Dated fuse board

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

The Ugly

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

We have found more than the average number of things that we would classify as bad. We would specifically comment upon the movement in the property and the lack of understanding by the builder with regard to older properties in relation to some of the work that has been carried out. Providing you can reach a resolution with regard to the movement and that you are happy with the characteristics of the property than nothing, we feel, falls within this section.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

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

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

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the services within the property we also need to advise you of the following:

Electrics

The electrics are dated we would recommend the fuse board is upgraded. The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

The property has single panel radiators you may wish to upgrade these to double panel convector radiators but the property does benefit from an 'as new' floor mounted boiler (you were advised of this by the owners but need to obtain some form of guarantee on it). 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.

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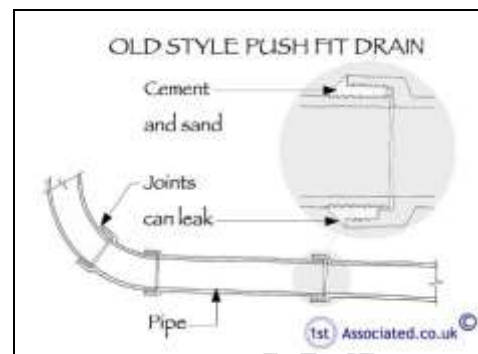
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Drainage

Whilst we have lifted the manhole cover to the right hand side of the property the only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report carried out. Drains in this age of property tend to be push fit drains and there will often have been leaks over the years.



Push fit drain

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

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

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main

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body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

Estimates of Building Costs

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

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

Our main concerns are with regard to the movement which we feel has an outside chance of being progressive and so you do need to limit your liability with an insurance claim and also the work that has been carried out without a proper understanding of older buildings, for example, using cement mortar. We do feel that the building has been very much presented to sell and some basics have not been thought through, such as how to keep the building warm, that you will need to resolve at your cost over time. This is why we are recommending that you negotiate a discount on the sale price to compensate you for these future issues and problems that you need to resolve.

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

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

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

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MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



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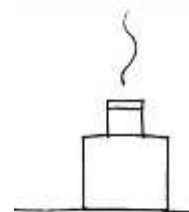
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, PARAPET WALLS, DORMER WINDOWS 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 are two chimneys to this property they are located to the left and to the rear. The left chimney sits on the Party Wall. (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One - left

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and several chimney pots (half of which are yours). From what we could see from ground level it looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style and needs re-pointing.



Chimney one – main roof



Chimney needs re-pointing

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out re-pointing; this needs doing in the next three years. We are surprised this work was not carried out when they carried



Flaunchings

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out the work to the room in the roof. This shows a lack of foresight by the builder in not carrying out the re-pointing. This needs to be carried out in the appropriate mortar.

Chimney Two- rear right

The chimney was difficult to view. This chimney is brick built with a flue which we believe means that it is venting the boiler. From what we could see it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style



Chimney two (rear

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.

Parapet Walls

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

In this case there is a parapet wall to the left hand side of the main roof that transfers down onto the roof below. It is built from brick with a coping stone. Our concern is that the lead flashing looks to have been pointed with a cement mortar which will crack relatively quickly. We much prefer a plumbers mastic to be used where a lead flashing is present.



Left parapet wall (front)



Left parapet wall (rear)

ACTION REQUIRED: It may take some time but ultimately you will need to re-bed the lead flashing.



Front left parapet wall
(ground floor)

Finally, we were only able to see approximately forty percent of the parapet wall, therefore we have made our best assumptions based upon what we could see. A closer inspection may reveal more.

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Dormer Windows

Dormer windows are often used where rooms are formed within the roof space and have the advantage of allowing light into the area and also giving the head space to allow them to be stood next to.

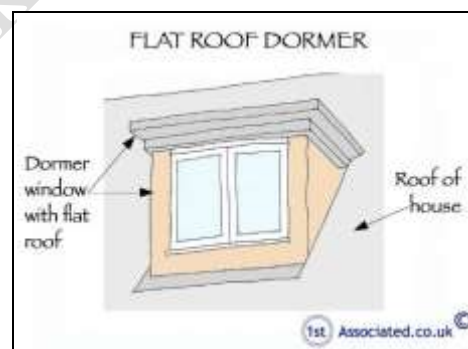
The dormer is made from the same material as the rear part of the main roof which is a manmade slate. The cheeks of the dormer are made in manmade slate and the windows are timber double glazed. Most importantly we would add that we cannot see the flat roof on the dormer. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary regarding the flat roof above the dormer. Generally we could comment for the age, type and style the dormer is in average condition.



Dormer (rear)
Forms the room in the roof



Dormer window with
flat roof (rear)



Flat Dormer roof

Finally, Dormer windows have been viewed from ground level and literally from the dormer windows themselves.

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Roof Windows (Also known as roof lights or Velux windows which is the trade or generic name)

The property has two purpose made roof lights, which looked in average condition. The important factor with roof lights is the flashing around them, in this case there were no signs of water penetration.



Roof windows (front)



Roof window (front)



Roof window (rear flat roof)



Roof window above kitchen

In our experience, sooner or later, the roof windows will leak around the base. You would have to see the roof in wet weather to understand if there is ponding etc. that may cause this to happen in the near future.

Ponding defined

This is where a pool or pond of water sits on a flat roof and the weight of it builds up and starts to depress the roof which then deteriorates the felt on it.

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you have a look at the roof window, to the flat roof over the kitchen, when it next rains from the bedroom window to see if you can see any ponding.

Party Walls

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimneys, firewall and parapet walls. 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.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks, parapet walls, dormer windows 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. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

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

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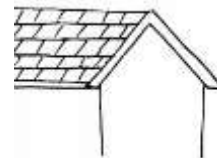
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ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

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 it may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in three areas:-

1. The main roof with rear hipped roof
2. The front roofs
3. The rear flat roof (we have commented on the rear dormer roof earlier in the report).

Main Roof

The main roof is pitched, part clad with quarried slate (front) and part clad with manmade slate (rear) and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roofs age type and style.



Quarried slate (front)



Main roof (front) clad with quarried slate

With this age of roof there will usually be a few missing or displaced slates, this is nothing unusual.

Rear hipped roof

Also to the rear of the main roof is a hipped roof in a manmade slate.

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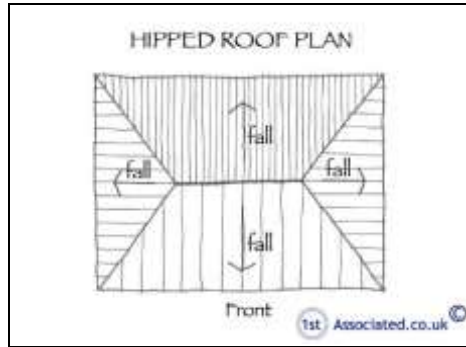
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Hipped roof



Hipped roof



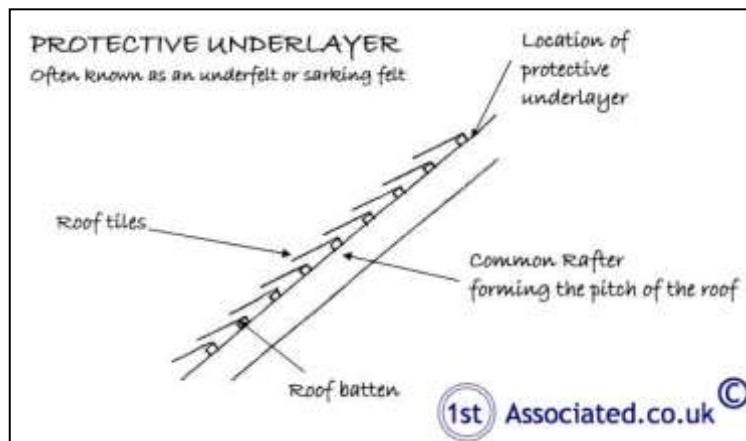
Manmade slate

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

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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 were unable to see if there was a protective underlayer in this particular case. We believe this to be a relatively new roof conversion in which case it should have a breathable protective underlayer.

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Front Roofs

Bay window roof



Front bay window



Manmade slates on Bay window



Parapet wall re-pointed in cement mortar. Just a reminder that you may have to re-point this

Porch roof



Front porch roof



Porch roof clad in manmade slate

Rear Roof

Rear Flat Roof over kitchen

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.



Rear flat roof

We would have preferred to see a steeper fall on this flat roof particularly with such a large roof window in the middle. We tend to find that roof windows such as this can mean that the centre of the roof sinks and you get ponding around the base of the roof window, you need to look out for this.

We mentioned earlier within this report that movement has been identified within this property and that this could be initial settlement following the alterations that have been carried out. Such initial settlement could include the roof window which would then in turn affect the flat roof.



Some pattern staining on the roof indicating water is ponding on the roof.



Roof window / glazed area over kitchen

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary regarding the coping stone on the parapet wall.

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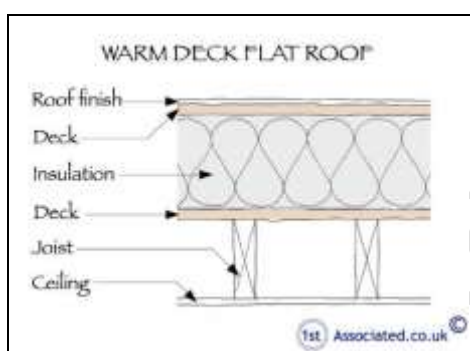
Further information on flat roofs

Ventilation

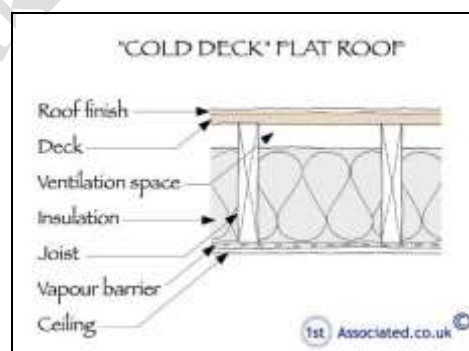
Building Regulations require flat roofs to be ventilated. We could not see any ventilation in this particular case. Building Regulations are not retrospective but the reason for the requirement is to make sure that any moisture that enters the roof construction is dispelled by way of ventilation. We would suggest that if the opportunity arises ventilation should be provided.

Insulation

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



Warm deck flat roof



Cold deck flat roof

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically ask if insulation was added to the flat roof as it will make this area even harder to heat if it has not been added.

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and/or ground level.

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

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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

We would normally comment on the roof structure but in this case we cannot as rooms have been formed within the roof which has hidden the roof structure.

Roof Timbers

During our inspection of the roof timbers we would usually comment on whether there is:-

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

However in this case we were unable to see the roof structure.

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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

In some areas there are the older style cast iron gutters and downpipes but much of this has been replaced with plastic. There is some poor detailing with regards to the plastic, for example, the rear flat roof where the downpipe has not been finished correctly. In our opinion this will cause over flowing of the gutter and dampness into the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: You may, we believe, have to carry out some amendments and alterations to the gutters and downpipes.

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.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend setting aside the sum of £1,000 to re-organise the gutters and downpipes.



Downpipe has been cut too close to the gutter. It will block, overflow and cause dampness in the property (circled)



Cast iron and plastic downpipe is overflowing and needs to be checked and cleared of any vegetation



Narrow downpipe from the front porch roof

Dampness to upstairs bathroom window possibly caused by overflowing gutters.

We are not one hundred percent certain why there is dampness coming into this window, it may be condensation but it may be from overflowing gutters.



Dampness to bathroom window

Soil and Vent Pipe

The original cast iron soil and vent pipe has been replaced with plastic.



Plastic soil and vent pipe

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. We had some rain light towards the end of this survey but it was not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

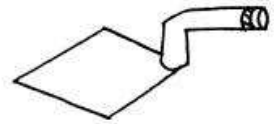
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External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

The walls are constructed of brickwork.

Brickwork

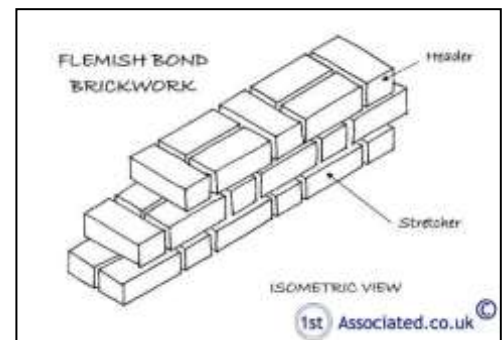
The property is built in a brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork. The most important thing is that they have been re-pointed in a cement mortar some time ago and then re-pointed again in a modern harder cement mortar.



Flemish Bond

The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.

The solid external walls may be liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon their condition and their exposure to the weather. External faces should be kept in good condition.



Flemish Bond brickwork

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

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Cracking

There are hairline cracks to the rear of the property.



Cracking to the rear of the property



Cracking

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

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

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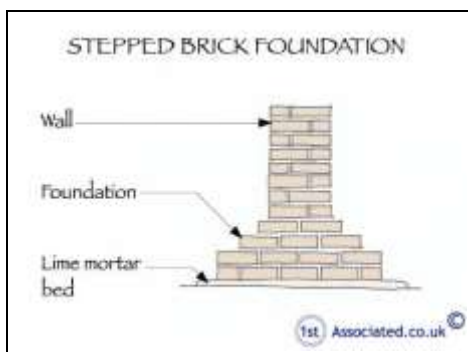


FOUNDATIONS

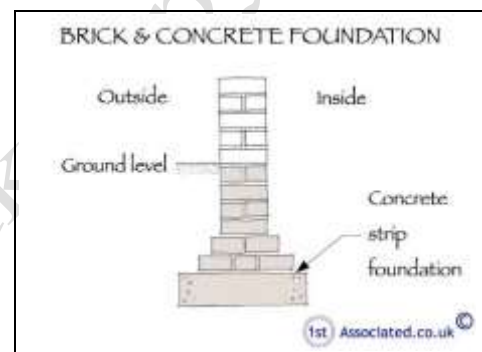
The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre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

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar and possibly a concrete foundation for the more recent extension.



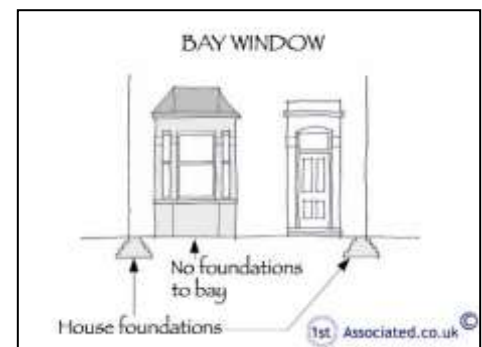
Stepped brick foundation



Concrete foundation

Bay Windows

Bay windows in this era of property typically do not have foundations underneath them and have been subject to movement. We are aware that some insurance companies underpin bay windows with a modern foundation. We think this is excessive and unnecessary.



Bay window

London Clay

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

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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.

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 recommends 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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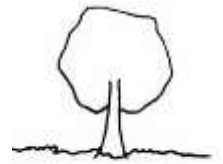
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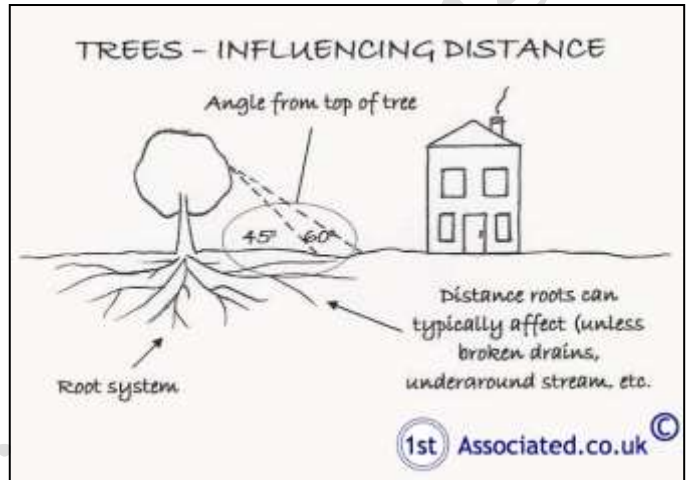
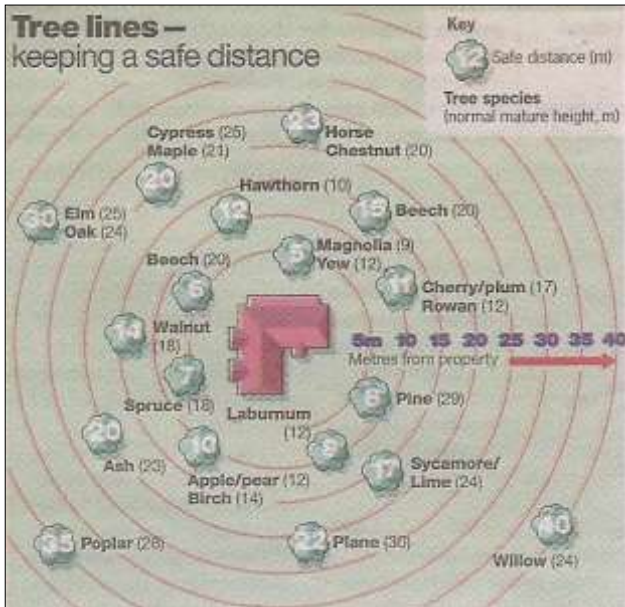
TREES

FOUNDATIONS



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

There are no trees within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.



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.

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.

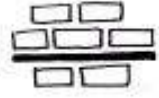
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DAMP PROOF COURSE

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, we cannot see a DPC. We believe the ground levels are a bit high and it may be hiding the damp proof course, if there is one.



Where is the DPC?

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness as we have found dampness in this property.

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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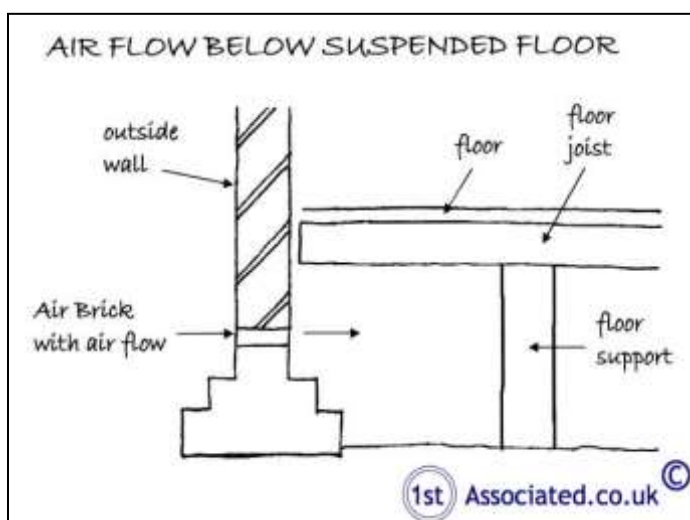
AIRBRICKS



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

Low Level Air Bricks

The property needs more airbricks. The property has a timber suspended floor but not enough air bricks. Air bricks are essential to have a through flow of air as this helps to reduce the chances of wet rot, dry rot and woodworm.



Suspended timber floor



Air brick (front)



Air brick (rear)

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments regarding the suspended timber floor within the Executive Summary.

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

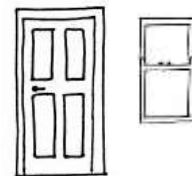
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

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, Soffits and Corbels

The fascias, soffits and corbels are timber. They are painted and we would comment they are in average to slightly below average condition for their age, type and style.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend redecoration in the summer of 2014. Make sure gutters and downpipes are watertight before carrying out any work on fascias and soffits.



Fascia and soffit (red oval)
Corbels (green circles)

Windows and Doors

The property has modern double glazed timber sliding sash windows which are nicely detailed with horns.

General Information on modern Sliding Sash Windows

Modern sliding sash windows where double glazing has been added often have draft seals etc. and can work very well eliminating the old draftiness and rattling of old sliding sash windows



Modern timber sash windows

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Generally they look to be of an average quality for their age, type and style.

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.

Transferable Guarantees

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

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

Please also see the Internal Joinery section.



Modern sash window



Dampness coming in through bathroom window. This may be due to condensation but may be due to leaking gutters



Entrance door with stained glass windows

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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.

We have mentioned the fascias, soffits and corbels and that we recommend redecoration of in 2014. At the same time we would look at carrying out work to the windows.

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

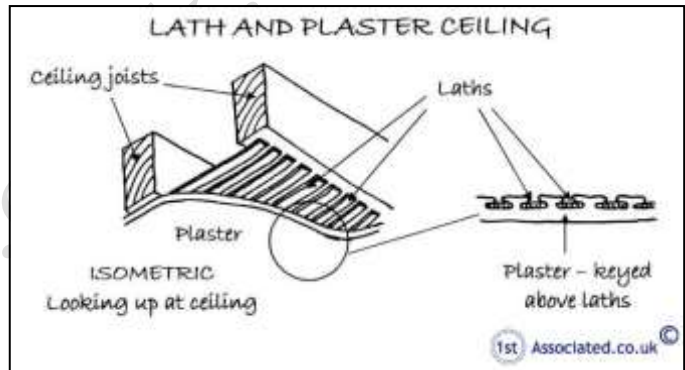
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.

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 lath and plaster to the older parts with plasterboard to the newer parts such as the kitchen areas.

Lath and Plaster Defined

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



Lath and plaster ceiling

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.

Mouldings

We think the ceiling rose is possibly a new addition but the ceiling mouldings look typical of this era. However now and again we are surprised at how good a polystyrene one can be. We would have to make a hole in it to be a hundred percent certain.

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Ceiling mouldings look typical of this era



Ceiling rose. We think this may have been added

Internal Walls and Partitions

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

Perimeter Walls

Originally the main property would have been constructed with a wet plaster, possibly a lime plaster. The extensions, alterations to the kitchen/dining area and the room in the roof, have a plasterboard finish and are what are known as dry lined.

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

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

Cracking to the rear bedroom

Our concern here is that the property may have been decorated to sell and as such this has hidden some of the cracks. This is why we could only see them within cupboards.



Cracking to the rear bedroom in the cupboard

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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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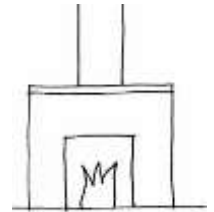
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES

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 left and rear (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.



Fireplace in first floor rear bedroom

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.



Fireplace in the lounge

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.



Hidden chimney

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.

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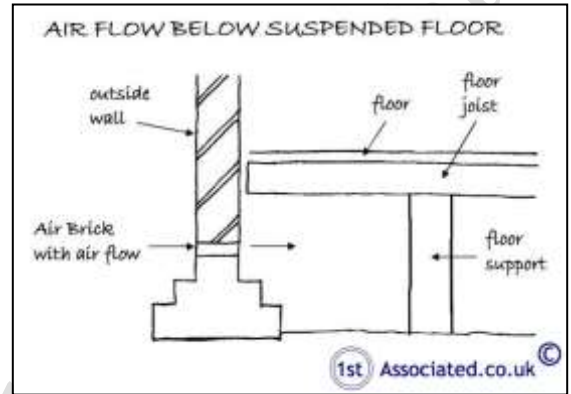
FLOORS



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 original property will have a suspended timber floor and the rear kitchen/dining area extension has a solid floor. This is based upon us literally walking on the floor. A suspended timber floor requires air movement underneath to minimise wet rot, dry rot and woodworm.



Suspended timber floor

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary where we advise about the lack of airflow underneath floor.

Tiles cracking

We note there are no expansion joints to the tiles in the kitchen/dining area which may mean they will crack. We can see one crack in the rear left hand corner.



Tiles cracked in kitchen because no expansion joint around the tiles

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

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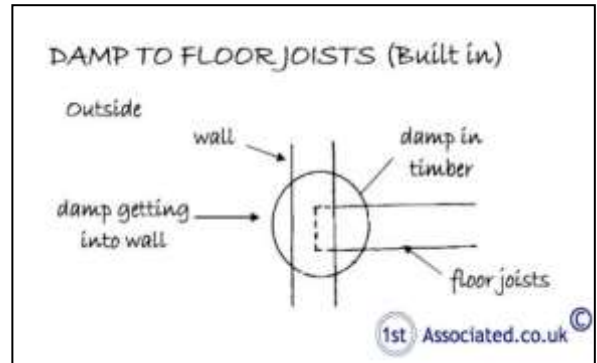
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First Floor and Second Floor

We have assumed that the first floor and second floor construction is joist and floorboards with embedded timbers, as this is typical in this age of property. We can only say this as an assumption as we only managed to lift a floor board in the rear left hand bedroom



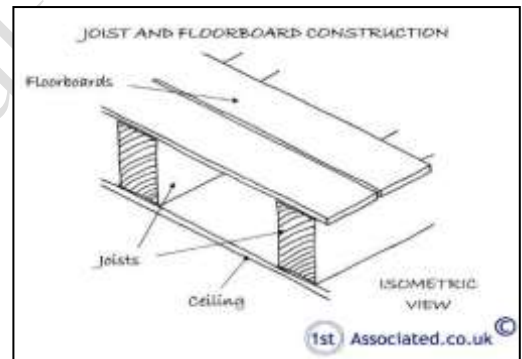
Embedded timbers

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.



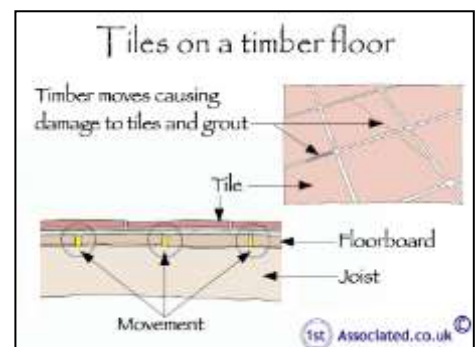
Several floor boards were loose but did not quite lift up completely



Joist and floorboards

Tiled floor in bathroom and en-suite shower room

We noted the bathroom floors have been tiled. We tend to find that over time, where tiles are put over a wooden floor, the grout becomes loose and comes out. Although in our opinion the tiled floors look nice you will have to re-grout from time to time.



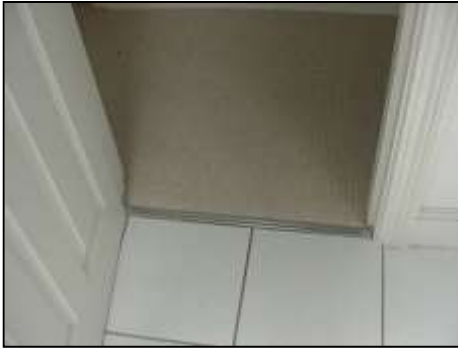
Tiles on a timber floor

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Tiled floor first floor bathroom



Tiled floor second floor en-suite

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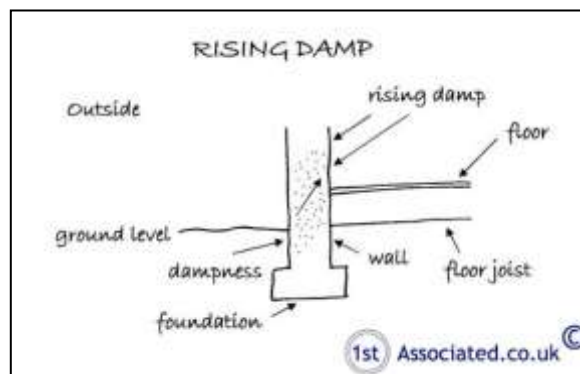


DAMPNESS

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 random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found rising damp. We took high readings on the right hand side of the property due to, we believe, high ground levels.



Testing for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments regarding adding more air bricks and also the dry lining within the Executive Summary and the body of the report. If this is not completely clear then please call us and we will be happy to explain.

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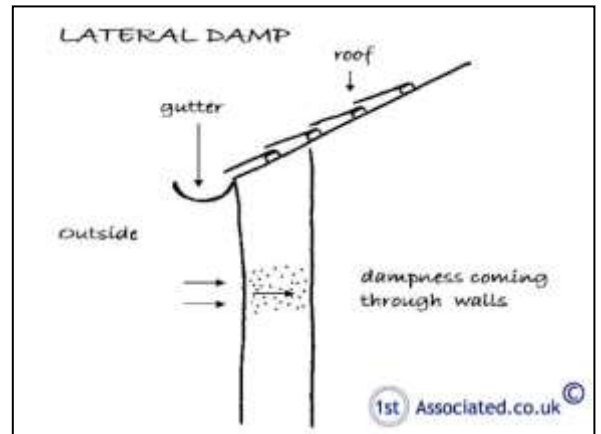
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Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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

We used a damp meter on the external walls. We have not lateral found dampness but we were surprised that we didn't find it. We could not take readings in all the usual places because of the dry lining

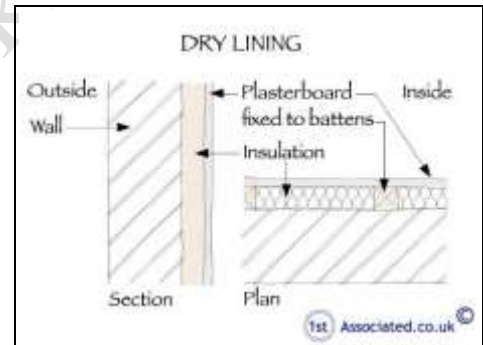


Lateral dampness

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



Testing for lateral dampness



Dry lining

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 obvious signs of condensation but the property was empty at the time of our survey! Please see our comments in the Executive Summary as we have found with this era of property where an extension has been added there can be problems relating to cold bridging/thermal bridging and condensation.

However, it depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between

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

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: We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas as this will help matters.

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 doors are generally panelled with the exception of the glazed doors that lead into the kitchen/dining room area. There is no British Standard Kite mark on the glass in the doors which is not unusual in this age of property but it does mean it is not safety glass. If you have young children you may wish to replace this with safety glass.



Glazed doors



Panel door

Staircase

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

Built in cupboards

The property has built in cupboards which come in very handy. However please note our earlier comments with regard to the cracking in the built in cupboards.



Built in cupboards complete with a sample of the old carpet!

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Kitchen

We found the kitchen in as new condition, it possibly has not been used.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

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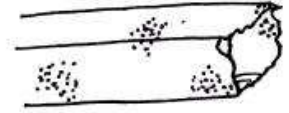
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have opened up a small section of the first floor but ideally would like to have opened up the ground floor. Of course we have also not had a view of the roof structure.

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.*

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

Given the damp conditions we found at floor level we would expect some rot in this area which is why we would recommend opening up the floors initially underneath the stair area to minimise damage. If problems are found in this area then further opening up would be recommended.

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.

Both the roof and the floor are the usual areas we would look for woodworm but in this case we have been unable to. We would normally look for visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection would usually be restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

However we would comment in this instance that our inspection is limited by the room formed in the roof and the exposed timber floor throughout (meaning if we open up the floor and damage it this would have a visual impact). This is why we recommended opening up the floor under the stairs.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm you would have to open up the structure at ground floor, roof areas and sections of the first floor. We would reiterate there are no visual signs indicating that there is woodworm, however, woodworm does like damp conditions which you are likely to have in the floor.

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

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

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INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

Internal decorations are in average condition, slightly dated and you may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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.

HIPs

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

Roofs

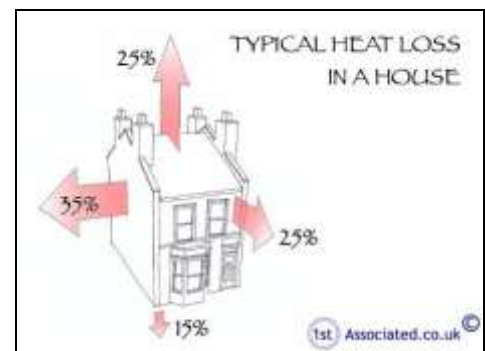
We cannot see any insulation in the roof due to the room formed in the roof.

Walls

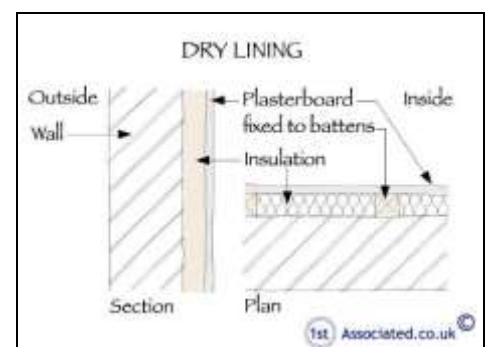
The original walls to this property are solid but the modern extension is likely to have a cavity wall. We have not opened the walls up so we cannot be a hundred per cent certain.

Cavity wall with dry lining

As such there will be a considerable difference between how the old and the new buildings perform. Please note our comments on this.



Typical heat loss



Dry lining

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Windows

The windows are sliding sash but 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. We are advised the boiler is a new Worcester floor mounted boiler. You need to confirm this.

Summary

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

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

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

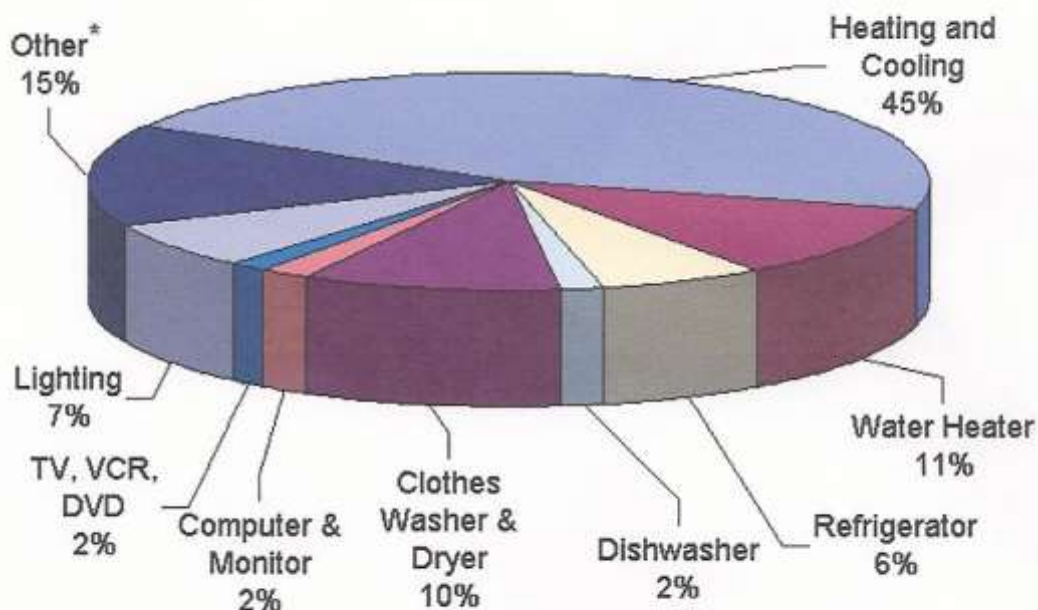
or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs

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.

What does my energy bill pay for?



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

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OTHER MATTERS

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

Security

No security system was noted and no code was required for us to enter the property. 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 except to say we would be more comfortable if there was a security system. 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.



Security lights

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend adding a security system particularly with the rear sliding, folding doors and the roof windows which may allow an intruder to gain access at first floor level or into the kitchen

Fire / Smoke Alarms

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



Smoke alarm

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

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investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

Insurance

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

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

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have noted Asbestos in the garage roof.

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

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

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

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SERVICES

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

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

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ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located under the stairs. The fuse board looked dated 1970's, 1980's or possibly 1990's and better are now available.

ACTION REQUIRED: Upgrade the fuse board. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Fuse Board

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 Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.



Earth Test

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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 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

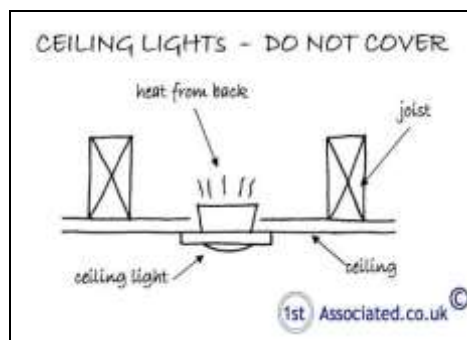
For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

Ceiling lights

We still have concerns over this type of ceiling light where there is nowhere for the heat to escape to particularly the ceiling lights that are present in the room in the roof. There is a flat roof above them that is likely to become warm and we are unhappy with this combination. We recommended earlier that you form an access hatch in the flat roof to give access to the flat roof and it will also enable you to hopefully see the backs of these lights. We would then suggest that you get an electrician to check their condition and whether they are appropriate for here.



Ceiling lights



Ceiling lights

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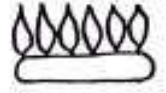
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GAS



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

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

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



Gas

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

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PLUMBING AND HEATING

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

Water Supply

The controlling stopcock was not located.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners or the Estate Agent to show you where it is.

Water Pressure

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



Taps run in bathroom
(first floor)

Cold Water Cistern

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

Plumbing

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper 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 Worcester floor mounted boiler was located in the utility room. You advised us that you were told it was new therefore a guarantee should be obtained on the boiler system. 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.



Floor mounted Worcester boiler

ACTION REQUIRED: Obtain a guarantee for the boiler system.

Ten Minute Heating Test

The heating was on during the course of the survey and it was pleasantly warm.

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

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

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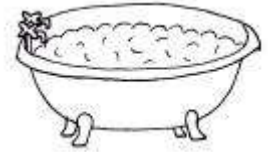
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BATHROOM



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

Cloakroom (ground floor)

There is a cloakroom on the ground floor off of the utility room. This is slightly on the small side but we always think it is better to have any ground floor W.C. than not.



Cloakroom

Bathroom (first floor)

The property has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.



Popular style tiles in first floor bathroom

En-Suite Shower room (second floor)

We would comment that this is in as new condition.



En –suite shower

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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 first floor bathroom. 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 chambers / manholes.

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 (right)

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be free flowing at the time of our inspection.

From what we could see it is plastic built.



Manhole (right)

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

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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal. In this age of property it is likely to be into shared drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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

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OUTSIDE AREAS

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

OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING



There is off road parking with a drop down kerb to the front of the property.



Off road parking



Off road parking



Drop kerb

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.

Old prefabricated garage with Asbestos roof

As discussed you are going to remove the garage to build a studio.



Garage



Asbestos roof on garage

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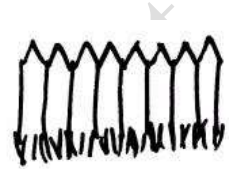
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ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Executive Summary and the Other Matters section of the report. If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an Asbestos survey carried out.

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



EXTERNAL AREAS

Front Garden

The front garden is mainly given over to parking and is shingle covered but does have a pattern tiled path.



Front Garden



Front Garden

Rear Garden

The garden to the rear of the property is a fair size with a timber deck, patio area, lawn area and various trees and shrubs.



Rear Garden



Decking and patio



Rear Garden

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Decking

We are finding decking becomes slippery over the years when it is not regularly maintained and can be an ideal space for wildlife to live under.

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 spoke to these neighbours briefly and have no issues with regards to the boundary fence.

Right Hand Neighbours

We knocked on the door but no one answered it.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

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

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mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

For and on Behalf of
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Independent Chartered Surveyors

This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxx

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

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WEATHER

It was a mild spring day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted the surveyors may not be local to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc.

EMPTY PROPERTY

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited as

1. We did not have full access to the roof.
2. We did not open up the ground floor, first floor or second floor.
3. The property was empty we did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers questionnaire.

We were pleased to meet you at the property and are more than happy to discuss any items further.

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

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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
3. French Drain Article
4. Condensation and Cold Bridging Article

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

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

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

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

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

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French Drain

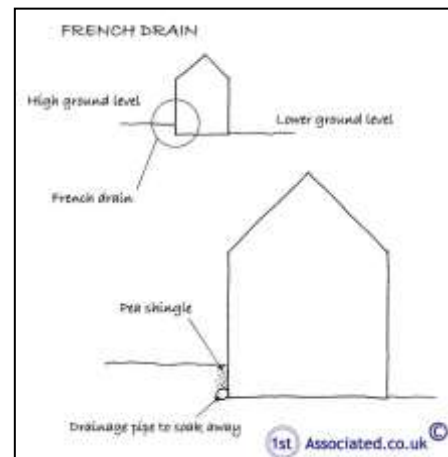
Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio area. This then discharges any rainwater against the building. Quite often the solution is to add a French drain.

Whilst French drains are quite simple and are basically nothing more than trenches filled with gravel, although there is a bit more to them, as we will explain, they are almost a D.I.Y. job for most people and they are relatively easy to install and are low cost. However, you do need some care and attention, otherwise you can install what we have heard referred to, as the French pond.

What use is a French drain?

A French drain is a trench, the width of approximately six inches or 300 millimetres wide, or the width of your spade, and is approximately twice the depth, i.e. 12 inches or 300 millimetres. In most cases this will suffice, however, where there is a great deal of ground water you may wish to make the trench wider and deeper.



The French drain acts as an area where water soaks away quickly. We often recommend them close to building, but not next to the building, as this helps reduce the ground level and/or take any water that is directed at that area away. For example, where a patio has been put in place which aims any rainwater at part of the wall. As mentioned, whilst a French drain is a D.I.Y. job, it does need some understanding of how it works.

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French drains must be on a slope

The piping that goes at the base of a French drain should be perforated or, as we did years ago for land drains, there should be gaps between each pipe. It should be set onto a bed of firm ground and the pipes should be on a fall to the drain. Whilst you should be able to ensure there is enough fall by sight, we also like the idea of rolling a marble from one end to the other.

You will then need to put the pipes down, fill the trench with half an inch, to an inch, of good sized gravel. You can leave it at that, or in addition you can cover with sand and then turf over. This is how a basic French drain is carried out.

The French drain system that we would recommend

This would be as described, although we would add to the base an inch or two of gravel on to which the perforated drainage pipe will rest. It will then wrap around that drainage pipe filter fabric. This is to stop the holes in the perforated pipe from blocking up. By the way, the drainage pipe should be four to six inches/100 millimetres to 250 millimetres. We would then fill with gravel. In addition to this, we would add a silt trap and this is added in the run of the pipe and is very similar to a road gully (not that's of much use if you don't understand how a road gully works). The silt trap is a rectangular box with a pipe opening at each end. The drained water passes onto this and any particles sink to the bottom of the box and then the water travels on to the other side of the box, enabling you to feed into a drain.

These are usually made of glass reinforced polyester and have been available in this form since the mid-1980's. They are normally reinforced with a steel frame for additional strength and re-bedded in concrete.

The French pond!

French drains will, over time, clog up, which is why we recommend using a filter fabric. However, even with this they will eventually clog up. Unfortunately, there is no dyno-rod equivalent, as it is normally fine sand, organic matter or clay that has clogged up the French drain. So, it is a case of digging it up and cleaning the pipework (or it may be quicker to just replace it), adding a filter fabric and re-filling the gravel.

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Condensation and Cold Bridging

What is Cold Bridging?

What is cold bridging and how does it work?

Cold bridging is a term and a problem we feel will become much more common in years to come. We are finding more and more examples of Cold Bridging. This happens in certain types of property and to some extent it could be argued that it is a characteristic of that type of property and quite a complex issue to resolve. Unfortunately it means condensation is more likely.



Post war / 1950's property that cold bridging can be a problem in.

Cold Bridging

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure or fabric of the building allowing coldness to pass through. When warm moist air is present in the property and it passes through the colder elements of the structure we have what is known as Cold Bridging. This is often caused by a combination of issues. It can occur from things such as having a shower or a bath, cooking or clothes washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. It could, in commercial properties, be a large gathering of people breathing (this can cause a lot of humidity) in a building that has stood cold and empty for some time such as a church, village hall, sports centre or a crèche. These human atmospheres create a climate which can result in condensation on the cold elements of the structure and fabric if the room is not ventilated properly.

Certain types of buildings are more susceptible to Condensation and Cold Bridging

Here is our sketch on Cold Bridging

This is a good indication of the typical things that cause Cold Bridging in a house and how extraction from humidity generating areas such as the kitchen and the bathroom can reduce problems. You do need to look at how you live in the house.



Cold bridging/condensation

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Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors

Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors. Not only can it be an original characteristic of the building it can be encouraged by all types of extension and alterations.

Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure which you can do very little to change without great expense. If you buy a 1960's property for example, with concrete lintels that cause cold bridging, this is a characteristic of the property and it is very difficult to change. However not only could it be a characteristic of the building it could also be caused by alterations that you make to the building.



1960's properties built with concrete lintels that can cause Cold Bridging

To give you some examples of Cold Bridging

As mentioned above typically Cold Bridging can be caused by lintels and also by beams (which effectively are big lintels). These were very commonly used in 1960's and 1970's buildings and can lead to condensation over doors and windows. We mentioned a 1960's building but here are some examples of concrete lintels that were commonly used in the 1970's and which today have caused cold bridging over the door and which in turn has led to condensation and deterioration of the paintwork.



A rear door to a 1970's building.
Can you tell where the cold bridging would be in this photo?



A close up view showing there is a concrete lintel over the door and window.
This is where the cold bridging occurs causing condensation inside

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Cold Bridging can also occur on metal lintels. We note that some modern metal lintels now have insulation in them which we assume is to reduce cold bridging.

Commercial properties suffer from Cold Bridging too

Commercial buildings are often built using structural frames. These frames are usually constructed of concrete or metal or sometimes both. The structural frame forms the skeleton of the building as you can see in the adjoining photo. Sometimes the structural frames, particularly, the concrete ones can suffer from Cold Bridging which causes blackening of the concrete frame. This can look like the roof has leaked and can lead to wrongly diagnosing a problem as being a roof leak. This can result in great time and expense being wasted repairing a roof that was not leaking and indeed in some cases has led to a new roof being fitted which has costs tens of thousands of pounds. This happened because it wasn't understood what the problem was.



Cold Bridging in a commercial property with a concrete frame.

When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in

1. Georgian and Regency properties
2. Victorian and Edwardian properties
3. Pre-war properties
4. War years construction properties
5. Post war construction properties up to the 1980's.
6. Commercial properties that use structural frames particularly concrete frames.



Georgian style properties can suffer from cold bridging and condensation. However in our experience it is more likely to be the new extensions or alterations that are added to them



Post war 1960's properties with plastic double glazing without trickle vents that have been added can cause condensation.

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We find that cold bridging and condensation occur most commonly where a property has a relatively high heating level, a good level of insulation and where it has many occupants.

Problems with 1970/1980 era properties relating to Cold Bridging

Let us take a look at the 1970's/1980's era of property to give an example of the problems we have come across with this era.

The 1970's is an era where we had just begun to think about insulating due to the oil crisis and where we added insulation into our structures

For example with:

1. cavity wall insulation or
2. double glazed windows.

This meant they were warmer which has meant the significance of a lintel, over a door or window, being colder and allowing the transfer of coldness becomes much more important. This results in condensation that we commonly see above windows in this age and era of property.

How to solve Cold Bridging

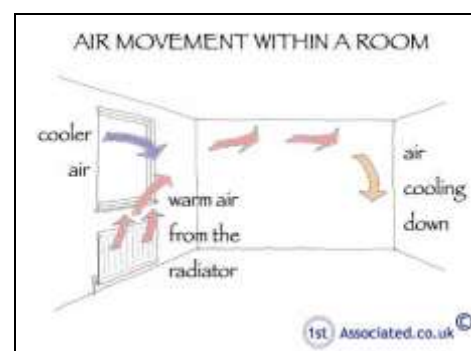
The difficulty is resolving cold bridging. Normally, where condensation is involved, if you get the balance of warm and coolness of the air, ventilation and movement you can reduce considerably the chances of condensation. Airing the room by opening the windows, which seems to have gone out of fashion, can help considerably.



1970's property with cold bridging to the roof beams and the lintels



1980's property, cold bridging was found in the lintels



Air movement within a room

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Where do we most commonly find Cold Bridging?

Our thoughts on this have very much changed as we used to say that cold bridging was typically found in properties from the 1960's/1970's. However we are increasingly finding it in a broader range of properties, particularly Victorian properties, where people are trying to live to modern standards of heating and insulation without understanding that the properties need to breathe as well. We have also found cold bridging in properties where extensions have been carried out and where the extension has been built to a different standard to the original property.



Victorian properties that have been extended and altered over the years with new thermal properties that can cause Cold Bridging because of the mix of old and new standards

Is your life style a factor in Cold Bridging?

This is often a contentious and difficult question, particularly where the occupier is a tenant and there is a disagreement between the landlord and the occupier as to why there is mould in the property. In our experience the major factor is the size of the family living in a property. This is especially the case with large families with young children and where in turn there is a lot of washing of clothes being done. This is particularly the case in the winter months, with the wet washed clothes being dried on radiators. Also general hygiene washing and not to mention cooking to feed everyone all lead toward a more humid atmosphere.

This is generally known as the lifestyle of occupants and can be a major factor particularly where there are legal cases as to the problems within a property.

Expert witness case, what is an expert witness?

This is where you employ someone who is a specialist within a field, such as us as Chartered Building Surveyors, who comment on problems of condensation within the property. We have been involved in several court cases as expert witnesses where landlords are being taken to court over the condensation that is occurring in their property. The expert witness case looks at how this condensation is occurring and if it relates, for example, to the occupiers' lifestyle or whether it relates to the way the



Older style London converted flats with property problems such as Condensation and Cold Bridging

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building was constructed and where there are, for example, cold bridging elements. When discussions of this nature take place in court they can be very expensive.

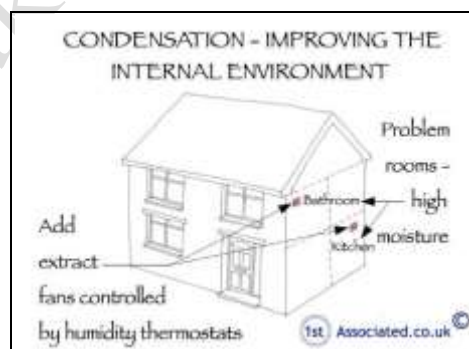
Is Cold Bridging and Condensation a design problem or a lifestyle problem?

This really is a difficult question to answer. We have been involved in a number of cases as expert witnesses or advocates and the answer can vary. We would comment that there are factors that can be changed and factors that can't be changed. For example, the occupiers lifestyle can in most cases be amended. This may involve the occupier having an understanding of the problems they are causing. For example, drying lots of washing on a radiator inside may be causing excessive moisture in the atmosphere. Equally not opening the windows and closing or sealing up vents can be a problem.



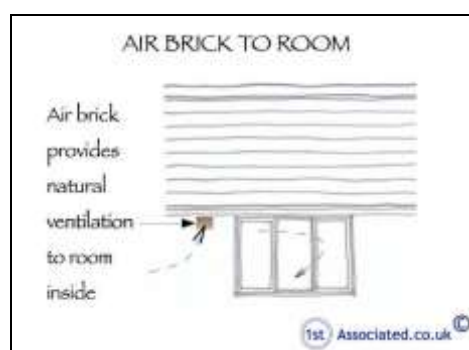
Design of the Building

Sometimes it really is down to the design of the property. Where there are cold elements in it, such as a concrete structural frame or concrete lintels, when these are in contact with moist air condensation occurs. Sometimes this is impossible to stop but often it is possible to reduce it by having a better circulation of air with a better heat and coolness balance and the removal of any moist air.



Things to remember about an air brick

If you are thinking about adding an air brick then you need to be aware that airbricks don't actually allow that much air through. Although externally a nine by three air brick has a lot of gaps, as these gaps taper, it is generally considered that only about one inch square of air regularly passes through the grills.



What's happening in brand new housing?

Air brick may not ventilate room enough

It could be argued that we still do not know what is happening in brand new houses that are highly insulated. We have been involved in one legal case where a modern heat exchange system was being used where it was simply not possible to have a

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shower in the property without causing condensation, even with the windows open and taking other measures. Our concern is what is happening to this condensation? It was not visible on the surface so is it visible as interstitial condensation? We still think there will be problems to be found in modern properties. As Chartered Surveyors we like to see things that have been in use for some time work before we would recommend them.

In the winter we have condensation problems but in the summer we don't

The different seasons mean that the building reacts differently. Anyone who has lived in an old property will know that windows and doors particularly sliding sash windows will swell during the winter months.



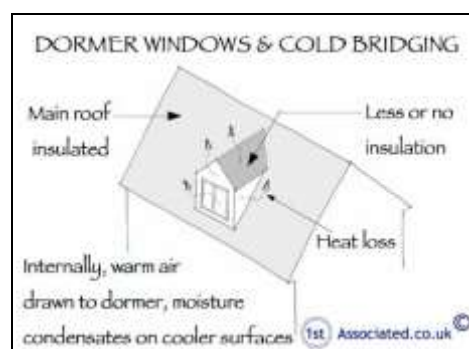
Sliding sash windows can swell in the winter months

There can be similar issues with a property where, regardless of your lifestyle, during some of the different seasons, for example the winter or a wet spring, taking a shower can relate in condensation even with extract fans running (although this is far less likely).

It also depends on what the humidity level is outside as this can be greater than inside. The moisture/humidity will then seek out colder rooms such as spare bedrooms and the corners of cupboards. When you open these at a later date you will be surprised to find black mould.

Extensions and Cold Bridging

Increasingly we are coming across problems where properties have been extended and it has not been planned or thought through properly. We have come across dormer roofs that simply have no insulation so any heat in the property is going straight out of the dormer roof. We have also come across property problems where an extension has resulted in colder areas within the property and which although not problem areas, as such, our clients have found them unpleasant areas to be in. It is not a great outcome if you have just spent tens of thousands of pounds on a new extension that you are not happy with.



Cold bridging and dormer windows

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