

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXX XXX  
Long Melford  
Sudbury  
Suffolk. CO10 XXX



FOR

XXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

## **GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

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



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil 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 terraced property that is being refurbished, altered and amended as we are surveying the building. The property has a traditional timber frame with a modern rear extension and an outbuilding and has had various alterations and amendments as part of this refurbishment.

We are advised by the builders working on the project that the property is Listed. Here is some information gathered from the British Listed Building website [BritishListedBuildings.co.uk](http://BritishListedBuildings.co.uk):

XXXXX

A C15 timber-framed and plastered house with C16-C17 alterations and refronted with C19 brick. 2 storeys. 3:2 window range, double-hung sashes mainly with single vertical glazing bars.

XXXXX has 3-light windows on the ground storey and a small C19 bay at the south end. XXXX has a small C19 shop front.

Roof tiled, with a C17 chimney stack with grouped diagonal shafts.

Listing NGR: XXXX

As you can see from the Listing it was originally 15<sup>th</sup> century, which is the timber frame, which has been amended and altered in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. 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:*

1509	Henry VIII becomes King of England
1529	Thomas More becomes Chancellor of England
1533	Henry VIII divorces Catherine of Aragon
1533	Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn
1534	Act of Supremacy Henry VIII declared Supreme Head of the Church of England
1536	Anne Boleyn executed
1536	Henry VIII marries Jane Seymour
1537	Jane Seymour dies
1540	Henry VIII divorces Anne of Cleves
1542	Kathryn Howard executed
1543	Henry VIII marries Katherine Parr
1547	Henry VIII dies leaving Katherine Parr a widow
1547	Edward VI becomes King of England
1553	Lady Jane Grey becomes Queen of England for nine days
1553	Mary I becomes Queen of England
1554	Lady Jane Grey is executed
1558	Elizabeth I becomes Queen of England
1564	William Shakespeare born
1587	Mary Queen of Scots beheaded
1603	Elizabeth I dies in Richmond Palace

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear View



Rear garden



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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

(All directions given as you face the property)

### **Ground Floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance lobby
- 2) Dining room (right hand side)
- 3) Lounge (left hand side)
- 4) Kitchen (rear)
- 5) WC (adjacent to the lounge)

### **First Floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Bathroom (front left hand side)
- 2) Small bedroom (front right hand side)
- 3) Double bedroom (rear)
- 4) Master bedroom with en suite consisting of a WC and wash hand basin (to rear left hand side)

### **Outside Areas**

The property is located directly onto the High Street at the front and has a small rear garden with an outbuilding. There is a right of way access via next door's property.

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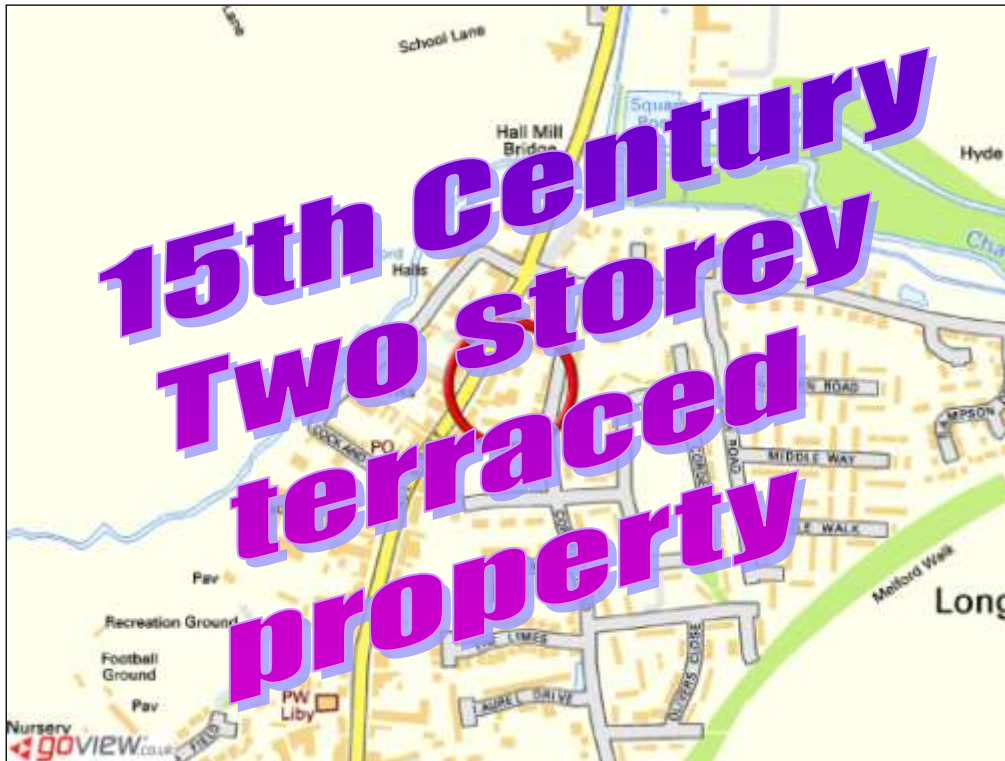
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## MAPS



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## **INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

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

### **Ground Floor**



Lounge looking towards front



Lounge looking towards rear



Kitchen



Unfinished WC

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**First Floor**



Master bedroom



En suite to master bedroom



Bathroom



Bedroom rear left hand



Bedroom front right hand side

## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Chimneys:	Three large brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with clay tiles
Rear Roofs:	Currently being re-roofed in a slate and one has asbestos
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Wall Structure:	Timber frame (assumed)
Wall Finish:	Front wall: Painted brickwork Rear wall: Render (being rendered at the time of our survey)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Front: Timber sliding sash windows Rear: Timber casement windows

### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster (assumed)
Walls:	Exposed timber with plaster between
Floors:	Ground Floor: Concrete (assumed)
	First Floor: Spin beam and timber joists (assumed)

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The Ideal boiler is a wall mounted located in the rear room and the electrics are dated and located near the front door (we were advised that they will be updated).

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report.

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



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

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

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

### **The Good**

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

- 1) The location in the High Street.
- 2) The property also has many of the original features left, which gives the property character.
- 3) The property has been updated with modern appliances albeit that some of the "improvements" we would not have carried out.
- 4) There may be potential to extend into the roof space subject to Local Authority Approval.

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) Insulation in the roof**

The insulation in the roof we feel will cause condensation as there is no ventilation.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Add ventilation to the roof. Ideally remove all the insulation in the roof and reconsider how to do this properly. There are already areas where the timber is becoming softer.

Please see the Roof and Thermal Efficiency Sections of this Report.



Mass of insulation



Timber becoming softer

### **2.0) There is a 24hr Butchers to the rear of the property which is visible**

As you are aware we spoke to the neighbour to the entrance of the Butchers who advised that it was a mistake renting the property due to the noise (particularly the gate and the light to the rear of the property). We have also since spoken to a neighbour who advised he had lived in the property for five years and was happy with the noise level although he does hear the gate.

Please see the Neighbours Section of this Report.

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### 3.0) Poor design

There are various things that we feel could have been better designed:-

#### 3.1) Ceiling lights

The ceiling lights in many of the rooms which are not appropriate and gives heat out into the ceiling area which is not ideal in a timber framed property.



Light fitting giving heat directly into floor and roof space

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Change to wall lights that self vent.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few thousand pounds or at the cost of the developer; please obtain quotations.

#### 3.2) Bathroom

The bathroom size, particularly the bath is not particularly generous.



Bathroom

#### 3.3) Plumbing

The kitchen radiator is not ideal and it is debateable whether you actually need a radiator in the kitchen particularly on an internal wall was well as it reduces the amount of storage space in the kitchen.



Kitchen radiator

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The radiator with the ugly boarding in the master bedroom we would have thought there would be a more presentable way of carrying out this work.



Radiator with ugly boarding around it

### 3.4) TV Point

As you pointed out the TV point is opposite the window in the lounge which means you will get the sunlight on the screen which is not ideal and there are no TV points upstairs, which is a normal standard today.

### 3.5) Design layout

We feel the design layout could have been better thought through.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

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#### 4.0) Lack of understanding of old properties

These buildings need to naturally breathe which is brought about by the use of lime materials. There seems to be a lack of understanding of old properties with the damp proof course inserted into the front of the property and the rear.



Damp proof course

**ACTION REQUIRED:** There is little you can do to undo the work.

Please see the Damp Proof Course Section of this Report.



Damp proof course to front

#### 5.0) We could see asbestos broken and damaged has been removed on the site

We could see that asbestos pipes have been removed and are still present on the site. They have not been bagged and merely put into the rubbish heap which, to us, represents poor project management. There is also some remaining asbestos on the rear outbuilding roof. Please note we are not asbestos surveyors.



Asbestos pipes removed and not bagged for disposal

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  
Asbestos to be removed from the site.

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Please see the Asbestos Section of this Report.

## 6.0) Condensation likely

Currently there are no extract fans in either the bathroom or the en suite. In both cases we would recommend large 150mm extract fans are installed due to the ceiling heights.

We are advised on site that as far as the builders were aware only 100mm were being used (as that was the diamond cutter size they have got!)

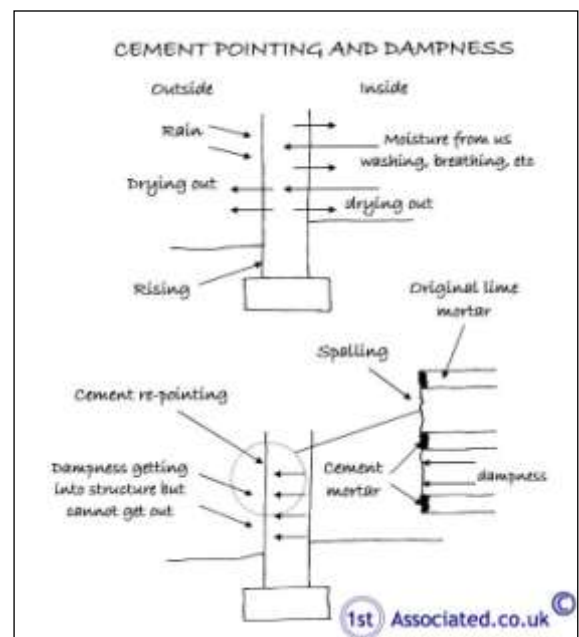
We would also in addition advise that the shower area we feel that an extract fan should be put directly above this due to the low ceiling height.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Add extract fans.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

## 7.0) At the time of our inspection, there was still a fair amount of work to be completed.

Our overall impression was disappointing that this standard of work is still being carried out on Listed Buildings which shows a general lack of knowledge about older properties and how they work.



Cement pointing and dampness

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## 8.0) Sloping site

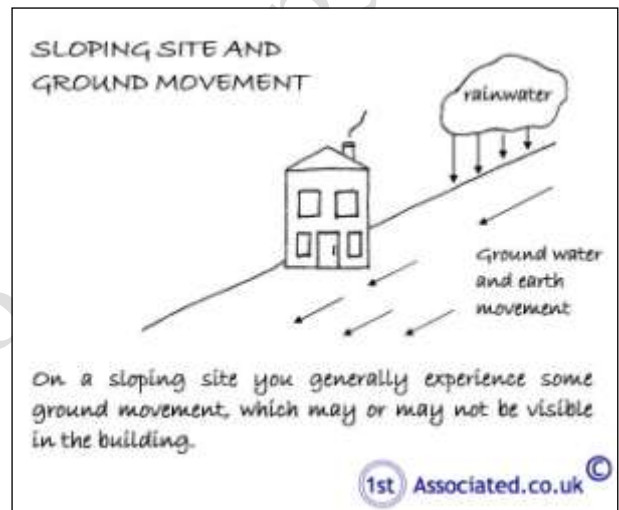
There rear of the property sits on a sloping site towards the main building. We are advised that paving slabs are going to be put onto this area and we are concerned that rainwater may be discharged towards the property which will overflow and over flood the gulley that has been put in place.



Running gulley

### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

You need to ensure the running gulley runs to a manhole, we would much prefer to see a reducing of the ground level and a French drain in an older property.



Please see the

Rainwater/Surface Drainage  
Section of this Report.

Sloping site

## 9.0) Lack of maintenance items

### 9.1) Chimney

We noticed that there is light coming through in the main roof, near the chimney, indicating that work needs to be carried out to the chimney and the chimney flashings. We spoke to the builders on site who advised that no work had been carried out to this area.



Rear left hand side chimney letting in light and dampness to property

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Dampness in chimney

#### 9.2) **Tiles displaced**

We could also see that some roof tiles are misplaced.

##### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

We would recommend a roofer carries out careful work to the roof over a period of approximately half a day to a day.



Missing tiles to rear

##### **ANTICIPATED COST:**

A few hundred pounds;  
please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

#### 10.0) **Painting with incorrect paint**

At the time of our survey painting was taking place using Dulux paint when specifically requested to use Farrow and Ball paint.



Dulux paint being used

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## **The Ugly**

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

As you accompanied us on part of the survey we appreciate that you are unhappy with the late night/all night butchers to the rear of the property it may well be worth visiting the property late at night to experience this.

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

### **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**

For the electrics we would recommend an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent carries out an inspection, test and report to Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE).

### **Heating**

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.

### **Maintenance**

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

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

### **Drainage**

We would recommend a close camera TV report.

The soil and vent pipe should extend approximately a metre above verge level to ensure that these smells travel elsewhere. If you note at the moment they are almost directly opposite the roof window of next door Number 1's extension.

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## **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 always recommend that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

## **Estimates of Costs**

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

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

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## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**



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

We feel that it is worth negotiating with the developers although care has to be done with this as much of the work that they have done we feel could have been carried out in a better way.

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.

If you so wish we can prepare specifications and obtain quotations for the work, whatever you do don't allow the estate agent to organise the quotes as he will utilise people he regularly uses who know they have to keep in with him/her to get further work and therefore are very keen to please the estate agent, as opposed to you the real client and at the end of the day it doesn't take long to organise.

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

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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 require a full Report if you decide to proceed please kindly advise us in due course and we would be delighted to help.

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  
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# APPENDICES

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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 XXX 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 dry and sunny at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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

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

References                      BBC News [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

## **NOT LOCAL**

It should be noted that we are not local surveyors to this area and are carrying out the work without the 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.

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## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to us not opening up the floors and due to the mass of insulation in the roof space.

## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

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

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

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

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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

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

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

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

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

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## INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This is a very good website for information on Listed Buildings.

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