

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXXXXXXXXXXX,
Luton,
Bedfordshire,
LU3



FOR

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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INTRODUCTION

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

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:

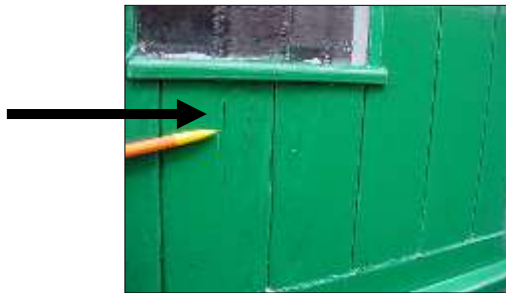
GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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 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 that has been extended to the side and altered and extended internally and within the roof space.

The front garden has been given over to parking and to the rear of the property there is a large sloping garden.

We believe the property was built probably in the 1950's but possibly as early as the 1930's. During the War years there was a rationing of materials and limited skilled labour available which can mean that sometimes there are unusual constructions hidden beneath what appears to be a typical construction. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1927	Charles Lindbergh flies across the Atlantic
1931	The Highway Code issued
1933	Assassination attempt on FDR
1937	The emergency (999) telephone number introduced
1944	D-Day
1946	Winston Churchill gave his 'Iron Curtain' Speech
1948	Olympic Games held in London
1951	Truman signs Peace Treaty with Japan which ended WWII
1953	DNA discovered

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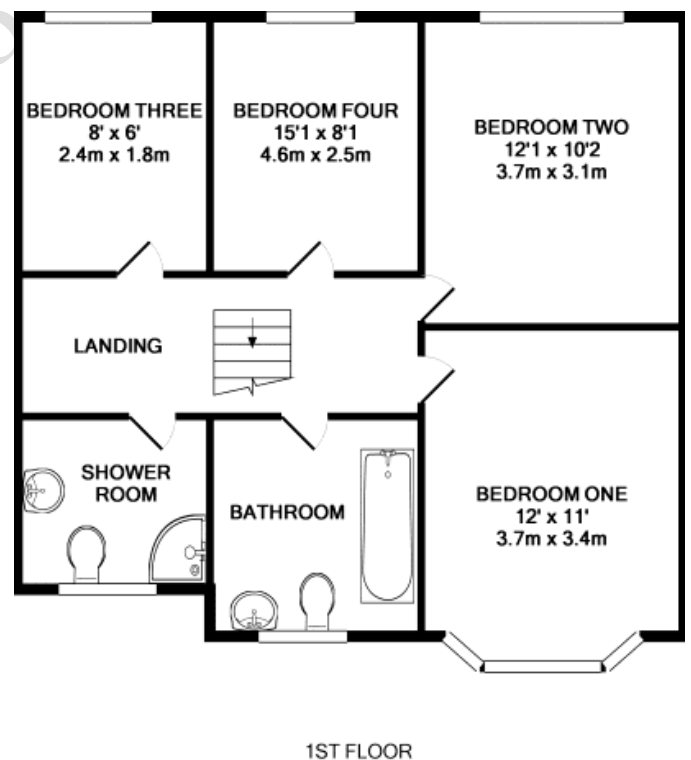
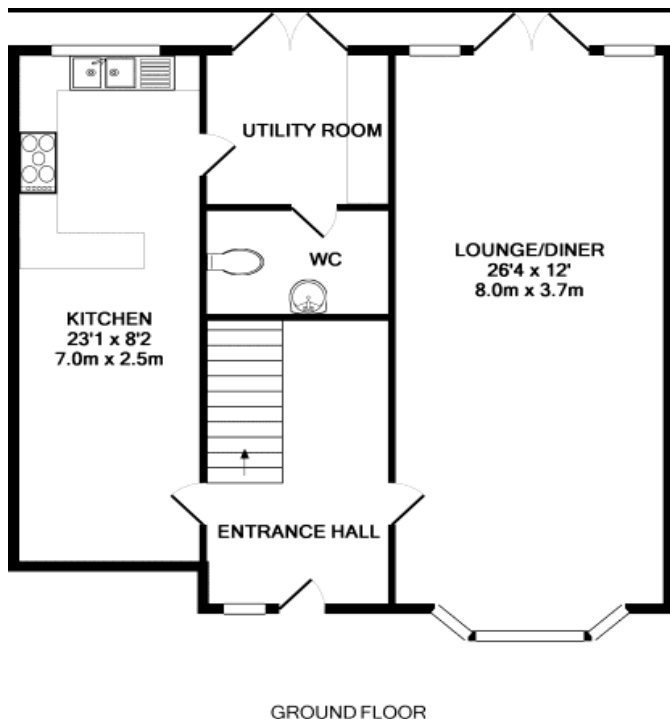
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Floor Plan

These plans have been taken from the Estate Agents website and we don't think they are completely accurate. The ground floor W.C and the first floor Shower Room are not as in the drawings. These drawings are better than nothing and should you want to carry out any work to the property you will need to get proper accurate drawings carried out.



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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear View



Left hand view



Front garden/ parking area



Decking/patio



Rear sloping 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 Hall
- 2) Through Lounge (right)
- 3) Kitchen/dining room (left)
- 4) Utility Room (rear)
- 5) Small Cloakroom (middle)

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Master bedroom (front right)
- 2) Bedroom (rear right)
- 3) Bedroom (rear left)
- 4) Bedroom (rear middle)
- 5) Shower room (front left)
- 6) Bathroom (front middle)

Room formed in the roof

This is a roof divided into two sections, the old and the new. The old section has been decorated and lined to form a room. Your Legal Advisor to check for Building Regulations and Planning Permission.

Outside Areas

The front garden has been bricked/block paved with a drop curb and has been set aside for parking. To the rear of the property is a large garden that drops away with a decking/patio area adjacent to the property.

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Ground Floor



Entrance Hallway



Through Lounge (front right)



Through Lounge (rear right)



Dining area (front left)



Kitchen (rear left)



Cloakroom (middle)



Utility Room (rear)

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First Floor



Landing



Master Bedroom (front right)



Bedroom (rear middle)



Bedroom (rear right)



Bedroom (rear left)

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Shower Room (front left)

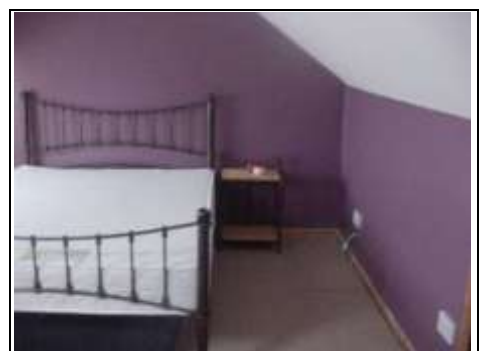


Bathroom (front middle)

Room in the roof (right hand side)



Roof space



Roof space

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roofs:	Pitched, clad with clay nibbed tiles. No underlayer in the original roof Underlayer in the new roof left hand side
Main Roof Structure:	Amended cut timber roof, i.e. adding of extra joists to ceilings/floor levels.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal, plastic at roof level where they can be seen
Walls:	Flemish Bond brick work (assumed). Stretcher bond to Gable end of extension (assumed). Pebbledash render at first floor level
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber over clad with plastic
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed, trickle vents to the newer windows and no trickle vents to the old windows.

Internal

Ceilings:	Limited view. Plasterboard where viewed (assumed).
Walls:	Mixture of solid and hollow (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Suspended timber floor (assumed). First Floor: Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed) Top Floor: Original roof joists with joists added.

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The wall mounted Baxi boiler is located in the utility room and the 1980's /1990's electrics are in the cupboard under the stairs.

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

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

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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 250 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) The property has been extended.
- 2) There is off road parking to the front of the property.
- 3) To the rear of the property is a large garden.
- 4) The property has potential, for example, an extension to the rear. This is assuming it has not been over extended for the plot size already (you need to check this with the Local Authority planning department).

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

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The Bad

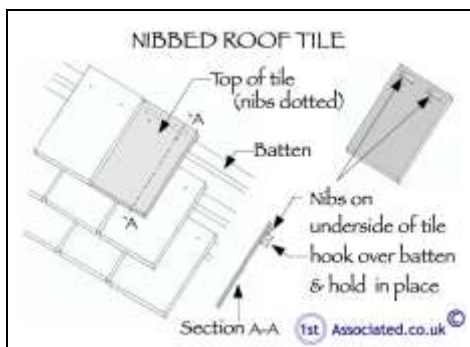
Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

1.0) Original Roof

The original roof has nibbed tiles without a protective underlayer. This type of roof has been superseded by a modern roof with a protective underlayer. We would recommend that a protective underlayer is added to the roof.



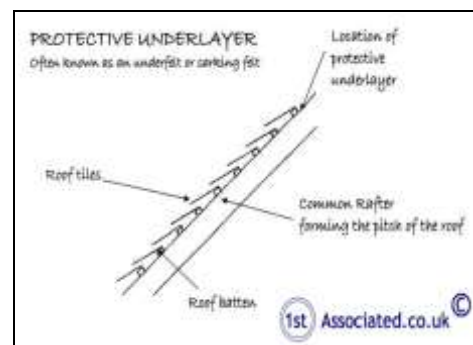
Original roof



Nibbed tile



Nibbed tile with no underlayer



Protective underlayer

ACTION REQUIRED: Within the next five to ten years we would remove the existing roof and add a protective underlayer, re-batten and add the tiles. You will probably have in the region of thirty per cent waste so you will need to replace some of the tiles.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £5,000 - £7,500 (five thousand to seven thousand, five hundred pounds) assuming that some tiles can be re-used. A substantial part of the cost for this type of work is for the scaffolding. Many insurers/companies now require the properties to have scaffolds not only to the sides but also to be roofed over to protect against weather damage; please obtain quotations.

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2.0) The chimney

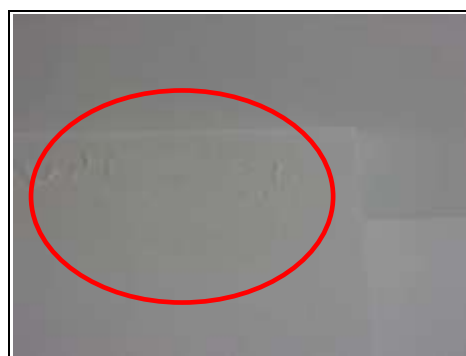
We can see in the top front bedroom sulphate attack from the chimney. This is normally caused where dampness gets into the chimney and is drawn through the soot causing damage and deterioration.

ACTION REQUIRED: Repairs are needed to the chimney. Again this is likely to require scaffolding and this will be the most expensive part of the cost

ANTICIPATED COST: If you have to scaffold this to carry out the work then it is likely to be in the region of £1,500 - £2,500 (one thousand five hundred to two thousand five hundred pounds).

You will need to get party wall agreement as this partly involves your neighbour's chimney. If this work can be carried out in relation to the re-roofing work then the cost will be nearer to a thousand pounds; please obtain quotations

We would comment that we cannot see the flaunchings very well.



Sulphate on chimney breast



Some of the flaunching is missing. We believe this is where the damp is getting in.



Flaunching

Please see the Chimney Section of this report.

3.0) Lead flashing

Where the new roof meets the old roof there is a step due to the site. The lead flashing here has come away at high level and will be very awkward to put right

We can also see at low level that the flashing has come away over the porch. Generally we find that builders that are able to carry put flashing work properly are few in number.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a tradesman that is used to carrying out lead work is used. We prefer to see bonding in Plumbers Mate or equivalent mastic to bed the lead into the wall.

ANTICIPATED COST: Again scaffolding may be required which will increase costs, £750 - £1,500 (seven hundred and fifty pounds to one thousand, five hundred pounds); please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.



Flashing coming away where there is an up-stand between the two roofs.



Close up of flashing coming away



Lead coming away over front entrance

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4.0) Plastic Over cladding

To the rear of the property we noticed some plastic fascias and soffit boards (these are at the base of the roof). These look as if they may be over cladding.

This is a practice that we are not at all keen on as it is usually put over the top of damaged or deteriorating timber fascias and soffits. Although it gives a clean look externally it can promote rot internally and in a worst case scenario can damage the roof joists.



Over cladding



Plastic over cladding

ACTION REQUIRED: Drill and check to see if it is plastic over cladding. If it is then we suggest that it is all removed and replaced with a new fascia and soffit.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £750 - £1,500 (seven hundred and fifty pounds to one thousand five hundred pounds); please obtain quotations.

Please see the Fascias and soffits Section of this Report.

5.0) Cracking in the pebbledash render

We can see cracking in the pebbledash render. In this age of render there is likely to be on-going maintenance.

The cracks to the rear appear to relate to the plastic windows that have been put in. We would add that these windows are from the cheaper end of the market and as such may not have metal within the frame (to give additional stability).



Crack in pebbledash render on bay window

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ACTION REQUIRED: To the front we would leave and repair the render in due course. To the rear we would open up above the windows and investigate to see what is there. As we discussed you have a business in double glazing. There may be no lintel in this area. The concern is that the windows slightly exceed the soldier course of bricks above them, which is unusual. There may be other problems that are revealed when the double glazing is removed.



Brick movement over the rear windows

ANTICIPATED COST: Likely to be thousands of pounds with further investigation required; please obtain quotations.



Cracking to rear window



Cracking in render (rear)



Closer view of cracking

More information on old pebble dash render

This age of pebbledash render will generally need repair work and the windows are not of the best quality. We noted some of these did not have trickle vents which have been a requirement for many years under Building Regulations, we would ultimately recommend replacement.

Trickle Vents Defined

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

Please see the External Walls and Window and Doors Sections of this Report.

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6.0) Dampness

There is some dampness to the front of the property. We can see externally that a damp proof course has been added.



Inserted damp proof course in original property



Damp proof course is too low to new extension

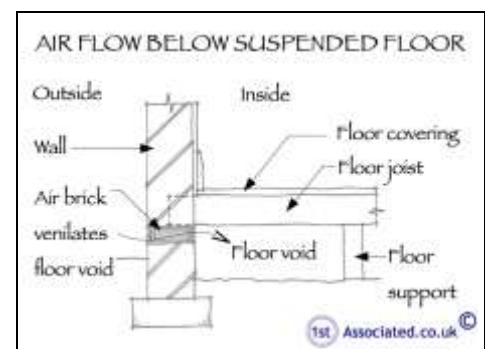
ACTION REQUIRED: There has been a damp proof course inserted into the older part of the property. There may well be a guarantee with this.

We believe the main problem regarding the dampness is a lack of ventilation underneath the property but we cannot be certain until the floors are opened up. These do need to be opened up to check the airflow goes from the front to the rear of the property. Please see our photos below that show some of the air bricks have been covered up. These need uncovering.

With regard to the damp proof course being too low, this is a general problem that we come across where brick paves are added to existing ground levels making it higher. In this case you only have one brick between the ground and the damp proof course.



Taking damp readings in bay window area



Suspended floor

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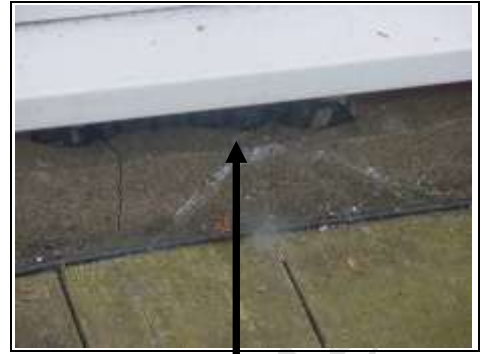
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Airbricks



Air brick to the rear



Covered over air brick (rear)
behind decking

Dampness to the flat roof of the bay window

The fascia boards and soffit boards are in poor condition at the front of the property and look as if they are letting in dampness.



Bay window –shows how the
roof has failed



Deterioration to fascias and
soffits



Dampness internally



Dampness in bedroom

ACTION REQUIRED: Dampness is coming in via the fascias and soffits or the flat roof. Both need to be looked at. This is likely to need a tower scaffold to the front of the property.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £750 - £1,500 (seven hundred and fifty to one thousand, five hundred pounds)



Scaffolding

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

7.0) Removed walls from the ground floor - the right hand side lounge and the left hand kitchen/dining area.

Two walls have been removed and this should have had Building Regulation approval to remove them.



Wall removed in through lounge
We cannot tell if this has been removed properly



Wall removed as seen from the other side

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor to check and confirm if Building Regulation approval has been obtained.

8.0) Damage in the Shower Room

You commented that there had been damage caused in the shower room since you last visited (this is the shower room in the new part of the property). There looked to have been a leak of some sort that has been resolved by switching off the W.C. This does leave you with some damaged tiles that may be difficult to repair/replace.



Damaged tiles in shower room

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace the tiles if possible or if not you need to allow for re-tiling.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £750 (two hundred and fifty pounds to seven hundred and fifty pounds); please obtain quotations.



Tiles that have come away

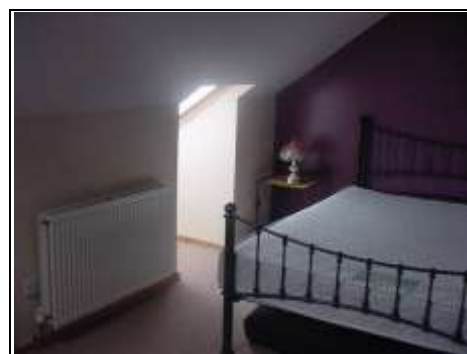


W.C needs repair

Please see the Bathrooms Section of this Report.

9.0) Loft conversion

The loft has been converted and from what we understand Building Regulations and Planning Permission have not been obtained. This is only useable as a storage space/ normal roof as opposed to a habitable room. To bring this up to standard you would need to get Local Authority approval.



Room in the roof

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This may involve the following:-

1. To check and ensure that the floor joists are to the correct standard (we can see that additional joists have been put in).
2. To check that the roof is correctly formed with insulation etc.
3. Adding a proper staircase.
4. Making sure that the property has a suitable fire alarm.

Ultimately you need to have the approval of the Local Authority which can be difficult.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

10.0) Services

Electrics

The fuse board looks to be dated circa 1980's/1990's and better are now available. We would suggest this is upgraded as we can see in some areas DIY electrics have been added.



Fuse board



DIY electrics in cupboard in utility room

ACTION REQUIRED: Have an Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) test and report carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £500 (two hundred and fifty pounds to five hundred pounds); please obtain quotations.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

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The Ugly

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

We have found more than the average number of things that we would classify as bad. There is no one specific thing that we would put in the Ugly Section, however when putting all the items in the Bad Section together we do feel this makes this a high risk purchase unless you get a reduction in the price based upon the items within the report.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

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

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services

Electrics

We think some DIY electrics have taken place in this property and as such we would recommend an Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) test and report be carried out. The IEE recommend this should take place whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

There is a wall mounted Baxi boiler within the Utility room. As the property has been rented out there should be certificates from a Gas Safe check that should have been carried out every year.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you obtain a copy of this. Nevertheless we would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Drainage

We have not been able to lift the drains to the front of the property due to the type of cover. The only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to

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have a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains. In this age of property there have often been leaks over the years.

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.

SERVICES 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 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

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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:

The roofs, the chimneys and the flashings have to be a major consideration in this property as they are all high level work and are likely to need scaffolding which in itself is costly.

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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Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for 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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