

JOB REFERENCE: RBSM2

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

**Dunstable
Bedfordshire**



FOR

Mrs XXXX



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for using our services once again and your kind instruction of XXXX; we have now undertaken an Independent 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

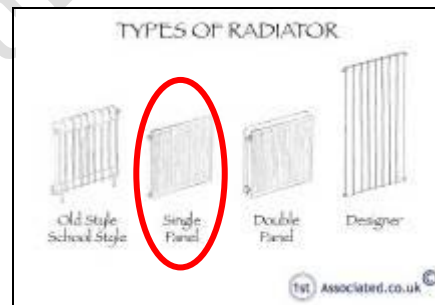
Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow has been used to highlight a specific area. We also use sketches to give guidance and clarity on various issues in the property and we use them to help you understand the issues, scenarios and situations better.



Single panel radiator



Types of radiators

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 detached property with garages (modified) and a rear right conservatory.

There is a sloping front garden with off-road parking to the left side and access leading to the garage. The rear garden is triangular in shape with a fence and conifer boundary. The rear garden is also accessible via a gate and walkway on the left side. The property sits on a slightly sloping site and is relatively modern.

This style of property was built from the 1970's onwards; we are advised by the left neighbours (all directions given as you face the front of the property) the property was built in 1989. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

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

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1970-1973 | Property Boom and again in the late 1970's. The average house price in 1975 when adjusted to current prices was about £85,000, the average price of a property now is double to treble that – even with the boom prices we wish we had bought a few! |
| 1979-1991 | The Thatcher Years, Britain's first female prime Minister is elected |
| 1979 | Mother Theresa awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for giving help and comfort to those living in poverty |
| 1984 | The Live Aid Concerts raise funds for famine relief in Ethiopia |
| 1985 | The wreck of the Titanic is found 73 years after it sank ending a long search. |
| 1989 | Unforgettable time in history, the Berlin Wall falls reuniting a country. |
| 1990 | Nelson Mandela is finally freed bringing the end of Apartheid |
| 1994 | The Channel Tunnel is opened, connecting two nations |
| Late 1990s | Property Boom in Britain, average house prices almost treble! |

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



Left view



Street view



Right view

~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Front garden



Rear triangular garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance lobby
- 2) Hallway and stairs
- 3) Right through lounge/dining area
- 4) Conservatory
- 5) Rear kitchen/breakfast room
- 6) Under stairs WC
- 7) Left utility room built within garage



First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 8) Landing
- 9) Bathroom rear middle
- 10) Office left
- 11) Bedroom front left
- 12) Bedroom front right with en-suite
- 13) Bedroom rear right



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Outside Areas

There is a sloping front garden with off-road parking to the left side and access leading to the garage. The rear garden is triangular in shape with a fence and conifer boundary. The property sits on a slightly sloping site and is located within a cul-de-sac.

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.

Ground Floor



Entrance lobby



Hallway and stairs



Under stairs WC



Right through lounge



Right through lounge/dining area



Conservatory



Rear kitchen/breakfast room



Utility area



Left utility room within garage

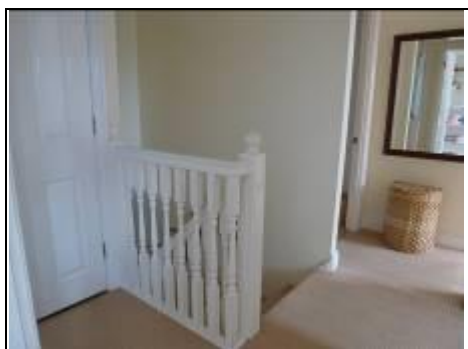
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First Floor



Landing



Bathroom rear middle



Office left



Bedroom front left



Bedroom front right



Bedroom front right en-suite



Bedroom rear right

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	One brick chimney to right
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with concrete tiles Dormer to front left
Main Roof Structure:	Pre-fabricated roof
Rear Conservatory Roof:	Polycarbonate
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic older style PVC plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Walls:	Stretcher Bond Brickwork (assumed)
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed windows

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Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard / proprietary board with swirly textured paint finish, commonly known as artex (all assumed)
Perimeter Walls:	Dry lined (assumed)
Internal Walls:	Mixture of solid and hollow (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Solid, possibly some areas of suspended floor (assumed, not opened up)
First Floor:	Joist and floorboards on joist hangers (assumed)

Services

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

Heating:	There is the original Worcester boiler located in the kitchen.
Electrics:	The electric fuse board is 1980's – 2000's and is located in the garage.
Gas:	The consumer unit was located to the front left.
Drainage:	Rodding eye to rear

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

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 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 normally divide the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues. In this case we have divided it into 'The Good', 'The Ugly' and 'The Bad'.

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) Detached.
- 2.0) Off-road parking.
- 3.0) Cul-de-sac location.

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

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The Ugly

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

1.0) Structural movement and cracking

Garage crack

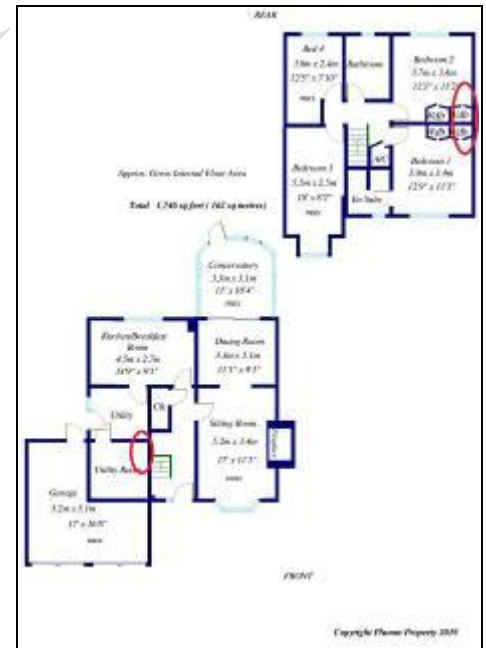
There is a vertical crack in the garage on the left wall visible at ground floor level behind the utility room.



Cracking

Roof cracks

There are cracks visible within the roof to the right gable. This, we believe, probably relates to initial settlement. We cannot be certain as this area is known for its brick making (clay) in Bedfordshire generally and also its sand in the Leighton Buzzard area.



Areas of cracking

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Right gable crack



Crack from top to bottom

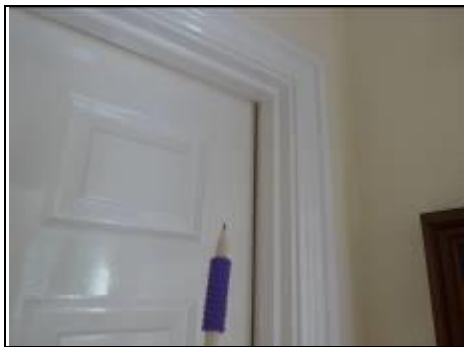


Horizontal crack



Raking crack

Within the property we cannot really see any major cracks; these could of course literally have been papered over, other than the door does not shut properly to the front left bedroom and there are some other minor hairline cracking. The cupboards limited our view of the right gable.



Door doesn't shut properly



Cupboards in front right bedroom



Cupboards in rear right bedroom

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ACTION REQUIRED: If we could only see the crack to the right side we would believe it relates to the chimney being worn and there being movement. However, there is a crack on both gables; therefore if you wish to be one hundred percent certain we would recommend the existing owners take out an insurance claim, advising that the cracking has been noted by a structural surveyor (this should cost them nothing other than time to write the letter/email). This usually means that the insurance company will carry out a monitoring exercise (the Building Research Establishment recommend monitoring any cracks for a minimum of one year) to establish if there is any progressive movement. Your future liability should be limited to the cost of the excess on the insurance providing the insurance company is happy for you to take over the insurance claim.

Your solicitor needs to ensure this is a legally watertight process and ensure your liability is limited to paying the excess on the insurance only.

Further investigation

There are a few areas, particularly to the left gable, where we noted repointing had been carried out. It may have been in a worst case scenario to hide cracking.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor to specifically ask in writing if there has been any repointing carried out and if so, why?



Is this different repointing?

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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) Gutters and downpipes

The property has older style plastic PVC gutters and downpipes which are affected by the sunlight and are discoloured.



Rear right gutter dropping



Faded plastic downpipe



Leaking gutters and downpipes



Plant growing out of gutter



Unsupported gutter to rear left

Downpipes feed directly into the ground

Also, this was from the era when downpipes were directly fed into the ground. This is a practice we are not particularly keen on; we would much prefer a gully as this allows you to unblock any blockages without digging up the piping.

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Downpipes feed directly into ground



Gully



Some downpipes have gullys

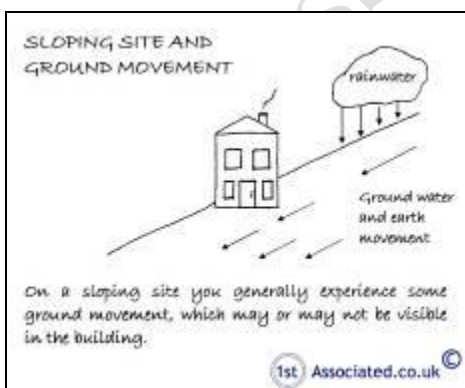
ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints. We would suggest an extra bracket is added to the unsupported gutters.

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.

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

2.0) Sloping site

The property sits on a slightly sloping site and because of this rainwater and ground water need to travel from the top of the site to the bottom with the building in the way. Sloping sites are not as good as level sites and buildings on them are integrally unstable. You need to understand this is a characteristic of any building sitting on a sloping site.



Sloping site



Sloping site



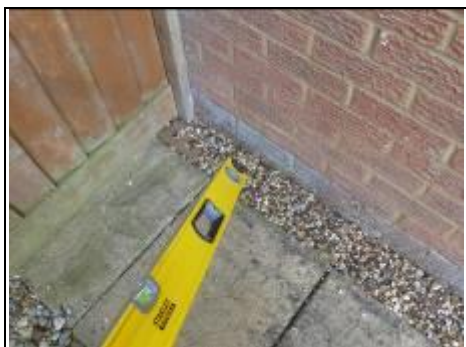
Sloping site

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The bricks at the base of the property are starting to deteriorate from water, etc due to the sloping site.



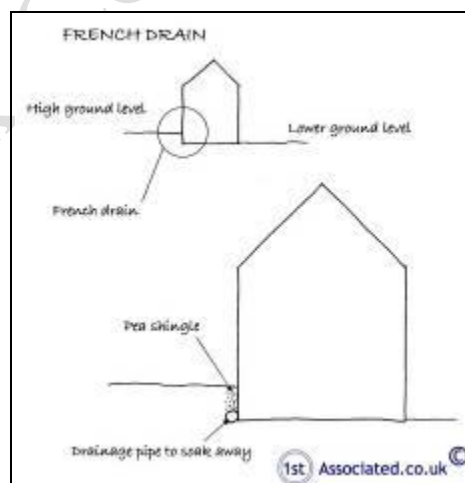
Water damage to base



Water damage/efflorescence to base of brickwork

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to accept this as a characteristic of the property or add a French drain.

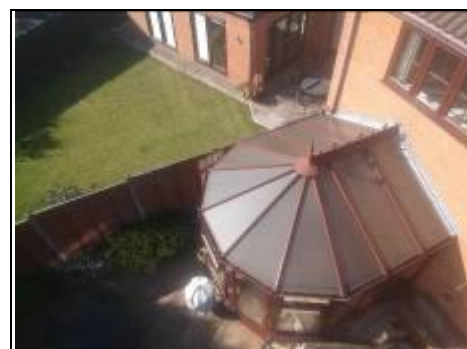
ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £3,000 - £5,000 to add a proper French drain. Please obtain quotations.



French drain

3.0) Rear conservatory – thermal heat gain and heat loss

The rear conservatory is south facing and has a basic polycarbonate roof. It was very warm during the course of the survey and we believe the conservatory was adding heat to the rest of the building even though the doors were shut and numerous windows in the conservatory were open.



Conservatory with polycarbonate roof

~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

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No blinds to conservatory roof



Windows open

ACTION REQUIRED: A way to help this is to either have vents added in the roof and/or add ceiling blinds.

ANTICIPATED COST: Ceiling blinds always seem to be expensive and can cost thousands of pounds. You will need to speak to the original manufacturer as to whether vents can be added to the roof; please obtain quotations.

Alternatively, you could add a lightweight roof which would give some protection from the sun to make it look more like a traditional construction although it is a lightweight roof and these are often in pressed metal. In the region of £7,500 - £15,000 for a new roof assuming they are compatible with the construction; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

4.0) Rear door

The rear plastic door to the garage is difficult to shut and appears to be warping. The property was getting a lot of sunlight during the course of the survey.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you try the door to see if you are able to shut it, it may need easing and adjusting. In a worst case scenario it will need replacing; doors can be expensive.

ANTICIPATED COST: £300 - £600; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Windows and Doors Section of this Report.

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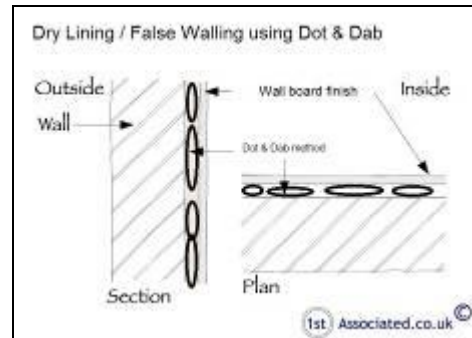


5.0) Dry lining to perimeter of property

There is dry lining to the perimeter of the property which effectively highlights the construction. The dry lining limited our inspection internally.



Dry lining to perimeter walls



Dry lining

Please see the Ceilings and Walls Section of this Report.

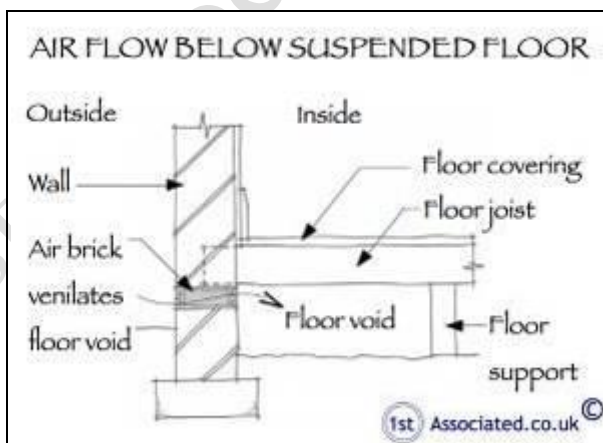
6.0) Floors – are the floors suspended or not?

We only found one airbrick, we would have expected to find more

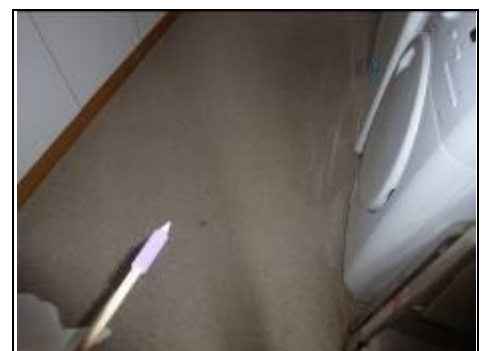
There is a suspended floor in the garage, this may be a DIY construction.



Airbrick to front right around chimney



Suspended timber floor



Suspended timber floor raised in garage area

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ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor needs to check and confirm if the internal alterations had building regulation approval. They generally will not need planning permission.

Building Regulations Defined

This is a legal requirement to show that the alterations carried out will be structurally sound. It looks at the way the building is built ensuring that good practice occurs, setting out a minimum standard of building and also Health and Safety.

Planning Permission Defined

This relates to the aesthetics of how a building looks and how it fits in with the environment.

7.0) Next doors conifers

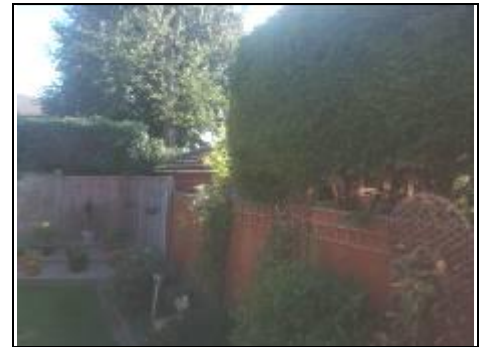
There are conifers to the rear right which you will need to keep trimmed. There is a large tree to the rear which could cause shading to the garden (which could be good or bad).



Large tree to rear



Conifers to rear right



Conifers to rear right
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

ACTION REQUIRED: Regularly cut back and maintain. It is possibly worth having a chat with the neighbour with regard to maintenance and management of the conifers (we knocked at the time of the inspection but there was no response).

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds during the growing season; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Trees Section of this Report.

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Services

8.0) Electrics

Better electrics are now available, for example the fuse boards are now in a metal casing for fire protection.

We noted extension leads being used indicating that the present system would benefit from an upgrade.



Fuse board

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend an Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) test and report to be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.



Additional socket points required

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £500 for a test and report plus any work recommended; in the region of £100 - £200 per additional socket point. Please obtain quotations.

9.0) Boiler

The looks to be the original 1980's Worcester boiler located in the kitchen which if it is original will be coming to the end of its life.

ACTION REQUIRED: Check with the owners whether the boiler is original. If so, budget for a new boiler. The system is also likely to need upgrading of the single panel radiators.



Boiler

ANTICIPATED COST: Budget £5,000 - £7,000 for new boiler and upgrading single panel radiators to double panel convection radiators; please obtain quotations.

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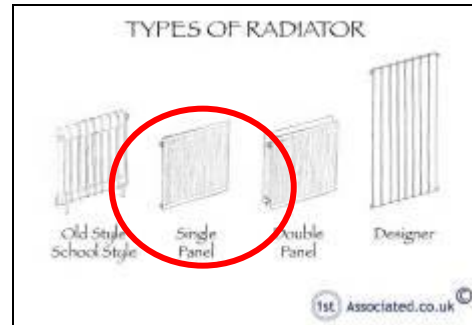
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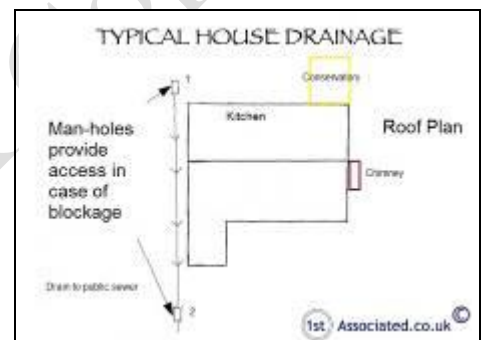
Single panel radiator



Replace single panel radiators with double panel convection radiators

10.0) No manhole found

Slightly unusually, we did not find a manhole. It may be hidden underneath something in the garden (the property was empty therefore there was no-one we could ask). The sketch shows a typical layout of drainage. In this case we could only find a rodding eye close to number 1 on our sketch.



Typical drainage



Rodding eye



Opened rodding eye

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds; please obtain quotations.

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11.0) Smoke alarms

The smoke alarms did not appear to be working.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors are 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 investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.



Smoke alarm

Please see the Services Section of this 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 ongoing maintenance and repair. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

Services

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

Electrics

The electric fuse board is 1980's – 2000's and is located in the garage. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

There is the original Worcester boiler located in the kitchen. 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 could not locate any manholes, we lifted a rodding eye. Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes in the kitchen without any build up or blockages the only way to be one hundred percent certain of the condition of the drains is to 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.

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ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES: 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 building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

We were surprised to see cracking in such a modern house. It seems to follow a line and probably relates to initial settlement however we cannot be one hundred percent certain from a one-off inspection. It requires monitoring which is why we have recommended an insurance claim (we would not purchase the property if the current owners are not willing to go ahead with the insurance claim).

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

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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AERIAL VIEW – 360 PHOTOS

Where permission has been obtained from the owners we have carried out aerial photographs using an aerial drone, stationary drone or a mono-pod pole (where the environment and weather is suitable).



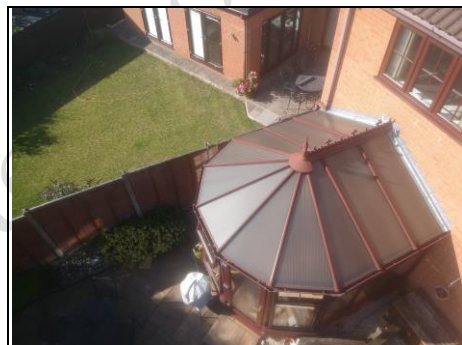
Drone and mono-pod pole



Front and right view
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Rear view
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Rear conservatory roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Front view of main roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Rear view of main roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

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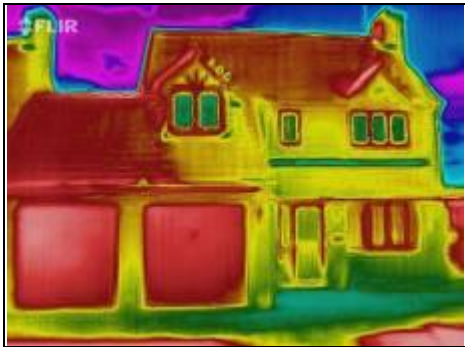
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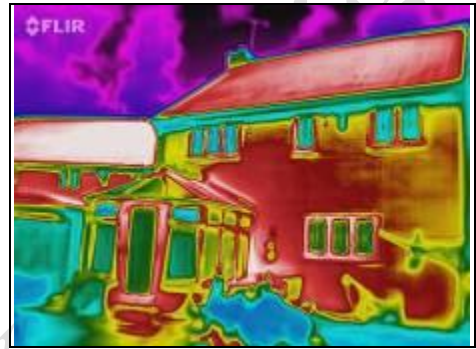
THERMAL IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

The property was not pre-heated so there was not ideal conditions however we have taken some thermal images as below. We use thermal imaging photography to help us with the survey. Not only does it establish warm and cold areas, it also helps us identify materials within the property.

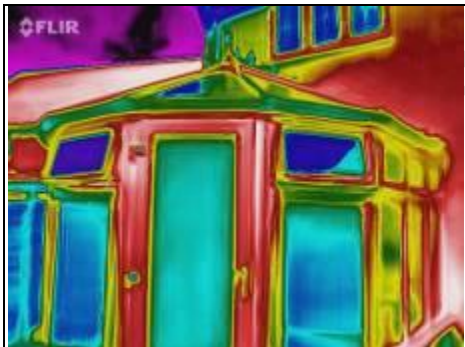
(Key to the colours; blue = cold, red = warm, green/yellow = cool)



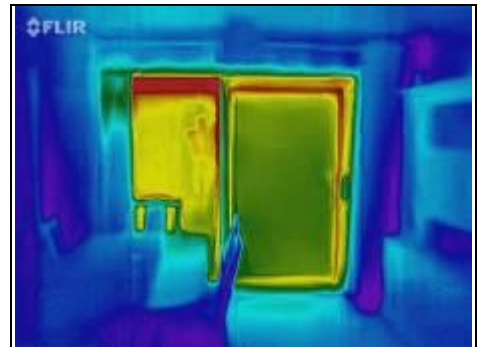
Front view
Heat from roofs, plastic window frames and metal garage doors



Rear view
Heat from roof, plastic windows and bricks



Heat from open windows



Heat coming through into building from conservatory even though doors closed

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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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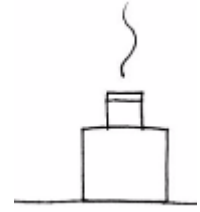
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, FLUES AND DORMER WINDOWS



Chimney Stacks

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

There is one chimney to this property located to the right (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One - Right

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style. Please see our comments elsewhere within the report regarding bedding lead flashings in mortar.



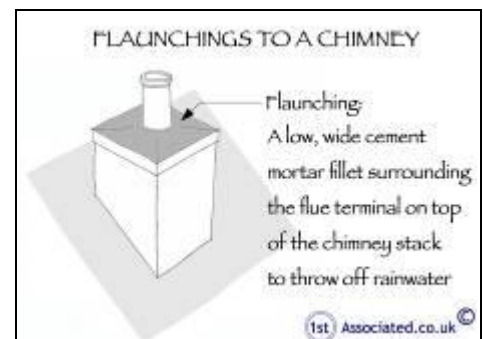
Chimney
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Chimney viewed from rear

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

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



Flaunching

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ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney.

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.

Flues

Flues offer ventilation to things like boilers and soil and vent pipes and usually come through the roof covering, which can often also be a weak area.

The property has a flue to the left side.



Flue to left side

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 window roof is clad with concrete tiles as the main roof, the cheeks of the dormer are cladding and the windows are plastic. Generally, we would comment for their age, type and style they are in average condition. We would comment it is unusual to have so many clips on the tiles.



Dormer window has clips on tiles

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

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

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

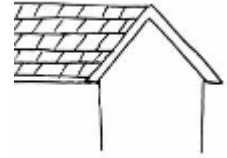
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ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

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

We will consider the roofs in three areas:

- 1) Main roof
- 2) Front entrance roof
- 3) Rear conservatory roof

Main Roof

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

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



Main roof

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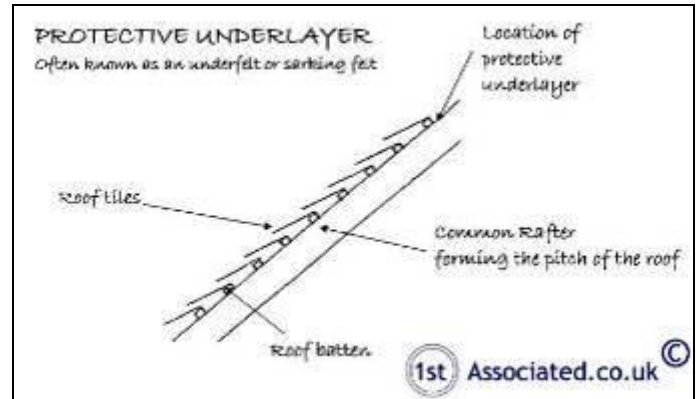
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Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

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



Protective underlayer

When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960's. We generally found it to be in average condition, with damage in some areas which is what we typically find.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

Front Entrance Roof

The main roof is pitched and clad with concrete tiles and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roof's age, type and style. The lead flashing has been bedded in cement which comes away, we prefer plumber's mastic.



Cement mortar to lead flashing likely to come away

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The roof has a fair amount of moss which will lead to deterioration of the tiles. We recommend removing moss with a soft brush, we do not recommend high pressure cleaning or chemicals are used on a roof.



Moss

Conservatory roof

The conservatory has a polycarbonate roof which looked in average condition for polycarbonate however polycarbonate can get brittle over time.



Conservatory with polycarbonate roof



Conservatory polycarbonate roof

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

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and/or aerial photographs.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately eighty percent of the main roof properly from ground level. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

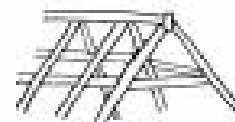
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ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

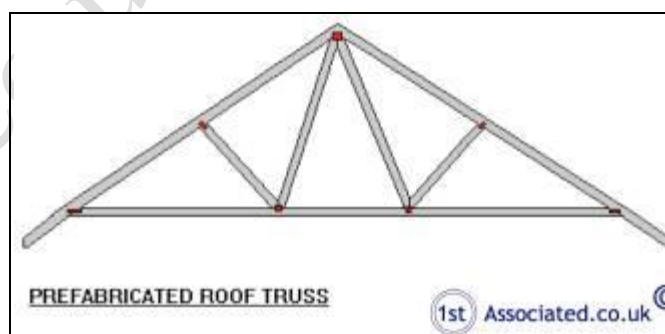
Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. The loft is partly boarded. The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

The property has a pre-fabricated trussed roof rafter. These are made in a factory and transported to site and then lifted into place. Without the manufacturer's calculations and installation details we cannot comment categorically on the roof.



Pre-fabricated roof truss

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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



Trussed rafters

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

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be one hundred percent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked.

Water Tanks

There is a plastic water tank.

We would always recommend that water tanks be drained down and cleared of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks). As you are often cleaning your teeth with this water it is best that it is as clean as possible!



Water tank

Ventilation

There is ventilation to the roof via the vented soffits.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

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

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

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

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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

The property has older style plastic PVC gutters and downpipes which are affected by the sunlight and are discoloured.



Faded plastic downpipe



Leaking gutters and downpipes



Plant growing out of gutter



Unsupported gutter to rear left

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

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Downpipes feed directly into the ground

The property has a mixture of downpipes into gullies and downpipes which feed directly into the ground. This is a practice we are not particularly keen on; we would much prefer a gully as this allows you to unblock any blockages without digging up the piping.



Downpipes feed directly into ground

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

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

Soil and Vent Pipe

We assume the property has internal soil and vent pipes.

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

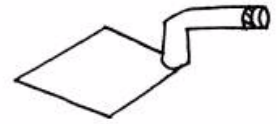
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WALLS



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

The walls are constructed of brickwork.

Brickwork

The property is built in a Stretcher bond brickwork in a cement based mortar with blockwork internally which was common in the 1970's/1980's onwards. The property is dry lined internally.



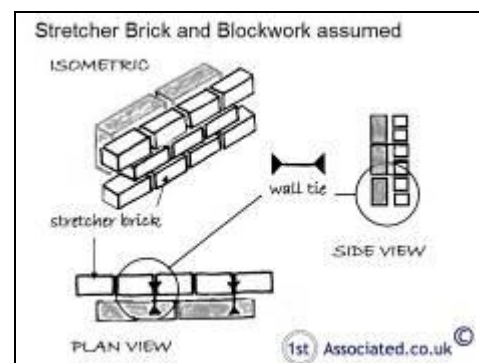
Stretcher bond brickwork

There is an unusual detail to the rear of the conservatory. We are not sure whether it is an additional course of brickwork or brickwork has been piled up against the conservatory to the rear right. Unfortunately, we only noticed it on the photographs.



Bricks near conservatory

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



Stretcher Bond brickwork

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Cavity Walls

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

Wall Ties

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

From what we can see externally it appears not to have any problems however the repointing could be hiding cracking.

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 / dry lining we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete 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 / dry lining has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / dry lining would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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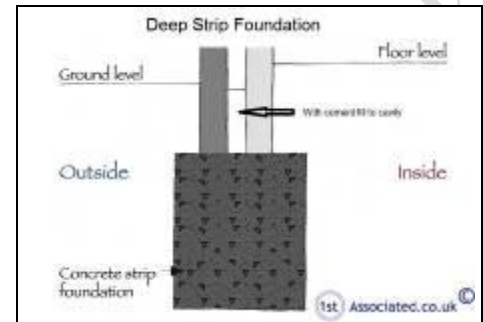
FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

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



Concrete strip foundation

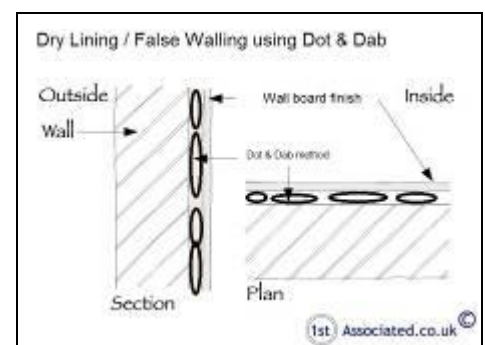
Building Insurance Policy

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

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



Dry lining

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

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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 one hundred percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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TREES



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

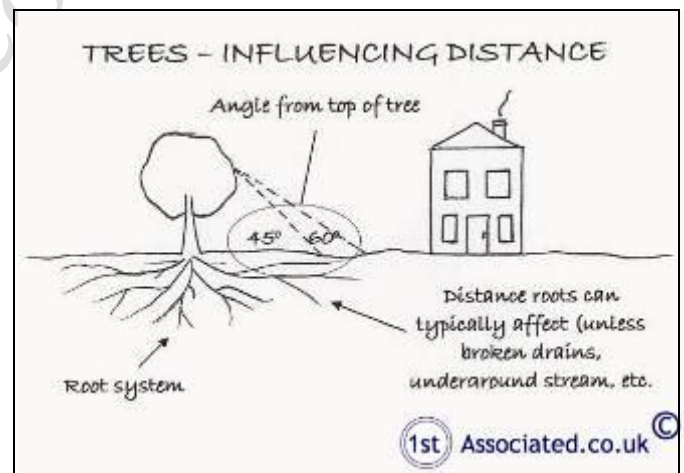
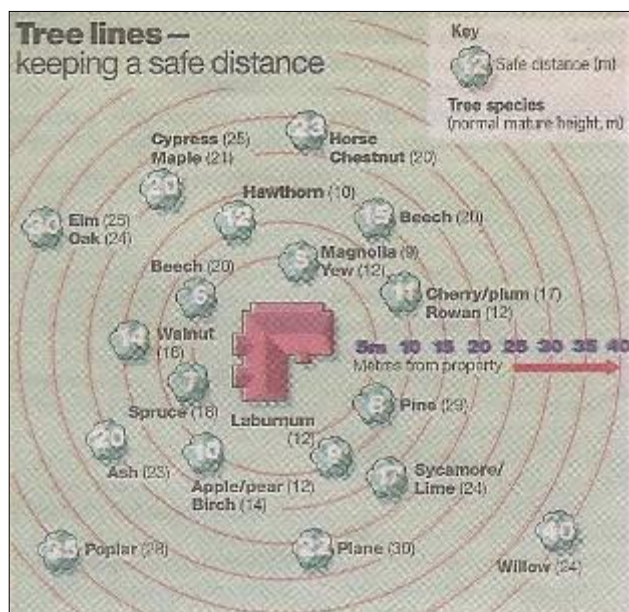
There are trees and conifers within what we would term as influencing distance but you do need to speak to your insurance company as they may have a different interpretation for insurance reasons.

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



Conifers to rear right

We would recommend an arboriculturalist (not a tree surgeon) is asked to view the trees and give a ten year plan for maintenance of the trees.



Influencing distance of trees to a property

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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, the damp proof course is not visible.

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

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

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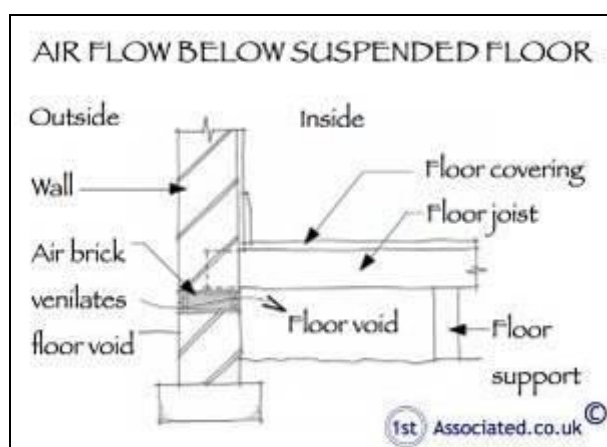
AIRBRICKS



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

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. In this case we found one airbrick to the chimney.



Suspended timber floor



Air brick

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in 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 walls/floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

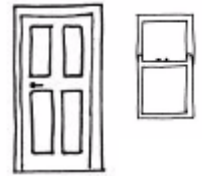
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



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 and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are painted timber with vents. We would comment they are in average condition for their age, type and style.



Vented soffit

Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows without trickle vents, which generally look to be of an average quality.

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



Plastic double glazed windows

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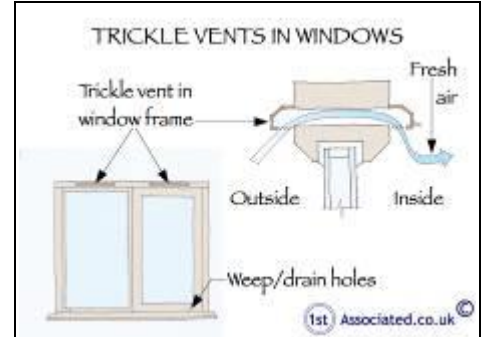


Transferable Guarantees

Although these windows are old enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees by your legal advisor. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years.

Trickle Vents Defined

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



Trickle vents

Door

The front and rear plastic doors are difficult to shut and appear to be warping. The property was getting a lot of sunlight during the course of the survey.

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

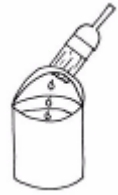
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EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The fence and garage door require redecoration.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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INTERNAL



CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be plasterboard or there may be some proprietary boarding as this was fairly common in this era of property.

A textured paint finish has been used, commonly known by its trade name as artex.



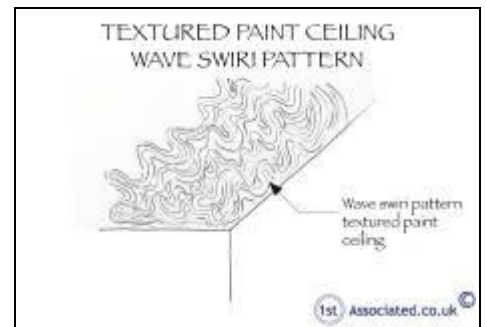
Textured paint

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.

Proprietary boarding Defined

Proprietary boarding are one off specially manufactured boards commonly used in years gone by which are now popular again.



Textured paint

Internal Walls and Partitions

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

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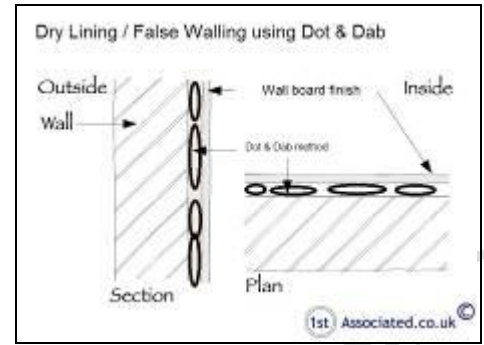
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Perimeter Walls

The perimeter walls are dry lined.

Again, we cannot be one hundred percent certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report. This comment has been based on the visual look of the wall which is relatively “smooth” and normally means a modern finish.



Dry lining

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

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

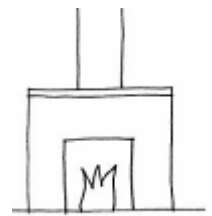
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

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

Any chimneys you do intend to use should be swept and a check should be carried out that a lining is in place.

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

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

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

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

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FLOORS

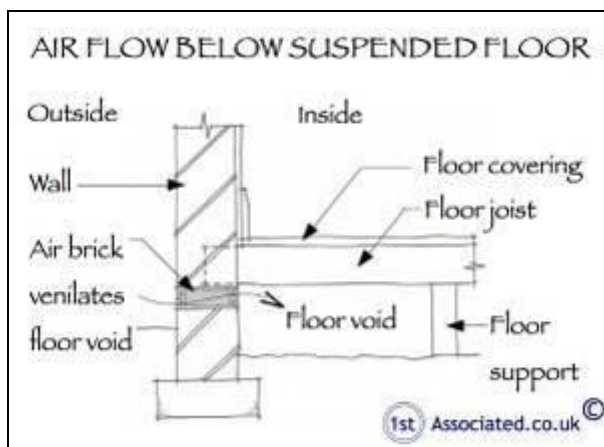


Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

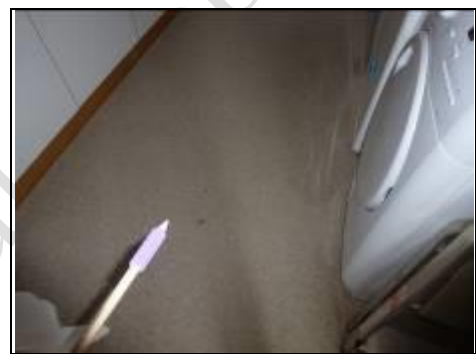
Ground Floor

The floors felt solid underfoot therefore we assume are concrete.

There is a suspended floor in the garage, this may be a DIY construction.



Suspended timber floor



Suspended timber floor raised in garage area

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



Tiles to kitchen

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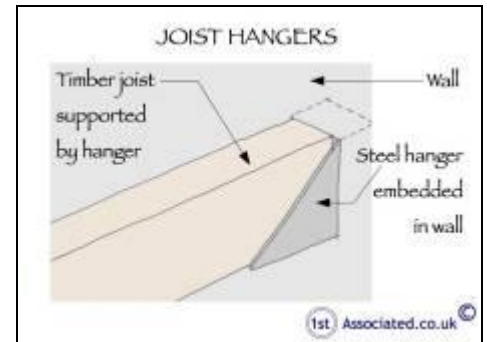
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First Floor

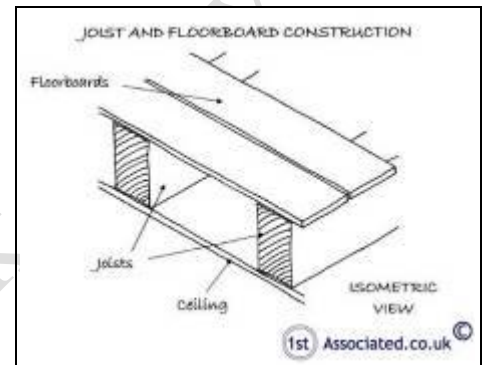
We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards on joist hangers, as this is typical in this age of property.



Joist hangers

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



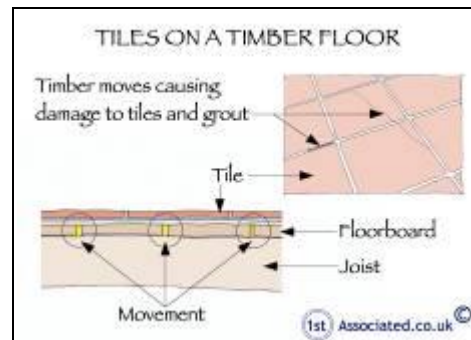
Joist and floorboards

Repointing

A hard material such as a tile onto a soft floor that deflects means that ultimately the joints will start to crack and deteriorate and you will need to repoint.



Repointing to en-suite tiles



Tiles on timber

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

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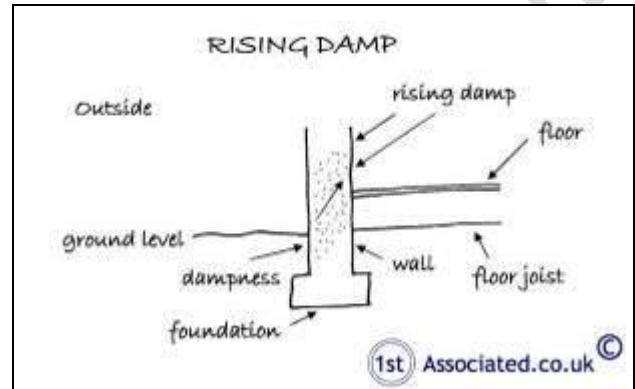


DAMPNESS

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

Rising Damp

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



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we were unable to obtain readings due to the dry lining.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see the Executive Summary.



Dry lining

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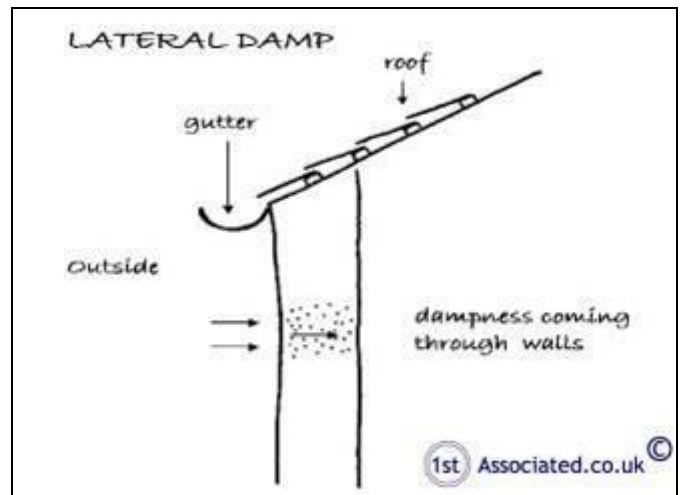
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Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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.



Lateral damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we were unable to obtain readings due to the dry lining.

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



Testing for lateral dampness

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no significant signs of condensation.

However, 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. You need to have a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

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Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good quality 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.

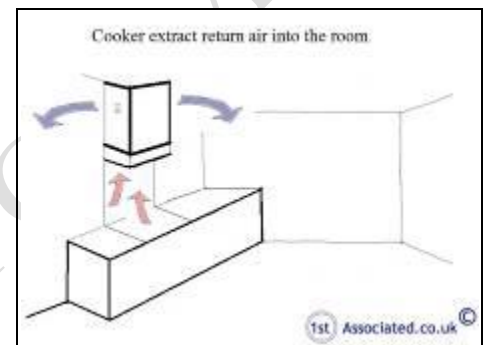
ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend good quality large humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and any rooms where you intend to dry clothes.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per large humidity controlled extract fan depending upon the wiring required; quotations required.



Air filter in kitchen, no extraction



Cooker air filter in kitchen

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

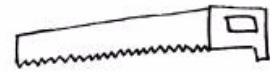
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INTERNAL JOINERY

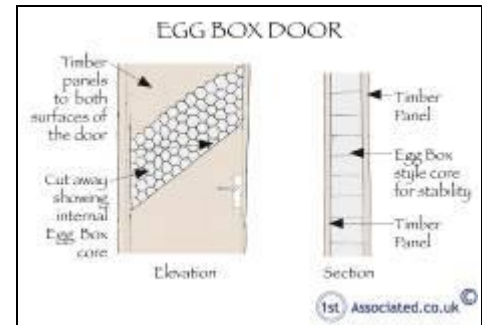


This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.

Doors

The property has hollow core doors (sometimes referred to as egg box doors, as this is what the internal of them looks like when they are opened up). These can damage very easily.

We noted the front left bedroom door is sticking and that the garage door has a door closer as garages are considered a high risk area from a fire point of view.



Cross section of egg box door/hollow core door



Damaged door



Internal door closer to garage

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regard to the cracking in the property.

Staircase

We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined where we could see it, 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.

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Kitchen

We found the kitchen in average condition and would benefit from an extract.

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

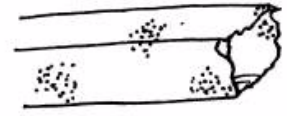
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot/White Rot

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

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

Wet Rot/Brown Rot

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

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

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

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Woodworm



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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of significant woodworm activity or indeed past signs of significant 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 is usually 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.

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

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

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

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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. 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

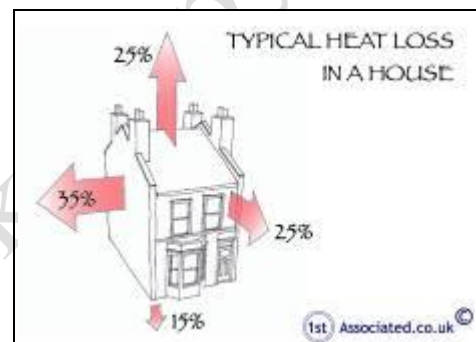


Up
until

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.

Roofs

Current Building Regulations require insulation of 300mm. In this instance there is 200mm to 300mm.



Typical heat loss

Walls

The property has a stretcher bond construction, we can see the blockwork internally in the roof space and garage. We cannot confirm if there is insulation.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Adviser to check and confirm if there is insulation within the walls and whether it was installed originally or not and advise us as there can be problems where insulation is added at a later date.

Windows

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

Services/Boilers

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

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you ask the owners for energy bills and service records for the past three years.

Summary

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

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

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk (Centre for Alternative Technology)

*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 – can be viewed on YouTube

HIPs

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

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

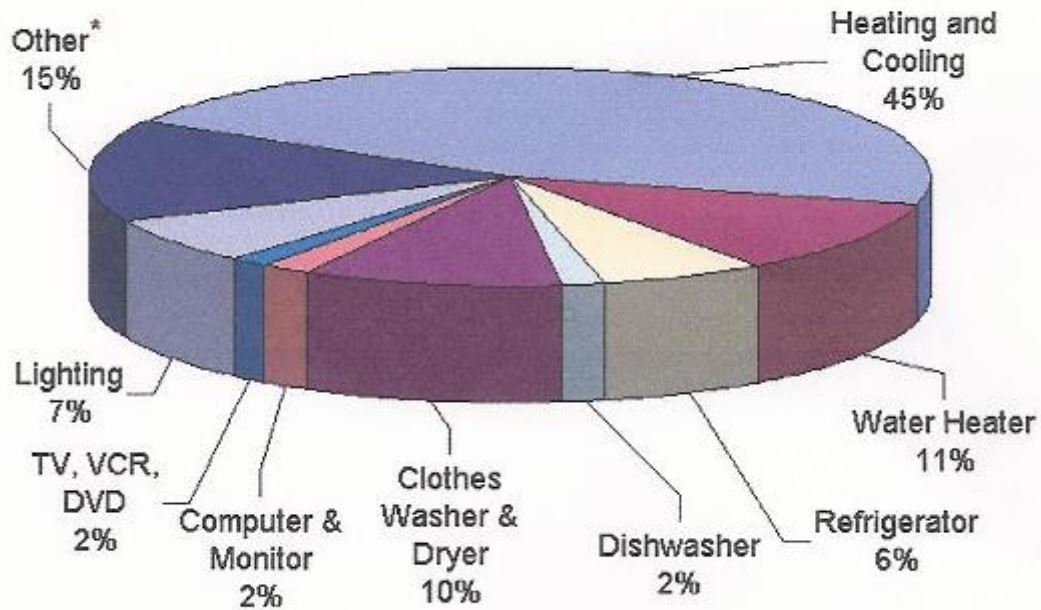
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What does my energy bill pay for?



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

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OTHER MATTERS



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

Security

A security system has been installed which we turned off to enter the property. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also help reduce your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further.

ACTION REQUIRED: Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

A fire/smoke alarm was opened up and did not appear to be working.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors are 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 investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.



Smoke alarm

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.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the existing owners placing an insurance claim otherwise we would not recommend you proceed with the purchase.

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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 Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommends that inspections and testing are undertaken at least every 10 years (we recommend every five years) and on change of occupancy. All electrical installation works undertaken after 1st January 2005 should be identified by an Electrical Installation Certificate.

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the garage. The fuse board looked 1980's – 2000's and better are now available.



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.



Earth test

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

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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.

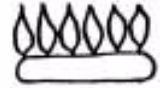
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GAS



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 to the front left.

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.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide monitors were not noted.

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

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PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

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 Estate Agent to show you where it is, although we would not expect most Estate Agents to know 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!).

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

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

There is the original Worcester boiler located in the kitchen.

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



Boiler

Ten Minute Heating Test

There was no owner / occupier at the property and therefore we do not turn the heating on in case there is a problem with it.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you return to the property with the estate agent to turn the heating on to ensure it is working.

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

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

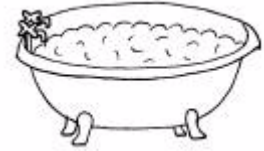
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BATHROOM



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

Ground floor cloakroom

The cloakroom comprises a wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.

Bathroom

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



Bathroom rear middle

En-Suite Bathroom

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



Bedroom front right en-suite

ACTION REQUIRED: The bathrooms would benefit from humidity controlled extract fans.

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 kitchen. No build up or back up was noted.

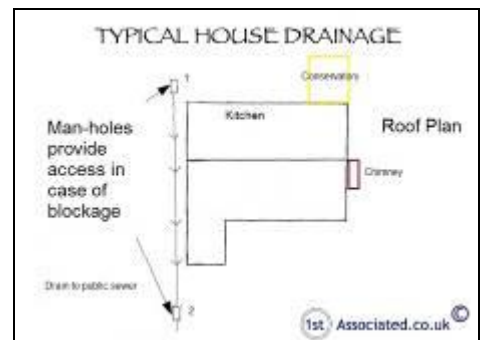
Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We did not find a manhole. It may be hidden underneath something in the garden (the property was empty therefore there was no-one we could ask). The sketch shows a typical layout of drainage. In this case we could only find a rodding eye.

Manholes Defined

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



Typical drainage

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains.

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.

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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. Normally in a property of this age the rainwater drains discharge into a soak away.

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

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

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OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGE/PARKING



Garage

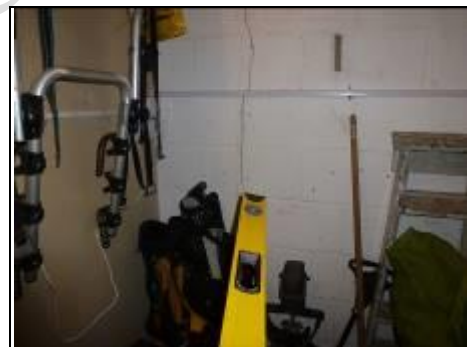
The garage has been part converted to incorporate a utility room, this should have building regulation approval. We noted cracking within the garage.



Garage



Garage



Cracking

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

Parking

There is parking for two cars to the front of the property. There was also roadside parking available at the time of our survey.



Parking

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EXTERNAL

Front Garden

The front garden is laid to lawn with parking area.
The garden is sloping.

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



Front Garden

Rear Garden

The rear garden is triangular.



Rear garden



Rear triangular garden



Paving slabs need levelling up

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the large tree and conifers.

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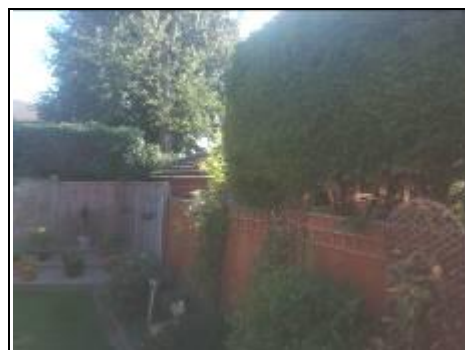




Large tree to rear



Conifers to rear right



Conifers to rear right
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

Boundaries

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

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

The left neighbours Richard and Beryl were very friendly and I am sure would be happy to make you a cup of tea and advise you more about the area. They moved in in 1989 so were original occupants.

Right Hand Neighbours

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

Other Neighbours

The neighbours across the road were friendly.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

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

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Designated Planning Area.

- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Environmental report 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 Environmental reports 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 Environmental reports or similar general reports on the environment 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!

Please do not hesitate to contact us on **0800 298 5424**.

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

APPROVALS/GUARANTEES

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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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.

LAYOUT PLAN

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

WEATHER

It was mild and dry at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

As you are probably aware there has been some record breaking weather recently:

2000 was the wettest year on record
December 2015 was the wettest month
August 2004 the wettest August on record in many areas.
2003 was the driest year on record
2018 being the driest start to a summer.

This may have adverse effects on many buildings in years to come or the not too distant future.

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.

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

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JAPANESE KNOTWEED

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

A BBC news report dated April 2018 states that the latest research has been carried out by Swansea University, where they carried out trials near Cardiff and Swansea and tested 19 main methods of controlling the plant and they found that none of these methods eradicated it. See our article:

<https://buildingsurveyquote.co.uk/japanese-knotweed-buildings-and-resveratrol/>

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

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

- 1) We did not have a full view of the roof due to the insulation covering the ceiling joists and general configuration of the roof.
- 2) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.
- 3) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.
- 4) The property was empty we did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers
- 5) We didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property to talk about your specific requirements.

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BUILDING INSURANCE

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

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

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

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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

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APPENDICES

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

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THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS

PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

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INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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.

www.hometrack.co.uk

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

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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 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

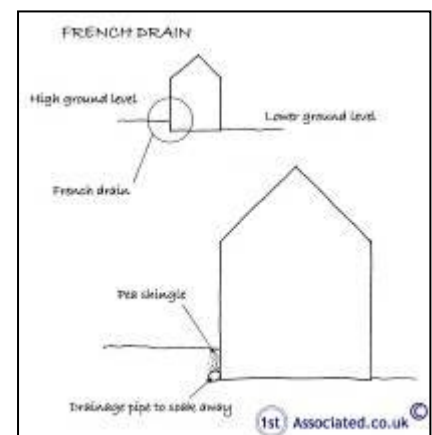
We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio 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 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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