

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXXX, Coventry,
West Midlands,
CV7 xxx



**Two bedroom
Semi-detached
Listed property**

1stAS

FOR

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

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

This is what we would term as a pre-sales survey where we advise you with regard to the property before you sell it. In many respects it is exactly the same as an Independent Building Survey being carried out for a purchaser. We are Independent Chartered Surveyors and therefore act independently and factually on problems seen in the property and give best advice based on our knowledge of this age, type and style of building.

This Independent 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 a section that should be brought to the attention of a Legal Advisor/Solicitor by the ultimate purchaser of the property and also attach some general information on the property market at the end of the report.

We are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. However, we do recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas which you wish to discuss further and phone us.

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

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy.

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REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

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

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



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

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or discuss and agree upon.

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 semi-detached traditional timber frame property that has been extended and altered over the years. We are advised (by the owners of the neighbouring property) that both cottages were extensively re-modernised in the early 1970's (believed to be 1972).

The property sits on a sloping site and benefits from a garden to the front and rear and also a detached single garage for parking with its own driveway.

We believe the property to be between three and four hundred years old. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1666	The Great Fire of London
1681	Oil powered street lights are put up in London
1694	Bank of England founded
1718	British convicts transported overseas
1783	Britain recognised American Independence
1750	The start of the Industrial Revolution

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS
(recent snowfall still covering the building)



Front Elevation



Rear View



Street view



Right hand view



Front garden



Rear garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway with stairs
- 2) Lounge – front right
- 3) Dining Room – rear right
- 4) Kitchen- left (recently refurbished and advised never used)

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Landing
- 2) Master bedroom - right
- 3) Single bedroom - front left
- 4) Bathroom – rear left
- 5) W.C. – rear middle
- 6) Airing cupboard / Boiler room

Part of the ceilings to some rooms are vaulted.

Outside Areas

The property sits on a sloping site with gardens to the front and the rear (covered in snow at the time of the survey).

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property. We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Ground Floor



Hallway and stairs – front left



Dining room – rear right



Kitchen – rear left



Kitchen – rear left



Lounge – front right



Lounge looking into dining room

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First Floor



Master Bedroom – Right
(front)



Master Bedroom - Right
(rear)



Bedroom – front left



Bedroom – front left
vaulted ceiling



Bathroom – rear left



W.C. – rear middle



Airing cupboard / boiler room
rear middle

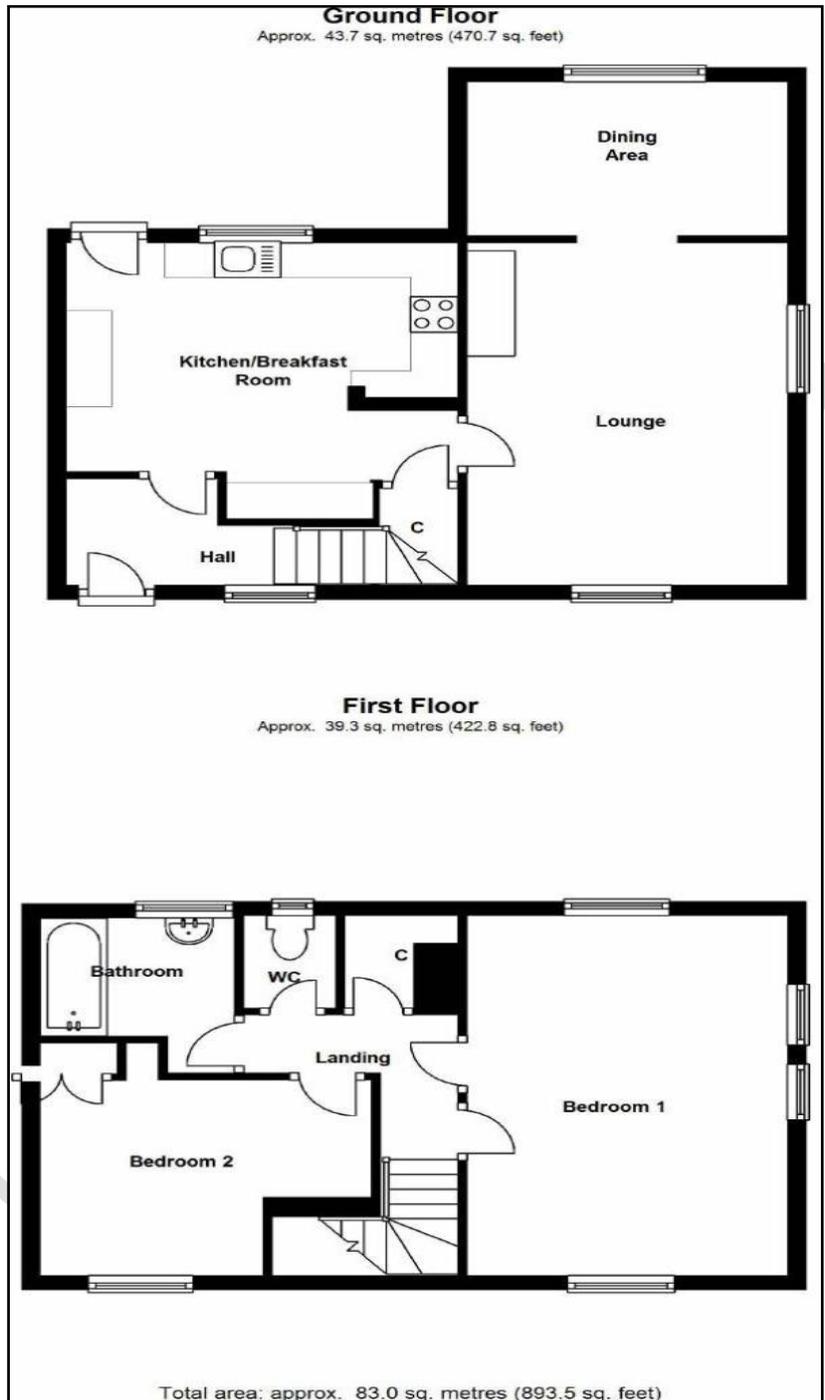
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FLOOR PLAN (from rightmove.co.uk website)



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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

(The building was snow covered at the time of our inspection)

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with tiles
Main Roof Structure:	Timber frame
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic with metal fixings. Some original cast iron may remain.
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Wall Structure:	Traditional timber frame (assumed)
Wall Finish:	Painted black timbers, white painted render and painted white brickwork with a bedrock visible to the base in some areas. Some modern stick on mock timbers.
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted/stained timber
Windows and Doors:	Timber single glazed windows with secondary glazing

Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Mixture of solid and traditional studwork (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Concrete possibly with tiles and earth beneath (assumed).
	First Floor: Traditional timber floor with a spine beam and supporting joists(assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The wall mounted Worcester boiler is located in the airing/boiler room on the first floor. The electrics are under the stairs and we are advised that an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test certificate is available.

The property is Listed, as found in BritishListedBuildings.co.uk. We have only made Internet enquiries on this website. Your legal adviser needs to check and confirm this.

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

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

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

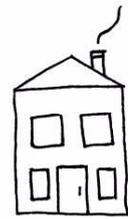
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly when looking at a house and home as 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 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 500 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 if you any concerns whatsoever please phone and talk to us (the sooner you take this action the better) as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

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

The Good

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

1.0 The character and charm of a period property.

2.0 Considering the age of the property we are pleased to see it has the benefit of a garage.

3.0 The boiler system and the electrics look relatively new. We are advised that documentation is available confirming this and an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) certificate is also available for the electrics.



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4.0 The property has vacant possession so can be moved into immediately.

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

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The Bad

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

1.0 Movement

As is common with many properties of this era and age there has been some movement to the structure. We cannot see any signs within the structure to indicate that this movement is progressive.

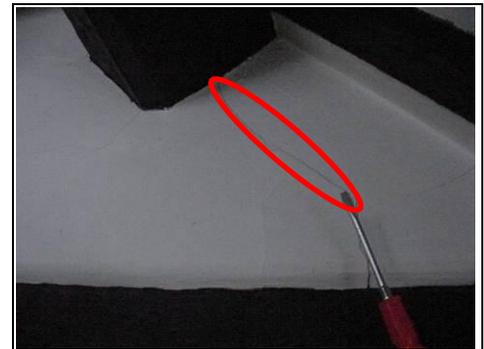
There are, however, cracks within the property for example to the top of the stairs and in the right hand bedroom. We believe these relate to the use of modern Gypsum plaster rather than a traditional lime plaster which the property would originally have had.



Crack at the top of the stairs



Crack near window of right hand bedroom



Crack in the right hand bedroom

Lime Every Time

Lime every time refers to the use of lime in older properties to allow the property to move and breathe as they do. It may be necessary to replace some of the cracked plaster with a lime plaster and eventually replace all of the Gypsum plaster with a lime plaster.

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ACTION REQUIRED: Overtime to replace the modern plaster with an older style lime plaster.

ANTICIPATED COST: This really depends upon how the work is carried out. It could be carried out in small sections as patch repairs in which case the cost will be about £100 (one hundred pounds) at a time or as whole rooms in which case it will be £300 plus (three hundred pounds plus); please obtain quotations.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

2.0 Building not straight and square

As is fairly common with this age, type and style of property the timber frame is out of square vertically and horizontally. It is important to establish if this building is settled in this position or if there is progressive movement. From what we can see there is no indication that there is any progressive movement.

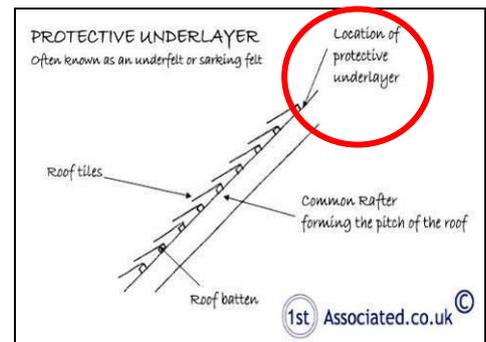


Level shows the walls are out of true

From within the roof we can see to the left hand side of the roof construction that there has been some tearing to the hessian based protective underlayer (sometimes known as sarking felt or under felt). This we assume was fitted in the 1970's refurbishment.



Hessian protective underlayer



Protective underlayer

Please read our full comments within the Walls and Roof Section of the report.

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2.1 What's happening within the roof?

Front purlin

From what we can see the front purlin is no longer tied in fully on the front left hand side of the roof, however, this looks to be an historic problem as the purlin has been doubled up (these are substantial purlins, at least double or triple of what we would typically expect in a newer property).



Over the years there has been some movement to the left hand purlin

ACTION REQUIRED: As a belt and braces measure we would look at putting some form of tie or prop to the purlin taking support from the central wall.

ANTICIPATED COST: Typically £500 - £1000 (five hundred to one thousand pounds). It is important that the prop or tie used allows movement and we would copy the existing props and ties in the roof; please obtain quotations.

Metal bracket to ridge timber

A metal bracket has been added where the ridge timber has given way in the right hand side roof. This is rusting. We would recommend a new metal bracket is added



Metal bracket added to broken ridge timber

ANTICIPATED COST: To replace the metal bracket £200 - £400 (two hundred to four hundred pounds); please obtain quotations.

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2.2 Gable end

The gable end is out of true (vertically) by many centimetres. In our experience this is not a problem unless movement is progressive as many older properties have moved and settled over the years and it will have been out of true for decades if not hundreds of years.



Gable wall is not straight

ACTION REQUIRED: We would suggest again as a belt and braces measure that a cross braced timber (sometimes known as wind brace timber) is added within the right hand roof space. The support must allow for movement within the structure as there is seasonal movement within this property.

The other option for both the purlin and the gable end is to monitor these areas and is what we would personally do. We would also add that any work will need Listed Building consent and at the very least you should advise them in writing. The Listed Building consultants may be unhappy to carry out such work without any significant signs of movement within the property.

Please remember that this is a one off inspection and we would recommend before any work is carried out with any old property that you should monitor it for as long as possible for carrying out alterations and amendments. Typically we would expect monitoring to be about a year and we would recommend consultations with the Listed Building consultant for the Local Authority.

2.3 Condition of the timber frame

The property has what is known as a box timber frame construction. This has primary timbers that are structurally required and secondary timbers. This may seem a strange comment to make but the secondary timbers are often over and above requirements and are added as a decorative feature or as expression of wealth or status.



Cement or plastic repair

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Our investigations are therefore focused on the primary structural timbers. We can see that repairs have been made to these over the years and also repairs have failed and work is required. A good example of this is the window to the gable end where we can see a hole that is a repair that has failed. We can also see next to it that there is a cement or plastic repair.



Hole above the window in gable end wall



Hole above the window in gable end wall (red)
Cement or plastic repair (green)

From what we can see at ground level we don't believe there are any major problems with the structural frame but we do believe repairs need to be carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: A systematic repair and maintenance of the timber structure externally elevation by elevation in conjunction with the local authority Listed Building conservation officer. We would work one elevation at a time i.e. rear elevation, gable end elevation and then front elevation. We suggest one elevation is repaired per year and as such this will be a learning pattern for yourself and the Listed Building control officer who will possibly want to have an involvement with this property.

We have suggested dealing with the rear elevation first as this is the least visible and also has a fair amount of what we would term as modern 'stick on' mock timber framing. It may even be possible to do the rear elevation and the gable end elevation in the same year dependent upon your budget.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would set aside the sum of £1,000 to £1,500 (one thousand to one thousand, five hundred pounds) per elevation to carry out repairs probably splicing in new timbers subject to

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the conservation officer being happy with this and then re-staining; please obtain quotations. Again it should be remembered that when this house was originally built it is likely that it wasn't a black and white construction style but a lime wash of one colour all over. Black and white tends to be a more modern look carried out in the Victorian era.

Please see the Roof and Wall Sections of this Report.

3.0 External re-decoration

At the same time as checking the timbers we would recommend the redecoration of the render, the brickwork and the re-painting of the timber windows. Ideally this would be in the spring/summer 2013. This could possibly wait a year longer but we would say that the sooner it is painted the better. Of course this would go perfectly with carrying out the work to the timber frame structure. It may be worth hiring or buying a tower scaffold to carry out work.



Paint peeling off and blistering on gable end wall

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair, prepare and re-decorate.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £2,500 to £4,000 (two thousand five hundred pounds to four thousand pounds); please obtain quotations.



Paint peeling off the windows

4.0 Roof space - minor dampness and woodworm (not believed to be active)

We can see that there is some dampness within the roof probably caused by the torn protective underlayer and the house being unoccupied. As is often the case where there is dampness there is woodworm. In this case it is minor woodworm and not what we would describe as structurally



Minor woodworm

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significant.

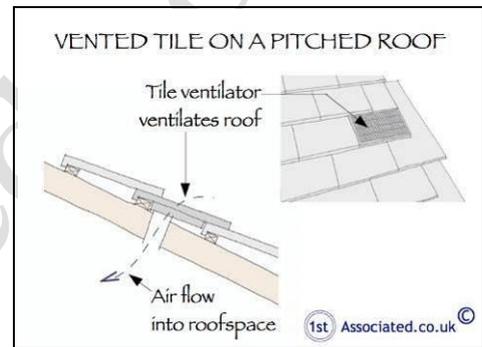
It does however warrant the benefit of further investigation. It is easier to see woodworm during their breeding season in the spring months where you can look for frass (chewed up wood that looks similar to sawdust). We would be more than happy to return to inspect the property during the spring months.



Signs of old woodworm

ACTION REQUIRED: Seal the roof by repairing the protective underlayer/sarking felt.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £500 - £1000 (five hundred to one thousand pounds) to carry out an internal repair which although is not ideal would improve matters. At the same time we would recommend ventilation tiles are added to reduce dampness and woodworm in the roof; please obtain quotations.



Vented tiles should be added

As mentioned, the time that it is easiest to see woodworm and establish if it is active (in most properties we inspect it is not active and is long since dead) is during the breeding season in spring. Again, we would be happy to carry out a further inspection during these months.

We would advise that we would not recommend using a woodworm treatment company or specialist to do this as, at the end of the day, they are not independent and are there to sell a product and do not have knowledge of the building as a whole.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

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5.0 Dampness within the property and the sloping site

We were surprised the dampness was relatively low considering the property has been vacant albeit the heating has been on. The main dampness that was found was to the central wall areas. From our question and answer session with the present owners they advise that the dampness has been in place for years.



Minor dampness and rusting to the corner bead

We find with internal walls where there is dampness such as this that it is often best to just re-paint occasionally and of course re-plaster in a lime plaster to allow the wall to breathe in due course. One of the common problems we come across is where plastic polymer based paints have been used which do not allow walls to breathe (this acts like a plastic Cagoule type raincoat rather than a breathable overcoat or Gortex raincoat).



Dampness in the central wall within the lounge

We believe that the sloping site that the property sits on may be causing the dampness as the rainwater travels from the tap end of the garden through the property and down to the road causing dampness within the walls.

ACTION REQUIRED: It is very difficult to get rid of the dampness internally without major work. We certainly would not recommend inserting a chemical damp proof course in this age of property. We would initially re-plaster in a lime based plaster and a breathable paint to see how this improves matters. We would also recommend the adding of a French Drain (please see our comments below) to allow the water to go around the water rather than through it.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £250 - £400 (two hundred and fifty to four hundred pounds; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

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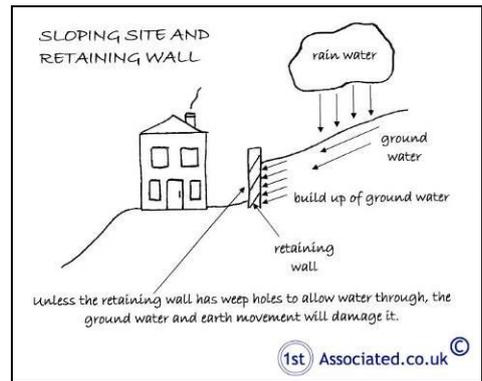
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6.0 Small retaining walls, sloping site and French drains

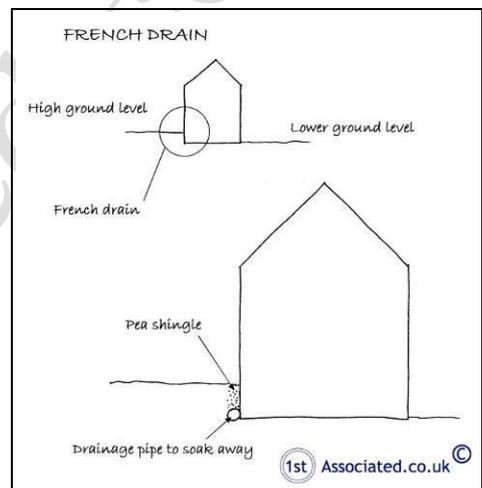
The property sits on a sloping site and as such the water needs to travel from the top of the site to the bottom of the site and the property is in the way. We noted there is a retaining wall in the garden and ideally this should have some weep holes in it to allow the water to travel through.

We would also like to have a defined path around the building, particularly on an old timber framed building such as this. Ideally you should stand outside the property next time it rains (yes it will involve getting wet!) to see how the water travels.

We do recommend with this age of property to have a French Drain added to run down the gable end side of the property. Care does need to be taken when this is carried out to ensure you do not damage the structural frame. However from what we can see there is bedrock to the right hand side.



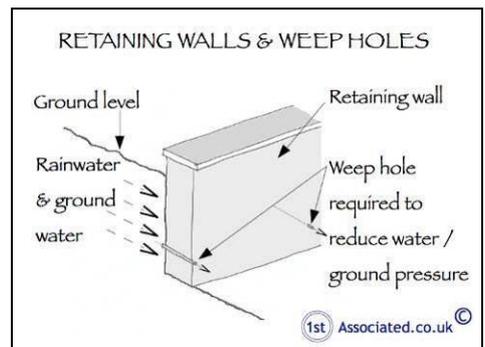
Sloping site



French Drain



Small retaining walls need weep holes



Retaining walls

ACTION REQUIRED: Add weep holes to retaining walls and add French drain around the property.

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ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds for the weep holes and in the region of a few thousand pounds for a French drain; please obtain quotations.

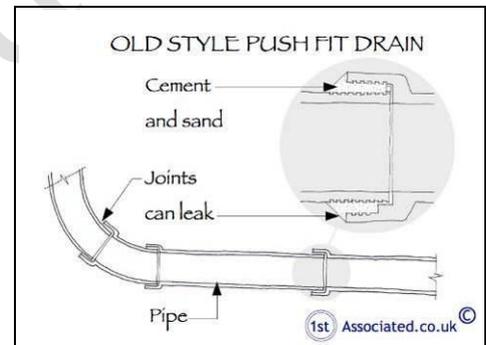
7.0 Drains blocked

We lifted the rear drain and we could see that this had not been used for some time (the water had been turned off when we carried out the survey).



Drain may be blocked

ACTION REQUIRED: It may simply be a case of running the water to clear the drains or it may be necessary to power jet the drains. However, we would take care with this on older drains such as this which are a push-fit style as there can be problems. Ideally we would recommend a Closed Circuit TV camera report of the drains is carried out.



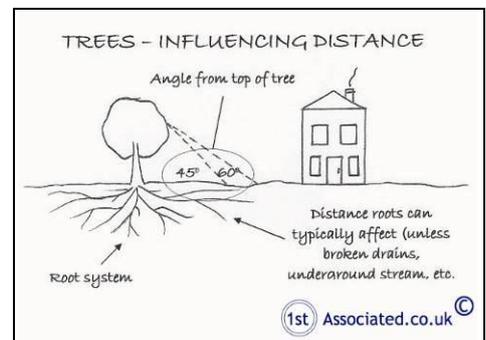
Push fit drain

We spoke to your neighbours on the left hand side and they advise they have had their section of the drain lined with fibreglass due to the tree roots from the nearby Willow tree possibly affecting the drains.

Please see the Main Drains Section of this Report.

8.0 Trees

Willow trees are renowned for having a large root system that can affect properties. Although the Willow tree is some distance away the roots will be underneath your property and as such can affect it. The tree does need to be kept well maintained. The neighbour advised that they did maintain it from time to time.



Influencing distance of trees

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would have a cup of tea meeting and a chat with the next door neighbours both about the drains and the tree. From speaking to them they have been in the property for a long time so we are sure they will have thoughts about both. They advised us that the Willow tree is relatively new being planted in the 1940's.



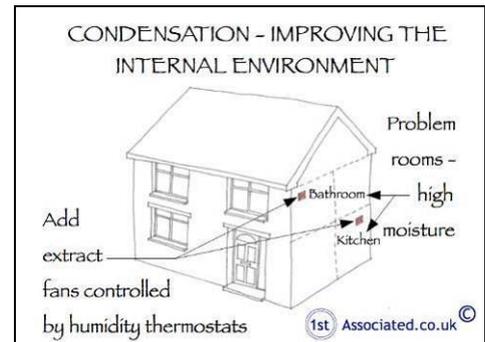
Nearby willow tree

ANTICIPATED COST: As mentioned above your neighbours have had their drains fibre glassed to prevent tree root problems. This may be necessary within your drains. You would need to have the drains flushed clean and then the closed circuit TV camera report carried out; please obtain quotations.

9.0 Condensation

Properties of this age can suffer from condensation.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that you have large humidity controlled extract fans fitted in the kitchen and bathroom and any other areas likely to get condensation such as if you were to use the second bedroom to dry clothes in.



Condensation

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds per extract fan dependant on how easy or difficult they are to wire up; please obtain quotations.

10.0 Asbestos

The refurbishment was carried out in the 1970's when it was popular to use Asbestos. We were advised that there was a warm air heating system put in the property. Warm air heating typically had Asbestos ducts to pass the

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warm air through. We could not visually see any Asbestos during the course of our survey although we would add that it can be well hidden by paint. We would also advise that we are not Asbestos Surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be certain there is no Asbestos in the property is to have an Asbestos report carried out. However we have seen no signs within the property to indicate there is Asbestos but as mentioned this may well be hidden.

ANTICIPATED COST: Please obtain quotations for an Asbestos report.

11.0 Noise Transfer

It should be remembered with properties of this age that you may get some noise transfer from adjoining rooms due to the relatively speaking thin floors and walls that were used in years gone by.

12.0 Services

Single Panel radiators

You have the benefit of a relatively new wall mounted energy efficient boiler which is then feeding some internal single panel radiators which are not ideal for air circulation.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would live in the property to see if it is warm enough if not upgrade the single panel radiators to double panel convection radiators as this would heat the property quicker and more effectively.



Single panel radiator.

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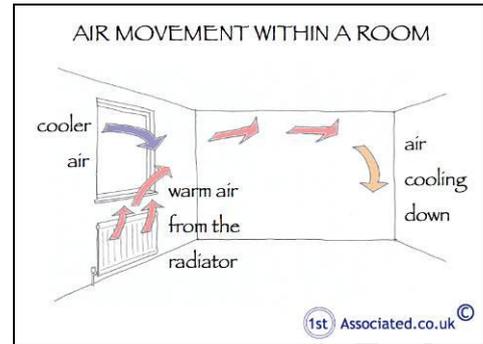
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ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds per radiator; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.



Air movement in a room.

The Ugly

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

As with all old properties you need to appreciate and understand how they work and be prepared to carry out regular maintenance to them. We feel that this property is in average to slightly below average condition due to the number of items that need attention.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Some thoughts on selling the property yourself

As discussed your best option may be to sell the property yourself. The road has a good level of passing traffic so we would suggest a good sign advertising the property (there was no for sale sign on the property on the day of the survey).

It also may be worth having an open day on the property and we strongly recommend free cups of tea, coffee and biscuits! We would recommend that you talk to some local Independent Estate agents with regard to how best they feel the property should be marketed.

Selling it yourself

There are various internet companies that look at selling properties yourself.

1. thelittlehousecompany.com,
2. tepilo.com,
3. sellyourownhome.co.uk,
4. thehousesale.co.uk

There are also companies that offer a quick sale and do look to sell the house quickly. These companies do require a discount and to be bought at what they term as wholesale prices which can be considerably below the open market value. Here are a few such companies:-

1. a-quick-sale.co.uk,
2. alliancehomebuyers.co.uk,
3. webuyanyhouse.net,
4. webuyanyhome.com,
5. nationalhomebuyers.co.uk,

If you do decide to sell the property yourself you do need to be aware that you may still be tied in with Estate Agents that will want their fees when the house is sold.

Presentation

From a presentation point of view we feel the house is average with the kitchen being above average and the bathroom being below average. To help sell the house re-decoration would be of benefit as the smell of fresh paint always helps to sell as well as free cups of tea and coffee! These are simple

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easy things to do. Plants, flowers and evergreens to the front of the property are also helpful in attracting the attention of potential buyers. A great number of potential buyers are attracted by what is known as curb side appeal. This is three seconds or so spent looking at the property from the curb side or via an internet website.

Active marketing

We have also found it productive and useful to do leaflet drops. This is literally posting leaflets through nearby doors to see if anyone locally would be interested in buying the property and also putting adverts in local shops.

You need to realistically pitch the price of the property below the stamp duty level of £250,000 and say that you have either taken the cost of the items within the survey into consideration within the price or have the work carried out such as clearing the drains and closed circuit TV's camera report. However you do need to be aware that purchasers are often sceptical of prices gathered by the seller of a property and they may wish to carry out their own investigation. Please do not take this to heart as this is just the nature of buying and selling properties.

We would be happy to carry out a separate Independent Survey for whoever proposes to purchase the property, if they so wish, to then have a legally binding contract between themselves and us. We would also be happy to meet them at the property and take them through our findings together with a review of the property based upon what you have or have not done.

Maintenance

With a period property it should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of an older property's overall character and style. Such character defects are normally considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report. The Report is looking at structural issues which we consider may be a problem.

This type of property will require on-going maintenance and repair such as external re-decoration to the render, brickwork and the timber. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration. We have outlined what we believe needs doing earlier in the Executive Summary.

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Getting to know more about older properties - SPAB course

We would recommend that anyone owning or looking to purchase an old property should go on a Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) weekend course on looking after and maintaining older properties. Even if you do not intend to carry out the work yourself it does give you a far better idea of what work should be carried out. The website for this is www.SPAB.org.

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 Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent. In this case we have been advised that an IEE test and report has been carried out. A copy of this should be seen by your legal Advisor.

Heating

We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer. In this case we are advised that the boiler system is relatively new and a Gas Safe certificate should be provided. We would recommend that the single panel radiators should be updated to double panel radiators if the property does not heat up to modern standards.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our other comments.

Drainage

At the time of the inspection the rear drain appeared blocked. However this may be because the water has not been turned on for some time. We would recommend initially running the taps to see if it does unblock. It may even be that this rear drain is for the rainwater pipe and there may be a hidden drain underneath the snow. We would generally comment in older properties, such

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as this, that drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together which means that they may leak over the years and tree roots can get in.

As the water was turned off we could not run the taps for our fifteen minute test as we would usually do during the survey.

ACTION REQUIRED: Drains to be checked and left in working order.

Water Supply

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

ACTION REQUIRED – 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. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

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Estimates of Building Costs

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

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

As with any older property there are elements of work that need to be carried out. Whoever is looking to purchase this property needs to be comfortable with older properties and comfortable with this type of work.

Surveys on older properties do tend to look like a list of problems however there are of course the benefits of living in an older property such as the character and feel of the property and its associated history. This all needs to be taken into account when looking at buying an older property.

With regards to this report you have now completed reading the Executive Summary and we suggest that you read again the 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Sections and make any notes necessary on anything that you would like to know more about and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

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MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

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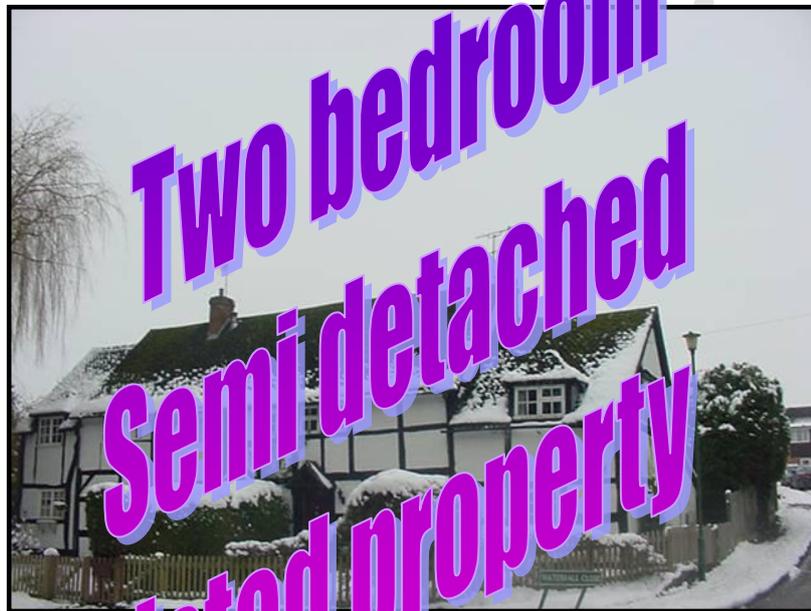
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THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS

From our investigations the property is Grade II Listed (your Legal Advisor should confirm this and make their own enquiries) and as such it will require various permissions to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials for the age, type and style of property.



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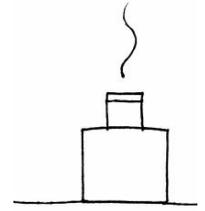
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS 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 which is located to the rear middle (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One - rear

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one flue. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style although we can see a lot of moss and growth around it indicating dampness is sitting behind it.



Chimney



Lead flashing

ACTION REQUIRED: Clear the moss and vegetation around the chimney and also check the flashings.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds as it should be accessible from a ladder.

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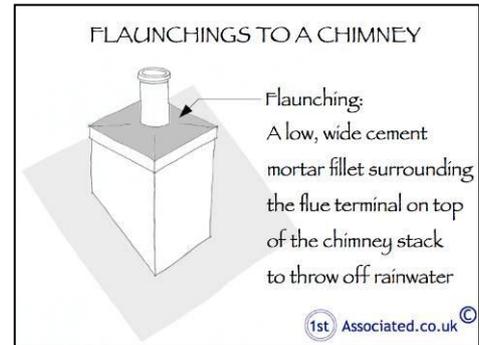
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Unfortunately we were unable to see the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.



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.

Flaunchings

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.

There are two dormer windows, one to the front and one to the rear right hand side of the property. The dormer window roofs are tiled and the cheeks of the dormers appear to be lead (this was slightly difficult to tell as they were snow covered at the time). Generally we could comment for their age, type and style that they are in average condition.



Dormer window- front



Dormer window - rear

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

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Party Wall

The party wall relates to shared items, such as firewalls. In older properties such as this there may be some noise transfer from the adjoining through the party wall although we did not hear anything during the course of the survey. If you do any work on these you will need to work within the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it. We recommend you seek professional advice on party wall work.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

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

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

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

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

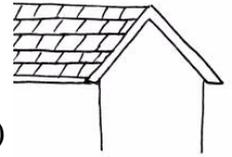
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ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

(please note there was snow on parts of the roof at the time of the survey)

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

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

We will consider the roofs in two areas.

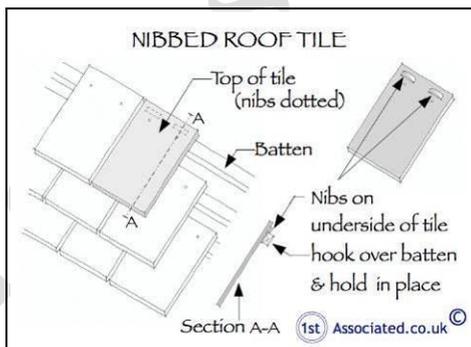
Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad with a small nibbed machine made tile. This is possibly concrete as it has a large moss covering which is common for this type of roof. This is likely to have been replaced in the 1970's and from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roofs age type and style.



Main roof with moss on it

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend clearing the moss. Please see our comments with regards to the sarking felt in the Executive Summary.



Nibbed tiles



Step in roof

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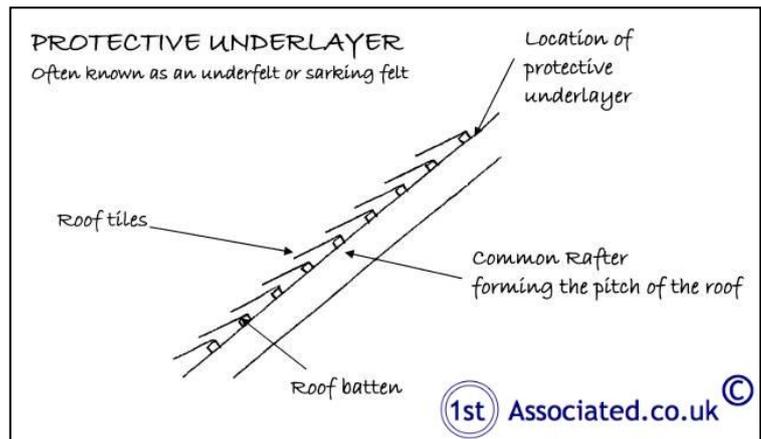
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Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or under felt)

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

The roof is accessed via both the left and the right hand side.

When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. No doubt this has been replaced in the 1970's when the new roof was put on.



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

There are some splits and gaps in the underlay that need repairing.

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



Splits and gaps in the underlayer

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Low Level Roofs – Single Storey Roofs

Rear low level roof (sometimes known as a cat slide)

The roof was completely covered in snow at the time of the survey. There were no obvious visual signs internally of dampness getting in on the day of the survey.



Low level rear roof

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera.

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

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

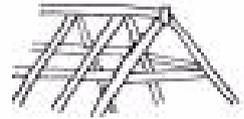
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ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

(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

There are two loft accesses. It should be commented that the first floor rooms are formed partly within the roof with a vaulted ceiling.

Roof Access

The right hand side is accessed via the loft hatch located in the bedroom. The left hand side is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There are no loft ladders, electric lights or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

The loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

How much weight can the lofts take?

The lofts we believe have been added at a later date probably in the 1970's and we are not certain to how much weight they can take. We would very much limit what is put into the roof unless angle brackets or something similar are used to secure the existing timbers.



Loft hatch for right hand roof
Not the easiest of hatches to use.



Loft hatch to the left hand side of
the roof on the landing

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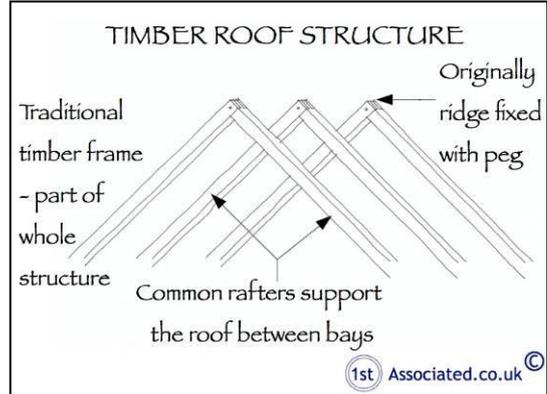
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Roof Structure

This property has a timber frame which also forms part of the roof structure.

The roof will have been hand cut and purpose made, with the trusses of the building originally normally being prefabricated on the ground floor before being lifted into place. Between the roof trusses, as you can see in the sketch, common rafters were used. In this particular case additional new timbers have been added we suspect when the property was re-roofed in the 1970's so there is now a mix of old and new timbers which is often the case in older properties.



Timber frame roof



Ridge timber



Blockwork visible in the roof space right hand side.

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof and the insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in average to slightly below average condition considering its age.

Our areas of concern in this particular case are;

1. The metal bracket to the right hand side that is rusting and we would recommend is replaced.

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2. The woodworm in the roof. We would recommend increasing the ventilation and have the roof re-checked in the spring months.
3. The securing of the purlins by adding additional props.



Quartered timber with bark left on in left side roof.
Underlayer torn

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be 100 per cent certain that the roof is structurally sound is to have it cleared and re-checked. Please see our comments with regard to the concerns above within the Executive Summary.

Fire Walls

The property has a blockwork firewall which is located to the left hand side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewall is also a Party Wall. This is something that was probably carried out in the 1970's.

Fire Walls Defined

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

Water Tanks

We did not see a water tank within the roof space.

Ventilation

There was no ventilation within the roof apart from the accidental ventilation where the protective underlayer (sarking felt) has torn.

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

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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, structure to the rear. We have not examined every single piece of the roof. 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 original cast iron gutters and downpipes have been replaced with plastic gutters and down pipes. These are attached with metal brackets. Some cast iron may remain.

The guttering to the rear looks to be out of alignment but we really could not tell if there were any problems due to the snow. We noted that the gutters were full.



Metal bracket for gutter

ACTION REQUIRED: Realign the gutters. 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.



Guttering out of alignment

We would 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.



Gutters need cleaning

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds to have the gutters realigned.

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Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipes are internal.

Finally, gutters and downpipes have been inspected from ground level. As it had snowed at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

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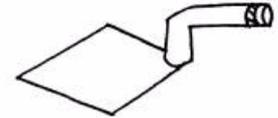
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WALLS

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 property is traditional timber frame with infill panels which are predominantly painted brickwork and painted render.

Timber Structure

Traditional timber frame buildings were the way we built houses for many centuries, although few survive from before 1500. We continued to build in timber to the 1800 century, mainly using Oak and Elm, but as timber supplies reduced other timbers were used and we moved to non-local materials, particularly as the sea, canal and rail systems developed.



Timber frame property

In this case we believe the timber frame to be three to four hundred years old.

Main Timber Frame Walls

Traditional timber frame buildings work as whole units forming both the walls and roof and built in bays with infill timbers and panels originally with wattle and daub, although many are replaced with other materials such as brick and render as in this case (we would have to open the walls to establish what they were constructed of).



Timber frame

These buildings are typically listed and require care and maintenance above average standards. In this particular case we would refer you to the Executive Summary with regard to the timber structure and also the need to redecorate.

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Bolt to the foot of the vertical timbers



Plastic wood repairs to the timber structure



Stick on timber to right hand side extension

Timbers needs re-staining

Some of the timber needs re-staining. Traditionally this would have been in lime wash but this may look unusual with the adjoining property being black and white. Most people prefer the black and white style.

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



Timber needs re-staining

Infill panels

The brick and render infill panels are in need of re-decoration. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary regarding External Decoration.



Panels with moss - right hand side

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Wall footings

To the base of the walls we noticed there is a bedrock stone visible in some areas and brickwork in others. This plinth is built to help protect the timber sole plate that is at floor level. As you are on a sloping site there may have been deterioration as water passes from the top of the sloping site to the bottom. We would recommend that during the summer months investigations are carried out to the sole plate to check its condition.



Brickwork to the base of the property



Bedrock visible to the base of the property

Render

We always take a second look at the render as it may be hiding wattle and daub. We have carried out a tap test (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer). We found some hollow areas where the cracking is visible.



Hammer test



Loose render around the cracking

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ACTION REQUIRED: During the warmer months sections will need to be removed to check what is underneath and repair as appropriate. We would always recommend lime every time.

Painted walls

The walls will need painting. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary. Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly if there is high level work which may need scaffolding and which can be expensive.

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 traditional timber frame / render / brickwork / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber, metal or concrete lintel (the latter is because of the alterations carried out in the 1970's) 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 traditional timber frame / render / brickwork / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the traditional timber frame / render / brickwork / plasterwork would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

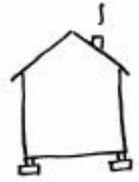
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FOUNDATIONS

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

Foundations

In a property such as this we would expect there to be limited foundations. We are advised by the neighbour that when they carried out their extension there is bedrock underneath. If this is the case it will have been built off this. We could see some rocks to the right hand side and it could be a very solid foundation.

Building Insurance Policy

A Building Insurance Policy should contain adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

It is the purchaser's 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 advice with regard to this.

Cracks identified within the property must be mentioned. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection; the Building Research Establishment recommends a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would always recommend that future purchasers remain with the existing insurance company of the property. 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. As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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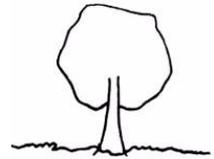
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TREES

FOUNDATIONS



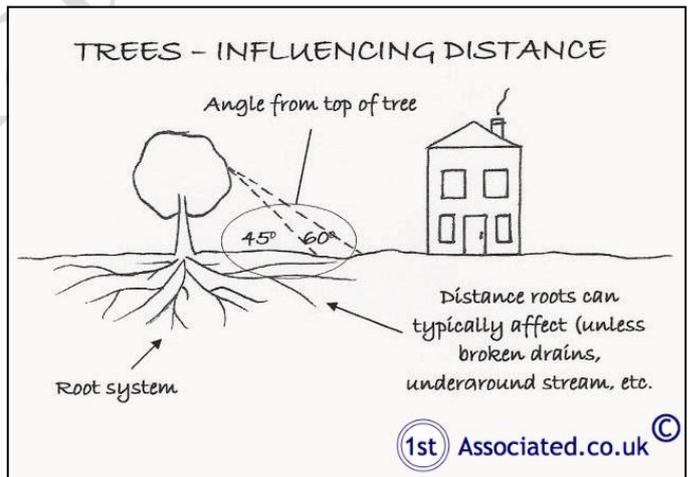
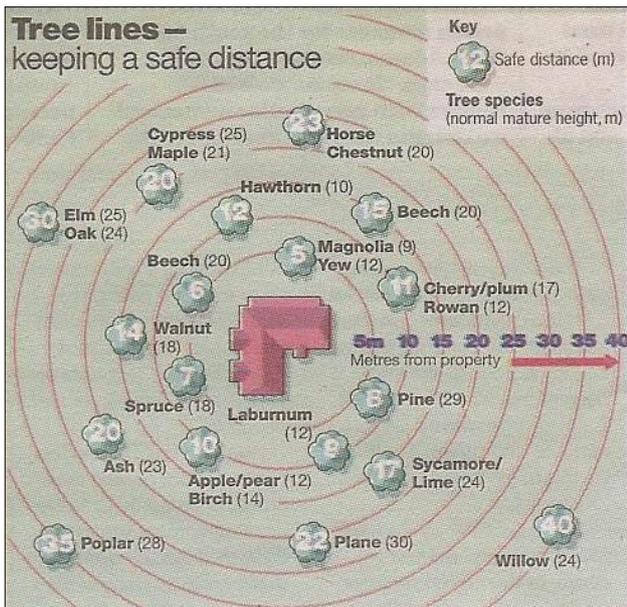
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There is a nearby tree within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would have a cup of tea meeting with the next door neighbour to understand their thoughts and ideas with regards to the tree and the problems it's caused with regard to their drains. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Willow tree



Influencing distance of trees to a property

Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

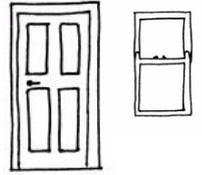
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS

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 and bargeboards

The fascias, soffits and bargeboards are timber. They are painted and stained and we would advise that they would benefit from redecoration as soon as possible.

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



Wet rot to barge board

Windows and Doors

The property has single glazed timber windows with secondary double glazing. We would specifically comment that on many of the windows the paint is starting to flake and there are a few areas where bare timber is visible. However after carrying out our knife test the windows are relatively solid.



Timber Window

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Knife Test

We have tested the windows by pushing a knife into a random selection. We generally tend to do the lower windows as access is easier. As stated above the windows were solid in these areas. However there is moss on the rear windows. Also the windows to the gable end, for example, do not fit and we were unable to open them as they appeared to be painted shut.



Knife test to window

ACTION REQUIRED: You may want to get the windows eased and adjusted



Moss on window sill



First floor window with moss growing on it



Window does not close properly

Secondary Glazing

We did note that the secondary glazing was a good quality (at the time it was installed) Everest secondary glazing.



Secondary glazing



Everest secondary glazing

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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 external decorations need redecoration. This should be carried out during the warmer months of 2013 and the sooner the better. Do not under estimate the amount of work required. It will best to contact the Local Authority before carrying out the work in case they have any requirements.

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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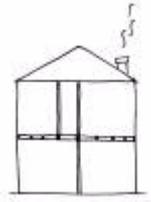
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INTERNAL



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.

Ceiling Construction

The ceilings have exposed timber beams, the main larger beams are known as the spine beams, with the inter-connecting ceiling / floor rafters.

Often these timbers are re-used timbers, used sideways as it was more practical but this leads to higher levels of deflection than usual. In this case there are some new timbers as well which again we assume were added in the 1970's.

The infill panels look to be predominantly plasterboard but there may be some original lath and plaster remaining. Without opening up the ceilings we cannot be certain of this.

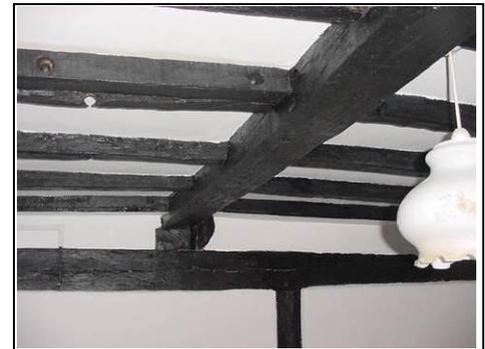
Generally the ceilings look in average condition.

Deflection

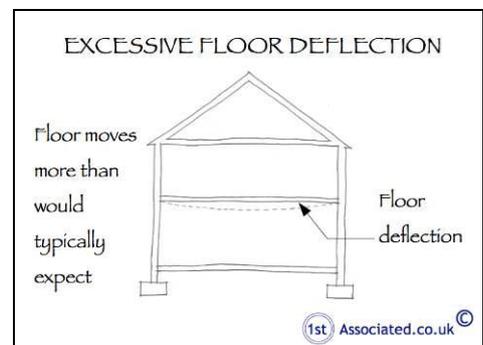
There is an above average level of deflection to the right hand bedroom. It is not unusual for this age and era of property but you do need to be aware of it.



Ceiling timbers in kitchen



Ceiling timbers in the lounge



Deflection to the first floor

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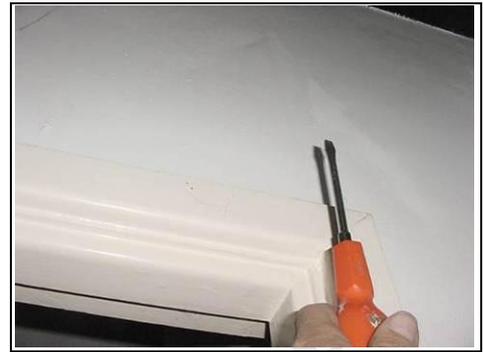
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Internal Walls and Partitions

The property has been built in bays as is typical with older timber framed properties. Internally we can see a modern plaster has been used. There are numerous areas of cracking which we believe to be due to the modern plaster being used rather than a lime plaster. We would have to take samples of the plaster to fully understand how it is made up.



Crack in plasterboard on first floor

Perimeter Walls

These walls are made up of the sole plate at ground level which gives the base of the wall and which can be affected by dampness. In the sole plate there are vertical timbers and cross framing. In this case we would comment that we are getting dampness readings to the central walls but not to the perimeter walls. We can see what looks to be bedrock and brickwork underneath forming a footing to the walls.



Crack in front right hand

Finally 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. No opening up has been carried out.



Crack at the top of the stairs

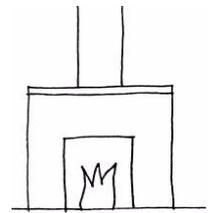
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES

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

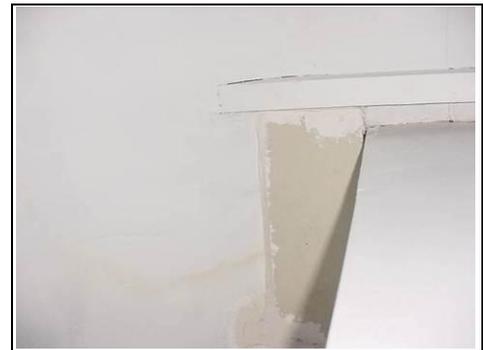
The chimney breasts are located to the central wall (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. From within the roof we would comment that the chimney breast looked relatively new, by this we mean the last fifty years. Again this may have been carried out with the 1970's refurbishment.



Lounge fire 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.



New plastering around the chimney indicating that some dampness is getting in

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

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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

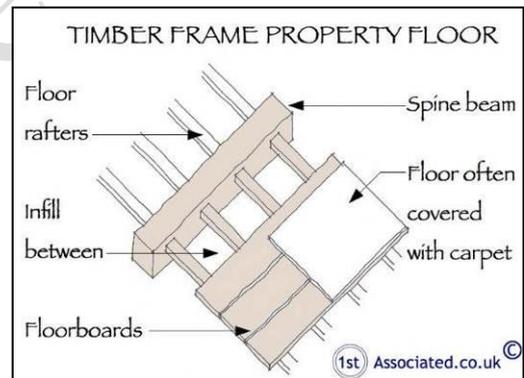
As with most older properties, the ground floor is not level and true.

We have assumed that originally the ground floor construction is tiles on earth or trampled earth. Over the years this has been replaced with various different finishes and now it seems to be a concrete finish.

Our investigation has been restricted due to us not opening up the floor or lifting the carpets/floor coverings.

First Floor

The first floor construction is exposed timber beams at ground level with the main spine beam and inter-connecting floor joists making the structural frame. This then is covered by floor boards.



Traditional timber frame floor

In the right hand bedroom there was more deflection than we would normally expect. We feel can feel within the floor a central spine beam which is where we have placed the ladder in this photo. As with older properties the floors are uneven and you may need to pack underneath the furniture. This is caused by general settlement and movement within the property over the year which is nothing unusual.



Ridge in right hand bedroom
Ladder indicates the position of the ridge

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

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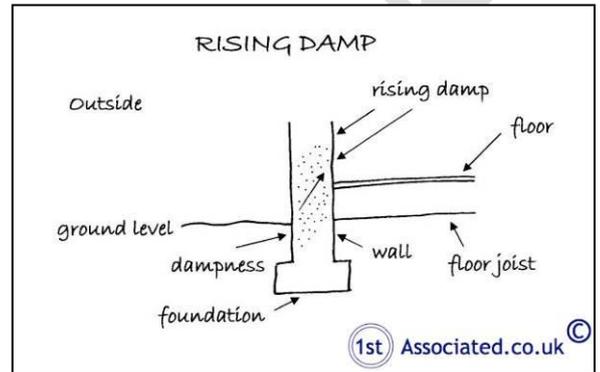


DAMPNESS

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

Rising Damp

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



Rising damp

A visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found minor dampness particularly to the central wall. We do feel that some of this can be attributed to the building being empty and unoccupied and the lack of air circulation but we do believe there is some dampness to the central wall.



Testing for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see the Executive Summary

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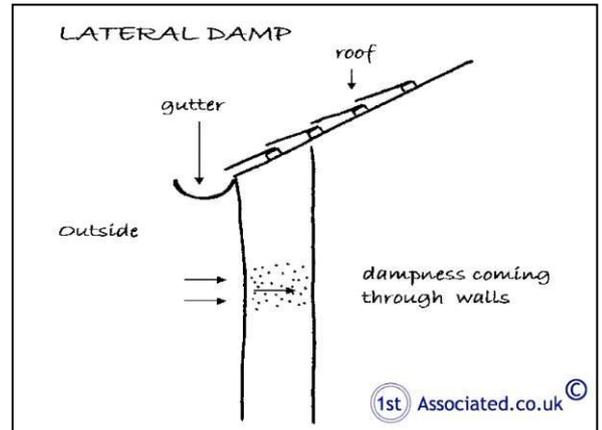
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Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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

We used a damp meter on the external walls.

We have found minor dampness; again we would attribute it to being empty. We would say it is in line with what we typically see for this age, type and style of property.



Lateral dampness

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



Testing for lateral dampness on the window reveals

Surface temperature

We tested the temperature readings internally. There was less than a degree difference between the high and low temperature at present. Nevertheless we feel when occupied the property may suffer from condensation. Please see the next section.



High level of 15.5



Low level of 14.8

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Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation. However the property is not being lived in and it does depend upon how it is utilised as a home. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas.

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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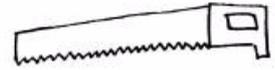
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INTERNAL JOINERY



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 ledge and brace doors with a varnish finish.



Ledge and brace door

Staircase

We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor in a worst case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.



Staircase with lintel above



Staircase is not lined

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Built in cupboards

We were pleased to see there were built in cupboards in the bedroom and also an airing cupboard which is also of benefit.



Cupboard in front left hand bedroom

Kitchen

We found the kitchen in as new condition. We were advised a new kitchen was fitted following flood work that had been carried out in the property and has not yet been in use.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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

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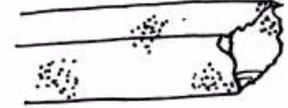
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

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

Wet Rot

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

We noted minor wet rot within the roof and possibly to the fascias and barge boards and some windows. We would be able to give a better comment in non-snowy conditions.

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 as well as the actual traditional timber structural frame. Within the roof we found some minor woodworm although we are not certain it is active. 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. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

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

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

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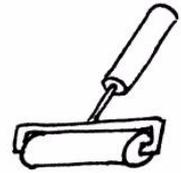
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INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

Internal decorations are in average condition and need freshening up.

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



This property was built a long time before modern methods of insulation were considered. We have only given real thought and consideration to the insulation of properties since the fuel crisis of the 1970's. 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, particularly with older properties, that they 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, particularly of this age, as it can lead to timber deterioration and other problems.

HIPs

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

Roofs

Although current regulations recommend a lot of insulation in the roofs (currently 300mm) this is not necessarily the best thing for a timber frame building as it can promote condensation and an ideal environment for woodworm.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend ventilation is added before further insulation is added. There is approximately 50mm of insulation on top of boarding of the roof. We would have to open up the boarding to know if there is insulation in that as well.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have. Also they are unlikely to have any insulation. In our experience this type of timber framed building needs to be kept constantly warm to provide a nice environment to live.

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Windows

The windows are single glazed with secondary glazing and therefore will have poor / reasonable thermal properties.

Services

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

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average for this age, type and style of property. There is the possibility of adding insulation to the roof but you do need to ventilate.

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

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

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

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

SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings are currently researching how best to insulate older properties and it is worth checking their website for the latest information at www.SPAB.org

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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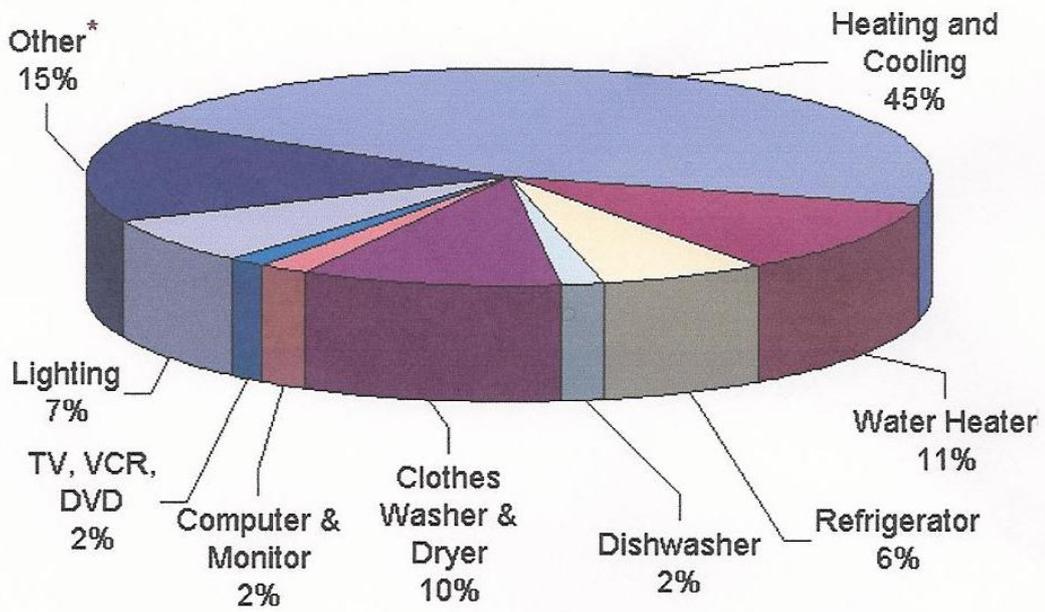
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What does my energy bill pay for?



*"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

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

Fire / Smoke Alarms

With older properties it is particularly important to have a good fire / smoke alarm system, as often they are built from many burnable elements.



Smoke alarm

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

ACTION REQUIRED: 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.

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.

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

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have not noted asbestos.

Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary regarding the warm air ducts.

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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 will be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

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ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the cupboard under the stairs. The fuse board looked relatively new. In an older property a defective fuse board can be particularly dangerous.



Fuse Board

Earth Test

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

ACTION REQUIRED: The Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend that when a property is changing occupancy a test and report is carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent. We are advised that there is an IEE certificate which can be viewed.



Earth Test

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

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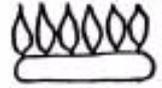
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GAS



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

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

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



Gas

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

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PLUMBING AND HEATING

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

Water Supply

The controlling stopcock is located under the sink.

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

Water Pressure

Water was turned off at the time of the inspection.

Cold Water Cistern

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

Plumbing

We are using this term to refer to supply pipes, wash hand basins, sinks, etc. Where visible it comprises of copper piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although some of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

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Heating

The wall mounted boiler was located in the airing cupboard/boiler room. It is manufactured by Worcester and we are advised is about four years old.

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.



Worcester boiler

Ten Minute Heating Test

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

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

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

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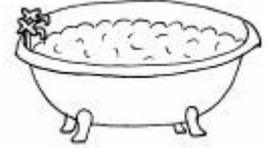
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BATHROOM



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

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

Separate W.C

There is a separate W.C on the first floor next to the bathroom.

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. as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

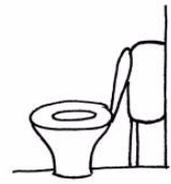
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MAIN DRAINS

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 the purchasers Legal Advisor/Solicitor 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.

We could not run cold taps as the water was turned off. We would normally carry out a ten minute test.

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

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

Manholes Defined

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

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One - Rear

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be full at the time of our inspection. However the water was turned off during the inspection.

From what we could see it is brick built.



Manhole is full

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

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Other manholes

The ground was snow covered at the time of our inspection and so there may be other manholes that were not visible.

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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

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

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

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OUTSIDE AREAS

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

PARKING/GARAGE



Garage

There is a garage to the rear of the property. It is always good to find parking space with a period property as they were built long before everyone had cars!

External



Front of the garage



Side of garage



Gates to the garage



Gutters discharging onto the ground

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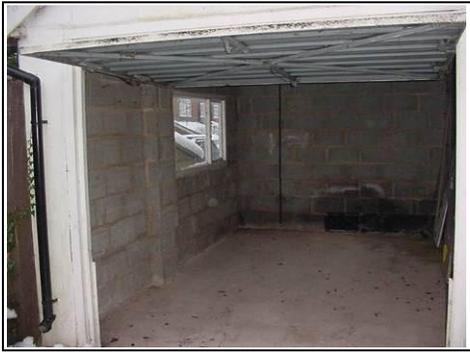
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Internal



General view of the garage



Inside the garage

Cracks to the garage

The cracks to the garage indicate there is some movement in it. A way forward would be for the existing owners to place an insurance claim and then the purchaser will then continue on with this insurance claim.



Crack in the floor follows the line of the building



Crack can be seen in the block work

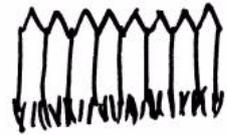
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EXTERNAL AREAS

Front Garden

This was covered in snow at the time of our survey.



Front Garden and gate



g. on fence

Rear Garden

Again the rear garden was covered in snow at the time of the survey.

This property is on a sloping site so please note our comments about how water travels in the Executive Summary



Rear Garden with shed

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

Often with older properties the boundaries are subject to negotiation and local practice. You do need to make sure that your solicitor is aware of the complications that can occur with older property boundaries.

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

We spoke to the left hand neighbours who were very pleasant and explained various things to us. They have lived in the property for many years.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

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

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

For and on Behalf of
Independent Chartered Surveyors

This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxxxxx

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

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WEATHER

It was cold and it had been snowing heavily for days prior to the survey and the weather did hamper the survey.

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

NOT LOCAL

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

EMPTY PROPERTY

The property was not occupied at the time of our survey.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited by the snow. We have not been able to open up the ground floor or the first floor. Also we were not able to access the roof space as we were not sure if it would take human weight.



Heavy snow

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. Enquires need to be made prior to committing to purchase a property. Please

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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.

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. Listed Building information
4. 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.

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

www.motleyfool.co.uk

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

www.rightmove.co.uk

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

www.zoopla.co.uk

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

www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

This is a very good website for establishing if the property is Listed and general information on British Listed buildings.

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French Drain

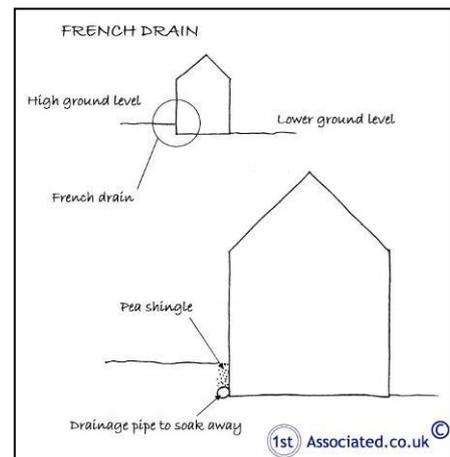
Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

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

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

What use is a French drain?

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



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

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French drains must be on a slope

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

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

The French drain system that we would recommend

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

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

The French pond!

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

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