

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Non-Traditional Pre-Cast Concrete House

South West England



FOR

Mr X

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of Date; we have now undertaken an independent Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on Date and we have had further discussions since that date and this is an update on our original draft survey.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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REPORT FORMAT

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

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

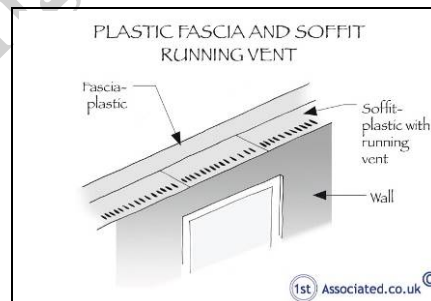
Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

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



Vented soffit board



Example sketch

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 (the roadside).

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property. Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey semi-detached property to the right side. It sits on a steep sloping site, sloping from the road.

To the front is a driveway and garden. The drive has been levelled out and there are retaining wall with steps down to give access into the property. The front gardens were covered with tarpaulin at the time of the survey.

There is access to the rear garden to the right hand side, where there is a half-built lean-to. The rear garden has been concreted over, compartmented into walled areas.

Non-traditional building

This is what we would term as a non-traditional building. There are many different types of non-traditional buildings. These are generally split into categories of:

1. Metal frame – a metal frame supporting the structure.
2. Pre-cast concrete - cast in a factory and then brought to the site.
3. In-situ concrete - cast at the site.
4. Timber frame – a timber frame supporting the structure.

Each of these main categories then has many, many different types.

Type of non-traditional building

When we met you advised us that you thought this was referred to as a No Fined building. We have since had discussions with X Council and the valuation company and your neighbours, who have been unable to clarify further the exact type of construction.

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Most probably the type of No Fines construction we tend to deal with is Wimpey No Fines, however from our discussions and from our database this type of non-traditional building does not seem to fit the type of property you have. We have therefore carried out a search on all non-traditional buildings that have been constructed by X Council, that have been recorded by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) database. This has resulted in a total list of 22 properties, which divide into:

1. Seven different types of metal frame buildings.
2. Eleven different types of pre-cast concrete buildings.
3. Four types of timber frame buildings.

It is very difficult to confirm exactly which type of building this property is as the building has external wall insulation, finished with a render and we cannot see the majority of the original building without opening up the property, with the exception of within the roof space.

We have been through the pre-cast concrete buildings that have been identified by the database search and cannot see any that are identified/known as No Fines construction. This may mean that this is a one-off construction that was carried out in the X area and not recorded.

The non-traditional houses that are in both the X Council and BRE searches are:

Costain P042
Reema Hollow Panel P101
Unity Type II P128

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend your solicitor specifically ask the local authority in writing if they can identify the type of construction, as this may get an answer more than a verbal/email request.

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Designated Defective

Of the pre-cast buildings that have been identified the majority are Designated Defective. We have put the list of Designated Defective properties in the Appendices.

List of pre-cast concrete construction listed on BRE database. One of them, the Costain construction, has not been listed by the BRE within the database mentioned:

POO3 Airey
POO39 Cornish Unit Type I
PO40 Cornish Unit Type II
PO42 Costain
PO94 Parkinson
P101 Reema Hollow Panel
P115 Tarran Temporary Bungalow
P127 Unity Type I
P128 Unity Type II
P130 Wates
P138 Woolaway

From a visual inspection of these Parkinson and Wates are most like the panel that we were able to see within the roof space.

Why is Designated Defective important?

It means there is no mortgage available on this type of property. We appreciate that you may be buying without a mortgage, however when you come to sell the property it will possibly need re-financing on it as it will not be possible from a mortgage, as we understand the data from today.

Wimpey No Fines

As discussed, the property we know most as No Fines is the Wimpey No Fines, with approximately 300,000 buildings built between 1940s to 1970s.

You advised you thought the property was built in 1955. This type of information will help X Council/existing owners/original owners identify the property type, which should be passed onto them.

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ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor needs to check and confirm all of the above and identify what type of non-traditional construction this house is with the existing owners.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1939-1945 | World War II |
| 1950 | The concept of artificial intelligence for computers was developed by Alan Turing (MOD) |
| 1952 | Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen at the age of twenty five. |
| 1954 | Roger Bannister breaks the four minute mile barrier. |
| 1958 | Ian Donald invents ultrasound to examine babies in the womb. |
| 1960 | The average house price in England was £2,500 |
| 1961 | Yuri Gagarin becomes the first man in space |

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



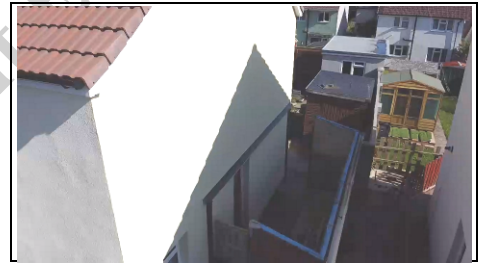
Front view of house and parking



Rear view



Front garden covered with tarpaulin



Right view
Aerial view – 360 photo



Front garden at high level,
covered with tarpaulin



Rear garden

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

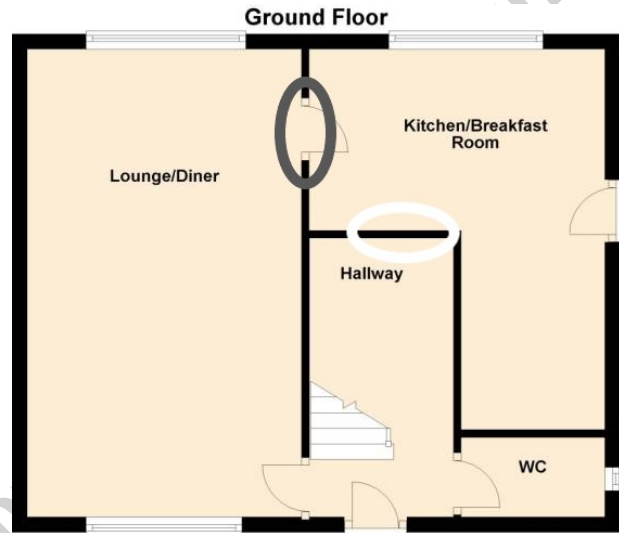
(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

NOTE: the plans below are for identification of areas only and other uses stated within this report and are not dimensionally correct.

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

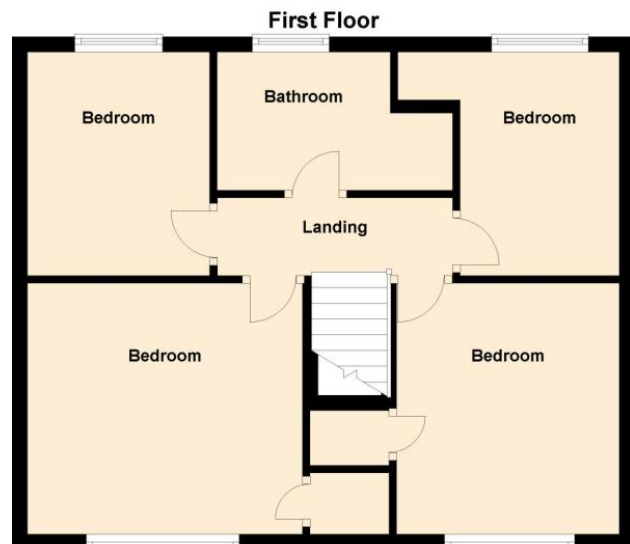
- 1) Central hallway and staircase
- 2) Front right WC
- 3) Left side reception room (with door blocked – black oval)
- 4) Rear kitchen/breakfast room (with new door opening - white oval)



First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Landing
- 2) Front left bedroom
- 3) Front right bedroom
- 4) Middle bathroom
- 5) Rear left bedroom
- 6) Rear right bedroom



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Outside Areas

The property sits on a slope. The front has a garden and driveway which are levelled off and there are steps down to get into the house. The gardens to the front had tarpaulin over them at the time of the survey.

There is access to the rear garden to the right hand side, where there is a half-built lean-to.

The rear garden has been concreted over, compartmented into walled areas.

The whole property sits on a sloping site, sloping away from the road at the front of the property.

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Ground Floor



Entrance hallway



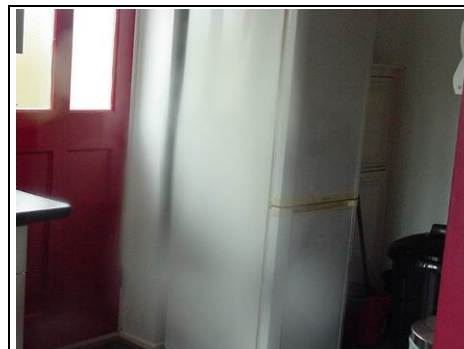
Cloakroom



Lounge



Lounge (where door has been blocked up)



Utility area

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First Floor



Front left bedroom



Front right bedroom



Middle bathroom



Rear left bedroom



Rear right bedroom

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	One brick finished chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched. You advised the roof tiles are Redland Renown Breckland Brown interlocking concrete tiles
Main Roof Structure:	Early semi pre-fabricated truss and cut timber roof with purlins
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic, to rear
Walls:	External insulation added, finished in a thin render. There is a half-built lean-to to the right hand side.
Wall Structure:	Limited view within roof space, believed to be a concrete panel
Fascias and Soffits:	Plastic, with vents, with part of the older timber fascias and soffits still remaining
Windows and Doors:	Plastic double glazed windows with trickle vents

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Internal

Ceilings:	Plasterboard or proprietary material (assumed)
Perimeter Walls:	Wet plaster and EWI (external wall insulation) (assumed)
Internal Walls:	Predominantly solid (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Solid under foot, assumed concrete
First Floor:	Timber boarding on timber joists, on metal corbels (assumed)

Services

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

Heating: There is a Worcester boiler located in the kitchen

Electrics: Advised the electric fuse board was fitted in Year. It is located in the kitchen

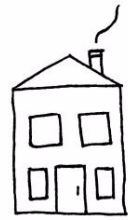
Gas: The consumer unit was located in the kitchen

Drainage: The manholes are located to the front right and to rear middle

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

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





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues. Although the exact type of non-traditional building has not been identified it does look like this is likely to be a pre-cast concrete system, which is designated as defective; please see our comments regarding this.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

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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 property has had various work carried out by the Council/their contractors over and above the original design. These we have divided these into:

1. Roof work.
2. External Wall Insulation
3. Fascias and soffits

We have detailed these more within the Bad Section of the report and although the alterations have been carried out, we would say that the jury is still out as to the long term effects of some of these alterations;

For example;

External wall insulation

Will it be beneficial or problematic with this type of building?

2.0) Generally non-traditional buildings can be purchased cheaper on a metre squared basis than traditional buildings. There are obviously difficulties with finding purchasers as some people are put off because this is a non-traditional building and some mortgage companies will not lend on it.

3.0) The property has off-road parking, with gardens to the front and rear, albeit sits on a sloping site.

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

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The Bad

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

1.0) Non-traditional building – the overview

You need to be fully aware that you are purchasing a non-traditional house that is Designated Defect. This following is an overview, but please also see our details throughout this report. There is a sample of included in the Appendices, but we can provide others if you so require.

1.1) Mass Building after the War Years

This house is of a non-traditional construction (as opposed to traditional brick, stone walls and tile and slate roof buildings).

Please see the Building Research Establishment (BRE) information sheets within the Appendices that give a better understanding by the BRE of these buildings however you should be aware that this information is dated and not regularly updated.

1.2) Mortgages on non-traditional houses

Getting a mortgage on a non-traditional house can be difficult and some lenders will not lend on this type of property. We do understand that your neighbours have a mortgage on their property.

We would add further that the lending criteria changes from time to time, which does mean that you may get a loan on this type of property and then at a later time the lending company may no longer want to lend on it, as the market changes and as mortgage companies managed how they wish to deal with a non-traditional house market.

This can affect you both when you are buying the property if you need a mortgage and also when you are selling the property, as much of the buying population needs a mortgage to buy a property. We would also add that much of the buying population seem to be put off by non-traditional buildings (as opposed to traditional brick and stone walls and tile and slate roof buildings).

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to be absolutely certain that you understand the risks of buying a non-traditional construction house.

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1.3) **What is a No Fines building?**

No Fines, as we understand it with Wimpey construction (which we appreciate this is not), relates to the cement mix of the panels that construct the building, which are sometimes known as large panel construction, where the large panels are joined together. This allows for quick construction and helped fill the need for building new houses quickly after the War years.

The standards that were used when these were built would not meet standards today and indeed have not done for some time, such as thermal efficiency, and many Councils and Housing Associations have carried out work to improve the standards of the buildings.

1.4) **Known problems with No Fines buildings**

The Building Research Establishment, which probably has the most data on non-traditional UK buildings publishes the following known problems on a Wimpey No Fines (the information sheet is in the Appendices) and we have used this as our basis/example, although this type of construction has not been recorded by the BRE database as being built in the X area.

We have summarised the Wates Ltd. construction known problems and we have summarised two other pre-cast concrete non-traditional buildings built in the X area in the Appendices.

Wates Ltd

This has the following known problems:

1. Corrosion of reinforcement and structural concrete.
2. Cracking of vertical joints between panels.
3. Cracking and spalling of string bonding units.
4. Spalling around apertures.

1.5) **Is the concrete structure sound?**

The risk with buying this type of property is if the structure is sound or not. The only way to be one hundred percent certain is to open up the structure / take core samples.

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Note; you can only be sure in the areas which have been opened up. This will need a builder to open up areas of the property and when this takes place we recommend the holes are one metre square, so a good look can be obtained and we do not recommend using endoscopes or borescopes as we feel the view is limited on these.

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property has not been identified we would recommend it is opened up in three areas to try and establish which non-traditional system this is.

1.6) Key areas on non-traditional buildings

In our experience key areas are generally at ground level, first floor level and roof level where the structural frame is joined together which should be checked for deterioration. This could be caused by water discharging onto the base of the property to condensation in the higher level structural frame.

For example;

As your property sits on a sloping site it could be affected at ground level.

1.7) Dangers with Non-Traditional Construction

Most non-traditional buildings of the major categories that have been identified by the Building Research Establishment have known weak areas but we (the whole of the construction profession) are still in the investigation stage/finding out stage with non-traditional buildings.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would draw your attention to the fact that this building is likely to be Designated Defective.

1.8) Local Authority / Housing Association owned

As we understand it, this house is currently in the ownership of the Local Authority/Housing Association and they normally have fairly good records of what has happened to the property over the years. We understand that you have approached them and obtained information under your rights for information.

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We appreciate you have had problems with them with regard to the roof work and external wall insulation, however we would recommend the following:

ACTION REQUIRED: We would ask the Local Authority for:

1. Information and details with regard to the original construction.
2. A history of repairs.
3. Details of any work that has been carried out, specifications if possible, together with as built information.

We are aware that you have already received information in relation to the roof, fascias and soffits and the external wall insulation, which we discuss during the course of this report.

2.0) The Roof

You advised that this roof is pitched with Redland Renown Breckland Brown interlocking roof tiles. This sits onto a timber roof structure.

The roof has a dry ridge, often used for venting. The problems with this type of roof is that it can get condensation and as such it needs suitable ventilated.

We understand you had problems having the roof covering installed.



Main roof
Aerial view – 360 photo



Dry ridge on roof
Aerial view – 360- photo

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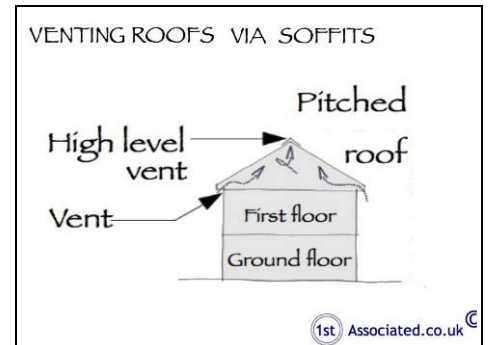
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ACTION REQUIRED: Your Solicitor needs to speak to the Local Authority to see if there is any form of Warranty/Guarantee with regard to the roof.

Also you need to get information with regard from the Local Authority with regard to how these roofs should be appropriately ventilated to help reduce/stop condensation.



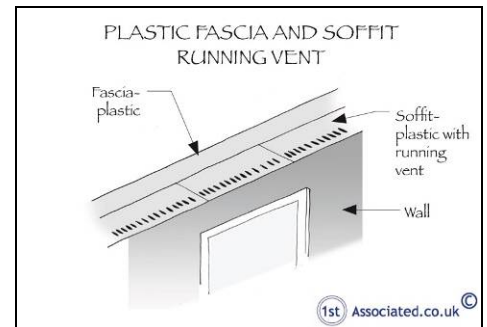
Vents into roof via fascias and soffits

3.0) Fascias and Soffits

The Local Authority have replaced the original fascias and soffits with a system that has a running trickle vent into the soffit boards to the roof space, allowing air movement. In our experience with retro-fits they tend to get blocked by the insulation already in the roof unless pre-formed plastic vents are used between the soffit vents and the roof void.



Plastic soffits with vents fitted in many short sections



Vent in soffit

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the Local Authority whether pre-formed vents have been used to ensure that air goes from the running vent in the soffit boards to the roof space.

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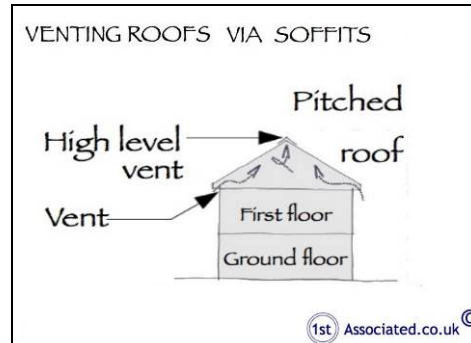


Problems with fitting of the fascias and soffit boards

We understand this is the third time the plastic fascias and soffits have been fitted. They were original fitted over the original ones, which had deteriorated from what we understand. They have been replaced but are in small sections.



Timber to next door



Roof vented through soffits

ACTION REQUIRED: The Local Authority to provide details of how they fixed the fascias and soffit boards.

Damage to the wall from the fixing of the fascias and soffit boards

As we understand it from what you have told us, there has been damage to the external wall insulation when the soffits were being fitted and you are currently pursuing a claim against the Council with regard to this.



Damage to external wall



Close up of damage to render
(client's photo)

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ACTION REQUIRED: Continue pursuing the Local Authority to get a solution that allows the external wall insulation to have a guarantee.

Also we think it is important that the air vents are genuinely venting the roof.

Please see the Fascias and Soffits Section of this Report.

4.0) **External wall insulation and right hand lean-to**

We understand you have had external wall insulation under the Warm Homes initiative, installed under a contract run by the X Council. This has involved the installing of an insulation board with a thin render.

We understand you have concerns with regard to the guarantee on it, due to problems with contractors and materials used and the right hand lean-to.

Right hand lean-to

From what we understand:

1. There was an agreement between the Local Authority and yourself to allow the completion of the lean-to.
2. This was not communicated to the contractors and you advised the lean-to was torn down.
3. Agreement was made to have provision for the lean-to to go back up. This involved the provision of wall plates and timber posts fixed to the original wall, meaning there is a gap in the insulation.

As we understand it, the situation is now that the manufacturer will come to review installation of the external wall insulation to confirm whether there is a guarantee or not.

From what we can see, the timber is causing a break in the insulation, often known as a cold bridge, which as you commented could affect the guarantee.

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Cold Bridging Defined

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



Cold bridging / thermal bridging

Right hand lean-to



Half-built lean-to to right side of property



Where the lean-to should be



Wall posts for lean-to



Flashing nailed into the external wall insulation (EWI)



Slight hairline crack just above the flashing

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To complete the lean-to as we see it, you will need to either to build a completely self-supporting separate structure, that is then abutted to the main building, and the insulation be replaced, subject to the manufacturer's agreement, or have a manufacturer approved detail that allows you go fix through the insulation.

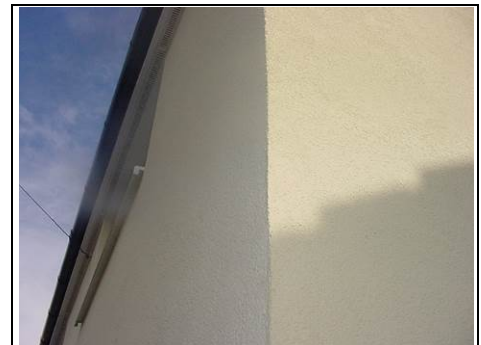
Finish to the External Wall Insulation

We understand from discussions with you that various contractors have visited the property to carry out different work and that you feel the following problems have occurred:

1. A mixture of different standards have been applied.
2. Different materials have been used.
3. There has been a general lack of communication between the Local Authority, the main contractor, sub-contractors and yourself.



Front with a mineral fibre finish
Aerial view – 360 photo



Difference between the two materials, with the mineral fibre finish to front and silicone finish to gable end

We understand the manufacturer of the External Wall Insulation (EWI) system is in the process of inspecting this property.

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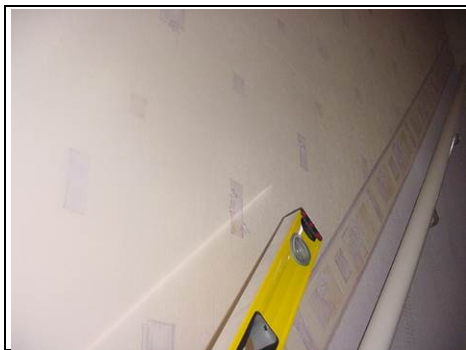
ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you ask for a written report with regard to the External Wall Insulation (EWI) manufacturer's findings, together with them advising what they think is the best way forward, so they can give you a Guarantee and what they feel is the best way forward if they are not prepared to give you a Guarantee.

We assume you would then have to have discussions with X Council/main contractor (Willmott Dixon/Fortem).

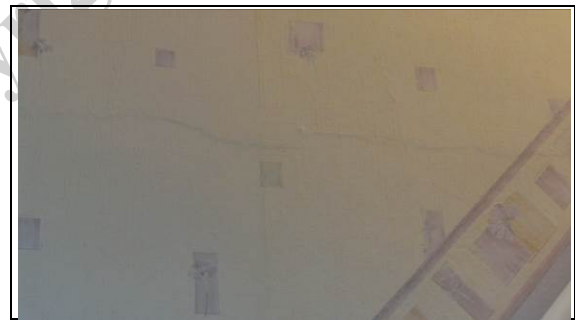
Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

5.0) Movement internally

You advised that there has been some movement to the staircase wall and also the wall to the left hand bedroom (adjacent to the semi-detached property) has dropped.



Staircase wall



Movement seen through marks on wallpaper to staircase area (client's photo)



Movement in front left bedroom



Checking for alignment on door in front left bedroom

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You advised that the only alterations you have carried out to the property was the moving of the kitchen door, however you advise that the adjoining property had alterations including a loft conversion (we noted there was a roof window to the front of the property), a rear extension and also internal alterations.

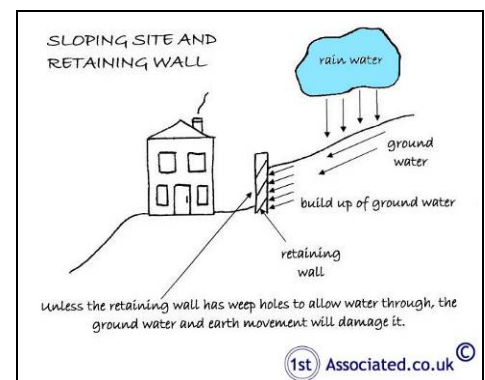
We feel that these alterations could have affected this property but without going inside the adjacent property it is hard to be 100% certain.

You may be able to find out more information with regard to the alterations next door by looking at Planning Permission and Building Regulations Approvals.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to check and confirm if the adjoining property had appropriate Approvals for the work.

6.0) Sloping Site

The property sits on a sloping site and as such is integrally less stable than one sitting on a level site. This in turn means it can be affected more easily by any alterations carried out by adjoining properties.



Retaining walls right side

The front retaining wall is helping to hold the driveway in place. The wall is part breeze block, which is not really the best material for a retaining wall as they absorb dampness and can deteriorate due to dampness. We noted cracking on this wall.

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Driveway is level with retaining wall at the end



Crack to right side retaining wall around drop from front driveway it

Retaining wall left side

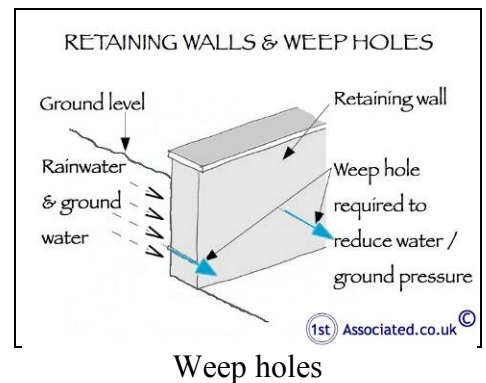
There is also a retaining wall to the left side, which is the garden side. It is built in a similar manner and we also noted a crack in this wall.



Crack in left side retaining wall

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend adding weep holes to the retaining wall. This will then relieve the pressure behind the walls and in due course repair the walls.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds to add weep holes. Then it will depend upon what you want to do. Please obtain quotations.



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Tarpaulin

We feel the tarpaulin to the front of the property will cause dampness to get under the building, which in turn will lead to other problems, such as black mould and a poor health environment.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend the tarpaulin is removed immediately.



Polythene sheet/tarpaulin at front by base of the wall

Please see the Outside Areas Section of this Report.

7.0) Asbestos

Asbestos was used in this era of property and needs to have been removed. Asbestos was a common popular material, used almost as commonly as wood. Many local authorities have replaced these over the years.

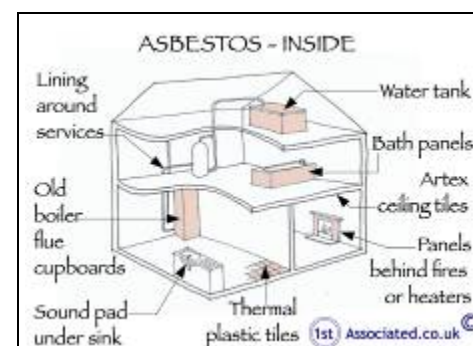
The generic sketches show typical areas where asbestos can be found in these properties

Our insurance company requires us to advise we are not asbestos surveyors and advises us to recommend asbestos surveyors are instructed and that you have your own asbestos survey carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor to specifically ask in writing if all asbestos has been removed and for the Local Authority/present owners to provide Asbestos Reports. If not you will need to carry out your own Asbestos Survey.



Asbestos - outside



Asbestos - inside

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We would always recommend any asbestos is removed from a property as it can not only be dangerous, as well as affecting the value of the property.

ANTICIPATED COST: It depends if the Local Authority/present owners identify if there is still asbestos in the property or that they can satisfactorily prove all asbestos has all been removed.

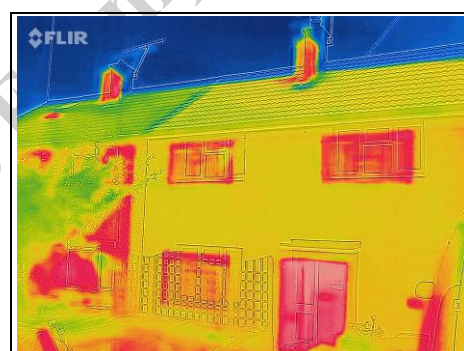
Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

8.0) Interstitial Condensation/Dew Point

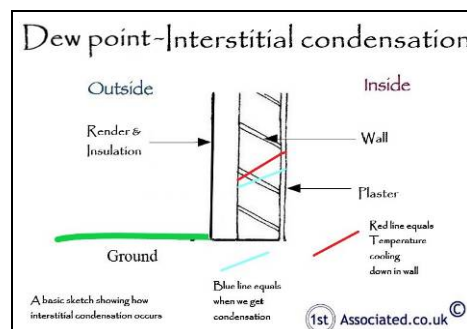
The property had had an external wall insulation added. Our concern with this is it can create interstitial condensation within the structure, sometimes known as dew points, as the heat from within cools down when it meets the coldness from outside and interstitial condensation is created, which is condensation within the structure.

Buildings can be particularly prone to this when they are kept warm for long periods and have a fair number of people occupying a property.

We noted you have black mould in the rear right bedroom and also at the time of our inspection the extract fan was not working in the bathroom (due to the fuse being removed).



Front of the property with the red being heat coming through the windows and front door



Dew point/interstitial condensation

Interstitial Condensation Defined

This is where moisture is present within the structure of a building. The more moisture it contains, the bigger the vapour pressure and the smaller amount of moisture, the less vapour pressure.

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ACTION REQUIRED: Local Authority/contractors to provide information relating to calculations they did with regard to the interstitial condensation/dew points that could occur within the wall structure.

You also need to make sure you have a good balance of heat and air movement/air circulation. We would always recommend that you remove any humidity from source, such as in bathrooms, kitchens and any rooms used for drying clothes internally. Things such as regularly opening windows can help, together with keeping a general level of background heat. However, we feel that you do also need to have large good quality humidity controlled extract fans to draw out the humid air from the property.

Your Solicitor to further investigate with the Local Authority/owners that research was carried out.

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

Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

9.0) **Bathroom floor**

You advised us of bathroom floor problems.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you get a qualified plumber to check all the fixtures and fittings to see if any of them are leaking immediately and ask for a report, which we would be more than happy to comment on.

ANCICIPATED COST: Few hundred pounds for a test and report; please obtain quotes.



Bathroom floor

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Services

10.0) Dated electrics

The electrics are located in the kitchen. We were advised they were fitted in 2012. However they are not in a metal fire resistant casing.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you upgrade the fuse board to one in a fire resistant metal casing.



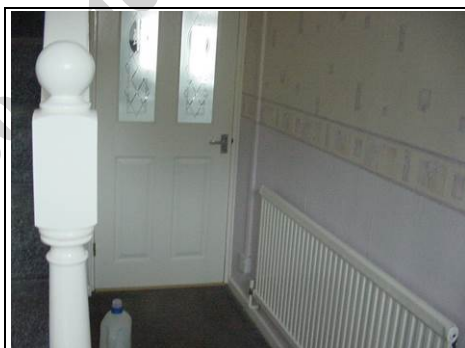
Fuse board

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

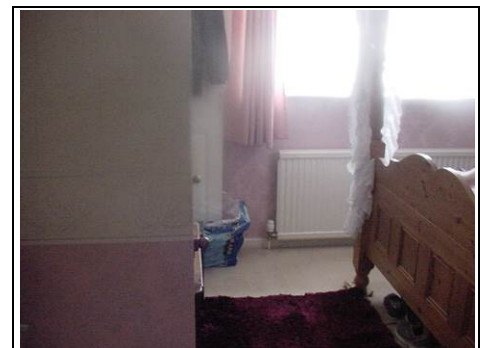
ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £500 for a test and report plus any recommended work and £250 - £500 for a new fuse board; please obtain quotations.

11.0) Single panel radiators

The radiators are single panel radiators. You may wish to upgrade these to double panel convection radiators, ideally positioned under windows which would also allow better air circulation around the property.



Single panel radiator in hallway



Single panel radiator in front left bedroom

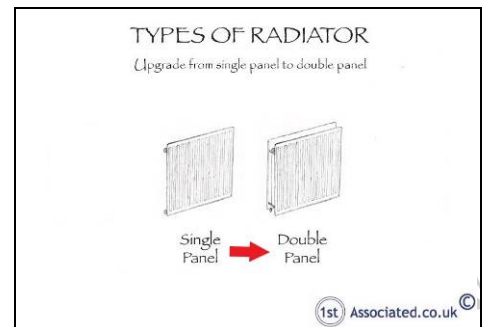
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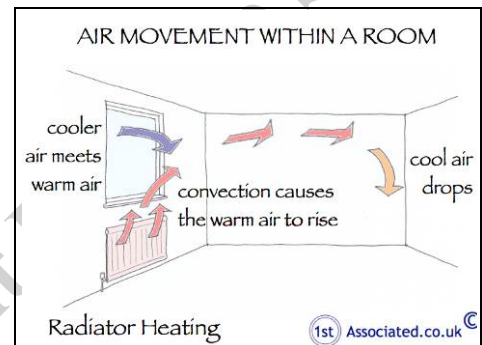


ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you replace the radiators with double panel convection radiators as we feel this would improve air circulation, particularly with the number of people living in the property, to help towards reducing the chance of black mould.



Replace single panel radiators with double panel convection radiators

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



Please see the Services Section of this Report.

Radiator Heating
Air movement from radiator under window

The Ugly

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

You need to fully understand what you are purchasing

You need to be absolutely certain that you understand you are buying a non-traditional building and the associated inherent issues that can go with it.

In addition to this, you have outgoing negotiations taking place with regard to problems that have occurred when the Local Authority have carried out work to the property.

Further to this, next door has carried out alterations and improvements to their property that may have affected your property.

All of this needs to be taken into consideration, as well of course this being a non-traditional building.

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Hidden problems

You explained your concerns with regard to:

1. The slow work carried out on getting the roof work done and the associated problems it caused.
2. The problems with the fascias and soffits being fitted incorrectly and the original fascias and soffits remaining.
3. The problems with the external wall insulation, both with it being damaged when the fascias and soffits work was being carried out, and your concern with regard to the lean-to, and your more general concerns with regard to the quality of workmanship and there possibly being no. Warranty/Guarantee for the external wall insulation.

We feel that you need to consider how these things would affect you in a worst case scenario, which we would be more than happy to talk through with you.

Future mortgage market

We would also comment that the future mortgage market may not accept this type of property and this would limit the market you could sell to and as such is likely to reduce the value of the property.

Future change in standards

Further changes in standards to how we require houses to be may make these non-traditional buildings in difficult to sell in years to come, or even possibly cash sales only if they become unmortgageable.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

When you buy this property you will still need to carry out basic maintenance associated with it, such as clearing the gutters, checking they are not leaking and that they fall towards the downpipes etc.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you budget for general maintenance on the property.

With a non-traditional building you may also have deterioration occurring that there is little that you can do about as it is part of the structure;

For example:

1. *The rusting of the reinforcement within any concrete structure.*
2. *The reinforcement of any tie bars, or indeed the non-installation of them originally.*

Services

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

Electrics

We are advised the electric fuse board was installed in 2012 and is located in the kitchen.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you replace with a fuse board in a metal fire resistant casing.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommend a test and report is carried out. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

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Heating

There is a wall mounted Worcester boiler located in the kitchen. As you have lived in the property for some time you should be aware of the testing and overhauling that has taken place and whether regular maintenance has occurred.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you place a contract for regular maintenance of the boiler with an approved heating engineer.

Drainage

We lifted the manhole covers to the front right and rear middle which were free from blockages at the time of the survey. As you live in the property you will no doubt be aware of how good the drains are.

The only true way to find out the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report to establish the condition of the drains. In this age of property there have often been leaks over the years and these leaks could also relate to deterioration that we discussed in the building, where you feel the walls have moved.

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.

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

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Purchase Price

We understand you will be receiving a discount on the property from the Right to Buy Scheme.

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of Building Costs

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

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

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

There is a lot to think about with regard to this property.

You need to be absolutely certain that you understand you are buying a non-traditional building and the associated issues that can go with these inherent problems and also when you come to sell the property. We would be more than happy to discuss any items further with you.

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

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

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

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AERIAL VIEW – 360 PHOTOS

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



Drone and mono-pod pole



Main roof and chimney
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Undulations in front render
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Chimney
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Join with next door's roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~



Rear roof
~ Aerial View - 360 Photo ~

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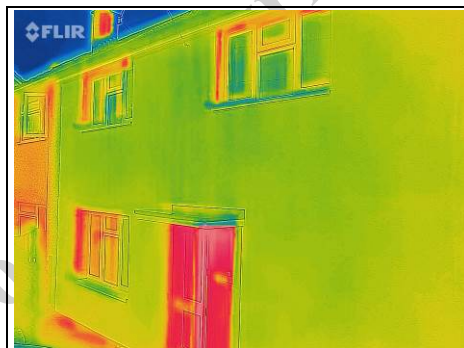
THERMAL IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

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

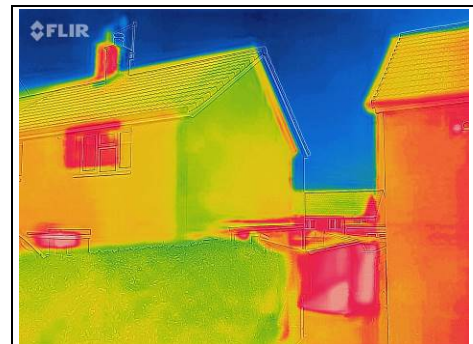
(Key to the colours; blue = cold, red = warm, green/yellow = cool)



Front of property showing heat coming through windows and door



Close up of heat coming through windows and open front door



Right gable end

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MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

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

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

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

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



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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS

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



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

Chimney One, located to front middle

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style.

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



Chimney
Aerial view – 360 photo



Chimney

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



Flaunching

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Within the roof we can see there has been water damage around the chimney. We understand this is historic, based upon our discussions with yourself about how you had problems getting the roof renewed. We would nevertheless monitor this area.



Water damage around chimney



Water damage

ACTION REQUIRED: Monitor the area around the chimney and check and ensure it dries out. If not, it is likely you have problems with the flaunching, the flashing or the pointing and these will need attending to.

You will also need to have discussions with the Local Authority with regard to this work if there is still a problem.

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.

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Party Walls

The party wall relates to shared items, such as chimneys and the firewalls. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Etc. Act 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.

Specifically in this case such as the firewall between the two properties.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks 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 and/or aerial photographs. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

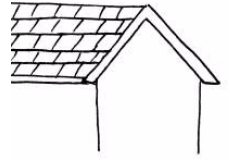
Please also see Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

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ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration. The property may or not have an underlayer dependent upon the age of your property, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in two areas:

- 1) Main roof
- 2) Front porch roof

Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and you advise it is clad with Redland Renown Breckland Brown interlocking concrete tiles. The roof has a dry ridge. From ground level, and also via aerial photography, this looks in average condition considering the roof's age, type and style.

We do find that this type of roof weathers.



Main roof
Aerial view – 360 photo



Dry ridge on roof
Aerial view – 360- photo

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Junction of roofs

The junction of the roof where your roof meets next door's roof does not meet perfectly and there looks to be a flashing between the two areas.

This needs to be monitored in case it leaks. There are many ways of joining new roofs to old, generally we would recommend a verge detail as opposed to a flashing detail like this where the roofs do not meet.



Junction in roof between your property and next door

ACTION REQUIRED: Periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.

Monitor junction in roof between your property and next door's.

You also need to obtain a guarantee from whoever carried out the work or the Local Authority.

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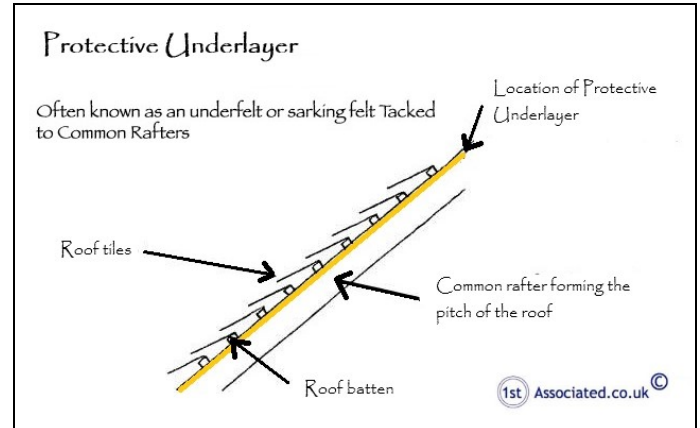
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Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

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



Protective underlayer

When we inspected the loft space we found a modern breathable protective underlayer. This type of underlayer has been used since 2002 and is meant to allow the roof to breathe and to minimise condensation, which is becoming more prevalent in highly insulated properties.



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

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regard to ventilation of this roof in the Executive Summary, as we feel better ventilation via trickle vents in soffits that work would reduce the chance of condensation.

The manufacturers of the roofing material should also give information with regard to this. You should ask for this information from the Local Authority/contractor who carried out the work.

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Front Flat Porch Roof

There is a flat ledge over the front entrance, which we are advised is GRP (glass reinforced plastic) fibreglass roof, which has been carried out with a lead style finish.



Porch roof

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and/or aerial photographs. Flat roofs have been inspected from ground floor level and from standing on the retaining wall area.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately fifty percent of the main roof properly from ground level 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

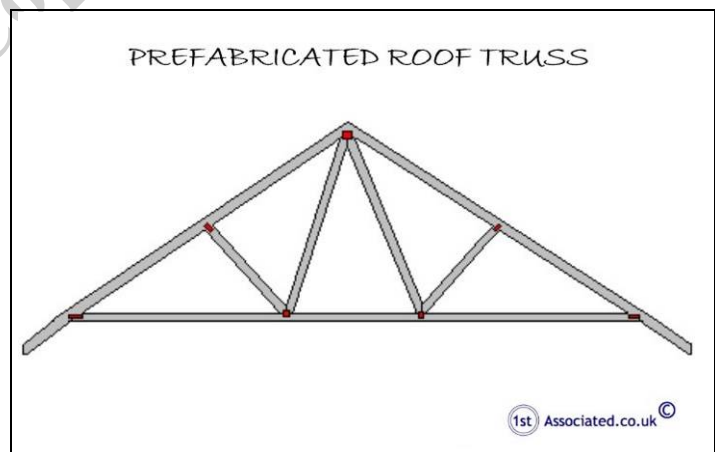
Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via a loft hatch located. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

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

Roof Structure

The adjacent sketch shows a pre-fabricated timber truss roof. You have the forerunner of this type of construction within your roof, which is a mixture of pre-fabricated roof and traditional roofing construction.



Pre-fabricated timber roof a fore-runner of the pre-fabricated timber roof

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Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

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

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition for its age, type and style, with the exception of the staining on the timber which we believe relates to roof problems.



General view of roof



Dampness to timbers



New timber visible and dampness to timbers around chimney



Dampness on timbers around chimney



Rendered chimney



Dampness to is the purlin and common rafters, we believe from the chimney

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ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our earlier comments.

Fire Walls

The property has one No Fines firewall located to the left side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewalls are also Party Walls.

Fire Walls Defined

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



No Fines to next door property

Ventilation

No ventilation holes were noted into the protective underlayer at high level. As mentioned elsewhere within this report, we are concerned that the soffit trickle vents are not giving ventilation into the roof, as they are blocked by the fibreglass.

ACTION REQUIRED: Use a pre-formed plastic vent to the edge of the roof, or whatever the manufacturer recommends, to allow a through flow of trickle air via the soffits. This will involve adjusting the fibreglass in the roof.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Insulation

Please note that too much insulation can also lead to condensation in this type of building, which can be problematic.

See the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.



Lifting insulation

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Electrical Cables

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

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

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

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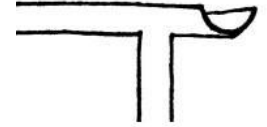
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GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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 gutters and downpipes are plastic. They are in average condition for their age, type and style.



Plastic gutters

Awkward detail

We noted an awkward detail to the front guttering where it joins with next door's gutter, which we think may leak. This is because of your property having the external wall insulation and next door's not.



Awkward detail to front where the guttering meets next door's gutter

Downpipes

The downpipes appear to be located on the neighbour's side of the property to both the front and rear, which means you have fairly long runs of gutter so you need to ensure that these are regularly cleaned.

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Rear downpipe on next door's property with long run of gutter



Rear downpipe on next door's property with long run of gutter

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

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

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Soil and Vent Pipe

The property has plastic soil and vent pipes to the rear.



Soil and vent pipe to rear

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining 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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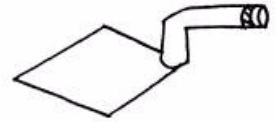
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WALLS

Address, South West England



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.

Non-traditional building

We would reiterate that this is a non-traditional building and as such although it looks like a traditional house it behaves differently.

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

Further enquiries required

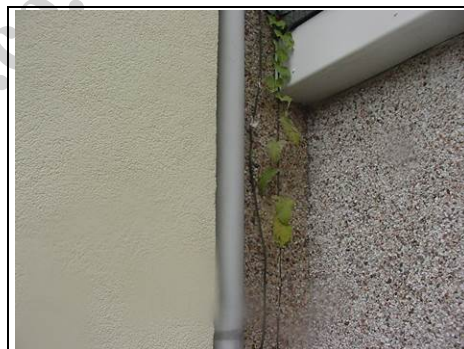
You need to make further enquiries with the present owners as to the type of non-traditional building this is. We can then provide more detailed information, particularly in relation to the historic problems that have been found by the BRE (Building Research Establishment).

Render

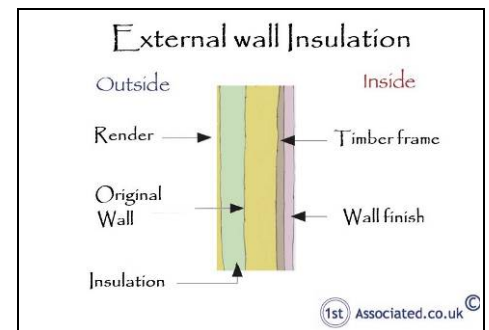
The external walls are now finished in an insulation and a thin render finish, by thin we mean less than 10mm. These insulation systems use a layered insulation with reinforcement mesh within it.



Insulation with render finish
Aerial view – 360 photo



Thin render insulation



Concrete structure with EWI
(external wall insulation)

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor needs to specifically ask the owners what system was used and explain your concerns with regard to the quality of work and the different materials used.

Your solicitor should ensure you have a written confirmation that there is an insurance backed guarantee in relation to the work.

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Render Detailing

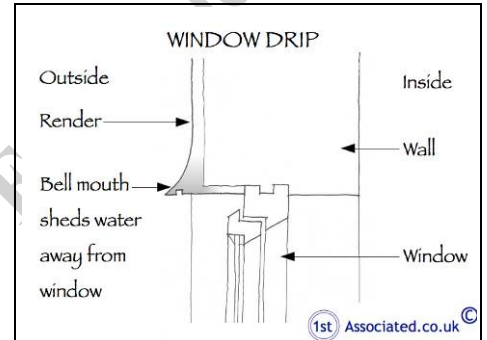
You can normally tell whether a property has had an insulation added as well a new render due to the detailing, such as where it joins the neighbouring property and around the windows and to the detail at the base and roof level.



Render detailing above windows

Window Drip Detail

Traditional render would usually have a drip detail. Generally we are finding there is no drip detail on modern thin rendered systems.



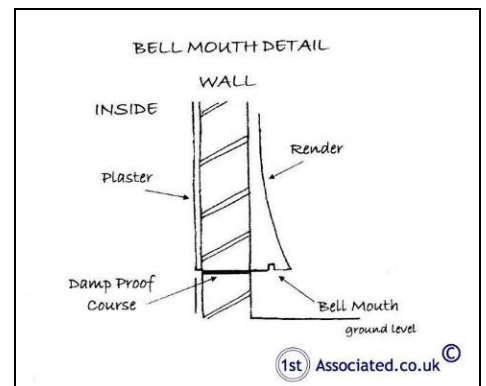
Window drip

Bell mouth to base of property

Equally a traditional render would usually have a bell mouth to the base of the render and we are finding no drip detail.



No bell mouth to base of render



Bell mouth detail

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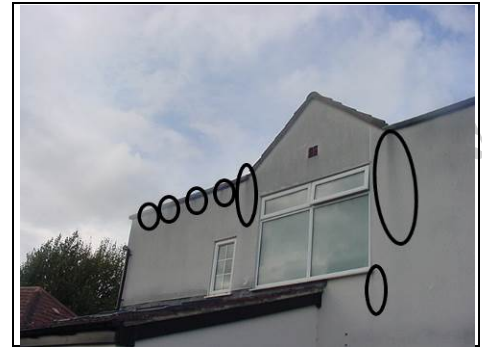
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Finish of render insulation

You need to check to see if this render is meant to be externally redecorated or if other types of maintenance are required.

Our concern with this type of render is the pattern staining that can occur on it which can make it look unsightly, in our opinion.



Example of pattern staining
(not your property)

Cold Bridging

Cold bridging is usually found where colder elements are within the property. The whole of the concrete construction would normally be considered areas where you can get cold bridging. We would add to this that where timber has been added on the right hand side to give you the ability to secure your lean-to (in theory) this is an area where you could get further cold bridging, which can result in black mould, such as can already be seen in the corners of the property.

Cold Bridging Defined

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

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Internal wall construction

Originally this would have been on a timber batten system with a plasterboard/proprietary boarding. Without opening up your specific property we cannot be 100% certain, as there are many variations on non-traditional buildings.

ACTION REQUIRED: The Local Authority can identify exactly which non-traditional building this is. Then we can use Building Research Establishment literature for guidance, but ultimately opening up the walls is the only way to confirm their construction.

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 render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the render / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the render / plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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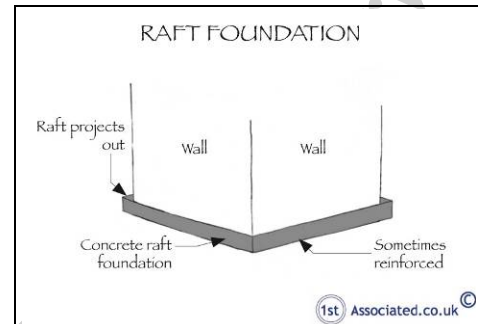
FOUNDATIONS

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

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a raft foundation, similar to that in the adjacent sketch.

If by speaking to the current owners you can identify the exact type of non-traditional building this is then we will be able to research this further on our Building Research Establishment data base.



Raft foundation

Building Insurance Policy

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this.

Cracks

Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection; the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

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

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Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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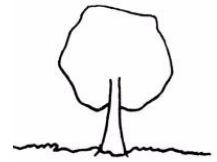
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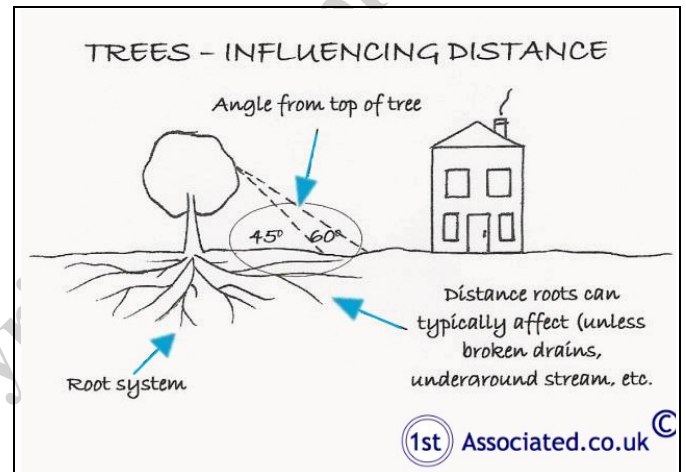
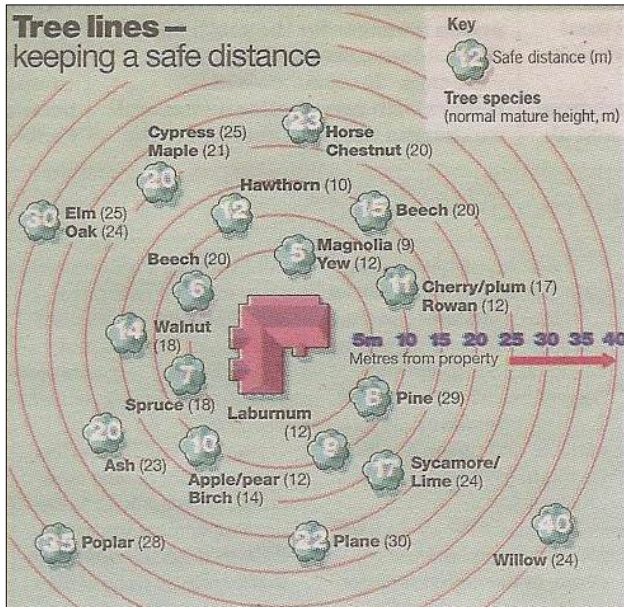


TREES



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

There are no trees within what we would term as influencing distance but you do need to speak to your insurance company as they may have a different interpretation for insurance reasons.



Influencing distance of trees to a property

Influencing Distance Defined

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

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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DAMP PROOF COURSE

The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case it would have been built in the original construction and cannot now be seen due to the insulation.

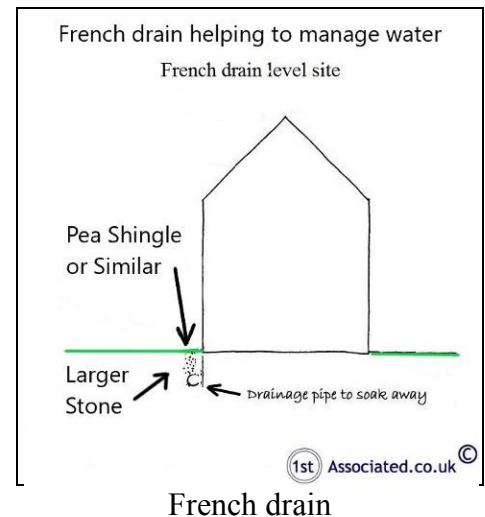
Our concern is that the polythene sheet/tarpaulin to the front will cause dampness under the property.



Polythene sheet/tarpaulin at front by base of the wall

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend it is removed immediately. If water is not draining away from this area then we would recommend a French drain is added, which is taken to the manhole to the right hand side of the property.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,500 to £3,000 for a French drain; please obtain quotes.



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

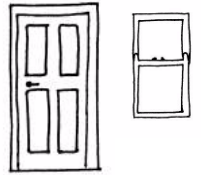
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

Fascias and Soffits

The fascias and soffits are plastic, with a running vent in the soffits. We are concerned that this vent is not venting into the roof.

We also understand that the original timber fascias and soffits were over-clad. These vented soffits have been cut into smaller sections, indicating issues. They have also damaged the External Wall Insulation (EWI) caused when carrying out these works.



Vented soffits

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

We recommend a section of the fascias and soffits are opened up to check the construction, this will be the only way to be 100% certain.

ANTICIPATED COST: For opening up a section £500 to £1,000, plus any scaffolding costs; please obtain quotes.

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Windows and Doors

The property has plastic double glazed windows with trickle vents, which generally look to be of an average quality.

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

The underside of the sill detail is relatively thin and therefore you need to take care not to damage it.

Transferable Guarantees

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

Trickle Vents Defined

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

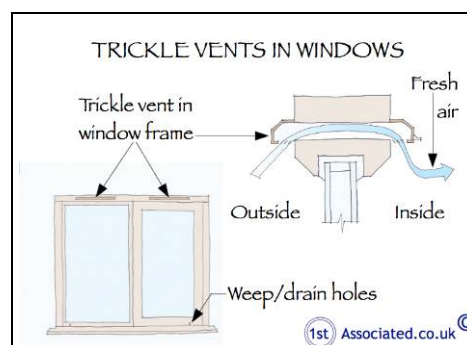
Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section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



Trickle vent



Thin sill detail door



Trickle vents

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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.

Generally you would have had traditional painted areas, such as the fascias and soffits and windows when they were timber and gutters and downpipes, when they were cast iron, which have now been replaced with plastic.

ACTION REQUIRED: You do however need to clean the plastic periodically otherwise it may deteriorate; usually every three to five years, or more if it gets dirty sooner.

You need to check and confirm whether the render needs externally redecorating or any other maintenance.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceilings

Where we could see the ceilings from the roof space we could see that they are plasterboard or proprietary boarding.

Plasterboard Defined

The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.



Plasterboard or proprietary boarding noted in roof space

Proprietary boarding Defined

Proprietary boarding are one off specially manufactured boards commonly used in years gone by, which are now popular again although in a different format.

Textured painted ceilings

Some of the ceilings have fan pattern textured paint (commonly known by the trade name Artex).



Fan pattern textured painted ceiling



Fan pattern textured painted ceiling

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Internal Walls and Partitions

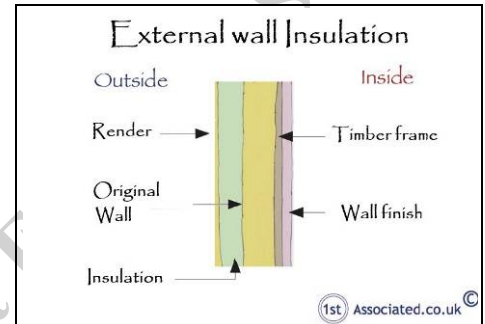
These are we believe predominantly solid, probably concrete or blockwork.

It is impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess as this is typical in this type of construction.

Perimeter Walls

The original perimeter wall are concrete, which have now had an insulation covering with a render finish.

We obviously cannot be one hundred percent certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.



Concrete structure with EWI
(external wall insulation)

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish us to comment further we recommend the wall is opened up in three areas, approximately one metre square. If you contact us we will identify exactly where we would recommend opening up in this particular case.

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

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

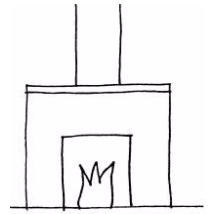
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

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

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use.

Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.



Fireplace in lounge

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

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

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

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

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FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

The floors are solid under foot, assumed concrete.

First Floor

We have assume these are timber boarding on timber joists, on metal corbels.

Bathroom floor

You advised us of bathroom floor problems.

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



Bathroom floor

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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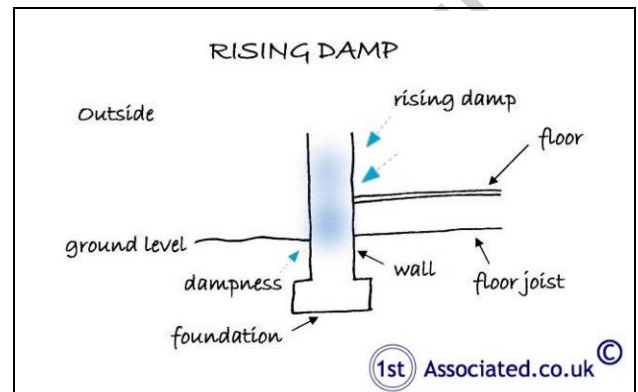


DAMPNESS

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 the walls are dry lined so we were unable to get damp readings, although dampness may be occurring in the property. We have not way of checking it without opening up the walls.



Testing for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100% certain that the property is in good condition you will need to open up the walls. We normally recommend three areas of approximately one metre squared.

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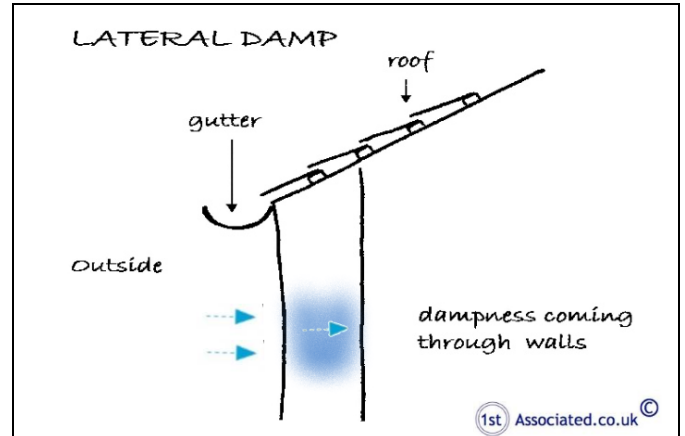
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Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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



Lateral damp

We used a resistance meter on the external walls. Again the walls are dry lined so we were unable to get readings.

ACTION REQUIRED: See our comments in the earlier dampness section about opening up the walls.

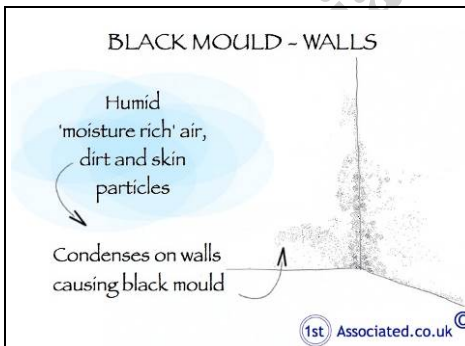


Testing for lateral dampness

Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were signs of condensation in the form of black mould in the rear right bedroom and bathroom.



Black mould



Black mould to corner of rear right bedroom



Black mould in bathroom

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Condensation often depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. You need to have a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

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

We could see that a relatively new fan have been fitted in the bathroom.

ACTION REQUIRED: If these extract fans are not suitable we would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans are added to the bathroom, kitchen and any rooms used as drying areas.

Also see our comments with regard to the tarpaulin externally, which we think could be adding dampness to the property and should be removed.

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

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

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INTERNAL JOINERY



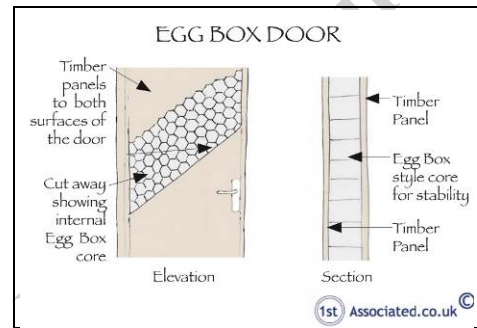
This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.

Doors

The doors are modern painted pressed doors (often known as egg box doors).



Painted pressed door

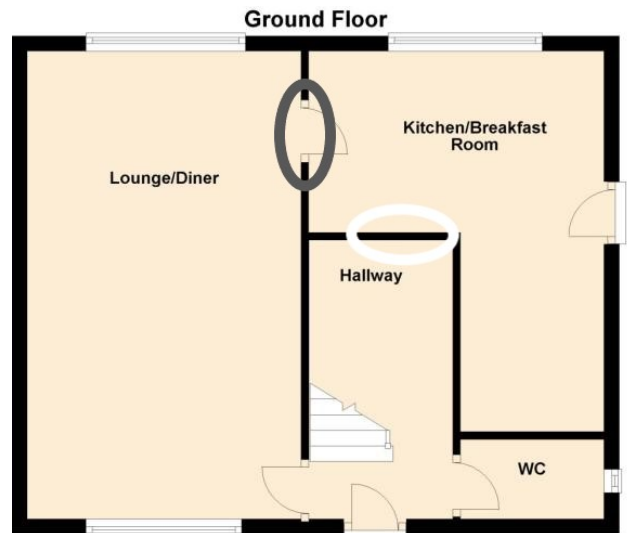


Plasterboard or proprietary boarding noted in roof space

There is a blocked up door to the rear of the lounge, which used to access the kitchen and we assume an opening up of the door to the end of the hallway. The plan below shows door blocked up (black oval) and wall removed (white oval).



Blocked up door



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Staircase

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

Cracking to staircase wall

You were concerned about the cracking in the staircase.

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

Kitchen

We found the kitchen in average condition, subject to some wear and tear as one would expect.

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.

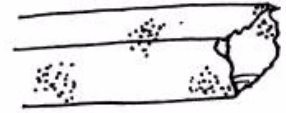
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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.

As this is a part concrete building, which has also had much of the original timber replaced, the likelihood of dry rot and wet rot that causes structurally significant damage is considerably reduced, however it does have a timber roof and we still do check for dry rot and wet rot.

Dry Rot/White Rot

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

We have not visually seen any significant dry rot during the course of our inspection within the roof.

Wet Rot/Brown Rot

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

We could see some staining to the timbers in the roof and there is, we believe, some minor wet rot in this area. It needs further investigation but does not look to be structurally significant.

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Woodworm



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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term ‘structurally significant’ damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers. We would comment in this instance that there are no problems.

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

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

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INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

Internal decorations are in average to below average condition. Please see our comments with regard to the black mould.

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY



Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically using insulation not only in the roof but also in the walls, floors and windows and more recently considerable work has been carried out on how efficient boilers are within properties. Care has to be taken that properties are not insulated disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.

Zoopla (and others may do similar) show an energy assessment of how much typical energy bills will be on a property. We have not had feedback on how accurate this is as yet however we feel it is an interesting step forward in looking at energy efficiency of a property, although there are all sorts of arguments as to how the energy efficiency calculations are carried out.

Thermal Imaging

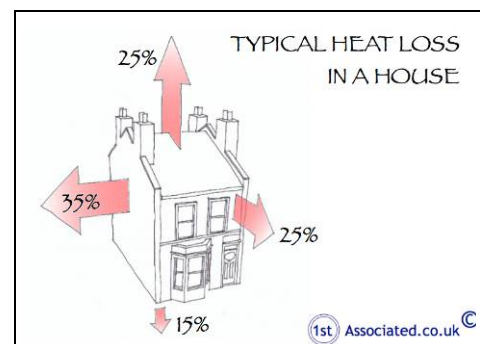
We would comment that the adjacent photo shows the heat loss is through the window and open door.



Thermal imaging of front of property

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this case there is about 100mm to 200mm and could be increased, although you do also need to ensure there is ventilation in the roof otherwise it will cause condensation.



Typical heat loss

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

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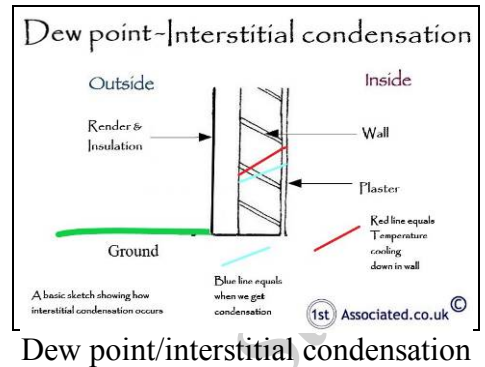
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Walls

The walls are a mixture of the original concrete panel construction, with an insulation over the top.

ACTION REQUIRED: Speak to the owner/contractors as regard to what thermal value the walls now have. Also, please note our comments with regard to interstitial condensation and dew point in the Executive Summary.



Windows

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

Services

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you ask the owners for a record of how often the boiler has been serviced and also when the electrics were last tested and checked.

Summary

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

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

[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

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

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

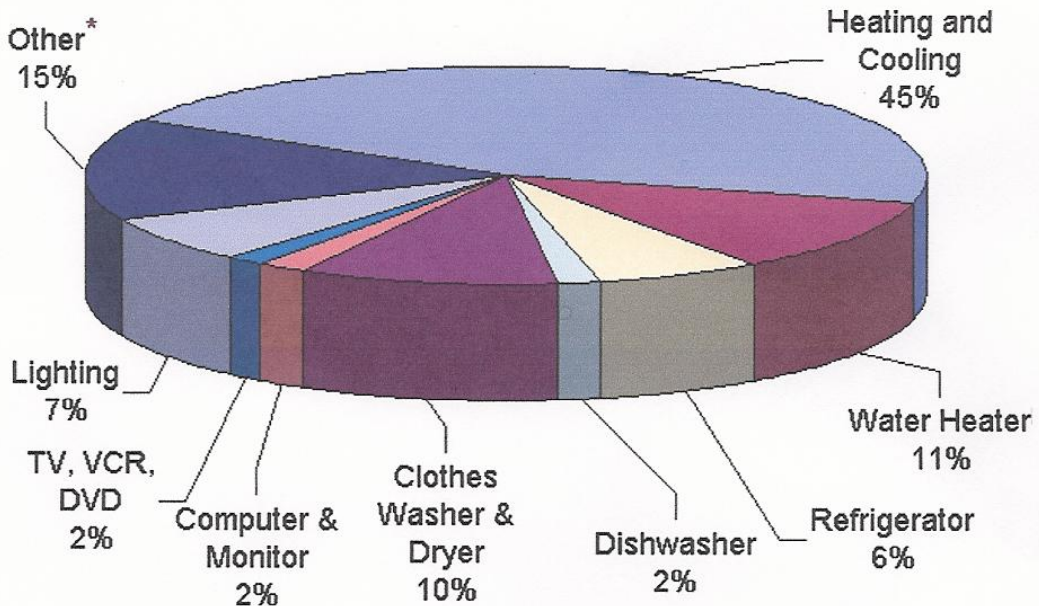
*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C
MacKay – can be viewed on YouTube*

HIPs

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are required before a sale completes. Please note we have not seen the Energy Performance Certificate.

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



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

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OTHER MATTERS



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

Security

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

Fire / Smoke Alarms

Some battery operated smoke detectors were noted. We are advised that the smoke alarms are wired to the mains and are fitted with rechargeable batteries, which last 10 years. We recommend these are checked regularly.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend for your own safety a hard wired fire alarm system that feeds the smoke alarms direct (rather than via batteries).

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,000 to £3,000, depending upon the difficulty of installation.

Insurance

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

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

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Asbestos

In a property of this era asbestos was popular. Originally it is likely to have been to the roof and fascias and soffits and possibly cladding internally, such as ceilings and ductwork.

It is always best to have an asbestos certificate from the existing owners, confirming there is no asbestos.

Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the UK relatively recently. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

Our insurance company require us to advise we are not asbestos specialists and recommend you have an asbestos survey carried out by a specialist asbestos company.

ACTION REQUIRED: The owners need to confirm in writing that there is no asbestos and also provide an Asbestos Report. If this is not available if you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out yourselves.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

ANTICIPATED COST: There should be no cost for getting the information from the existing owners, for carrying out an asbestos survey expect costs in the region of a few hundred pounds; please obtain quotes.

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SERVICES

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

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

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY



We have identified some websites which we believe are useful with regard to Broadband:

<https://www.broadband.co.uk/>

Advises whether there is phone line broadband or Superfast or Ultrafast broadband in an area.

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/>

Allows you to check broadband availability, check mobile availability and run a speed test.

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ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the kitchen. We were advised the fuse board was fitted in 2012.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you replace with a fuse board in a fire resistant metal casing.



Fuse Board

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Earth Test

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



Earth test

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

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

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

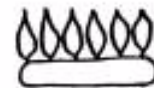
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GAS



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

We believe that the property has mains gas, the consumer unit is located in the kitchen.

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 meter in kitchen

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

Carbon Monoxide

We are advised there are carbon monoxide alarms in the property above the log burner.

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

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PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

As you live in the property we assume you know where the controlling stopcocks are.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you do not know where the controlling stopcocks are your Solicitor as one of their enquiries should ask the owners to specify where it is.

It is important that its presence is established in case of bursts or leaks.

Water Pressure

We assume as you live in the property you are happy with the water pressure.

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.

Hot Water Cylinder

None noted.

Plumbing

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

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Heating

The wall mounted Worcester boiler was located in the kitchen.

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



Worcester Boiler

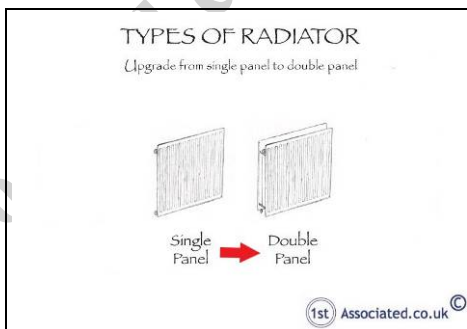


Flue for boiler

Ten Minute Heating Test

As you live in the property we assume you are happy with the level of heating.

We did note some single panel radiators and you may wish to upgrade to double panel convection radiators.



Replace single panel radiators with double panel convection radiators



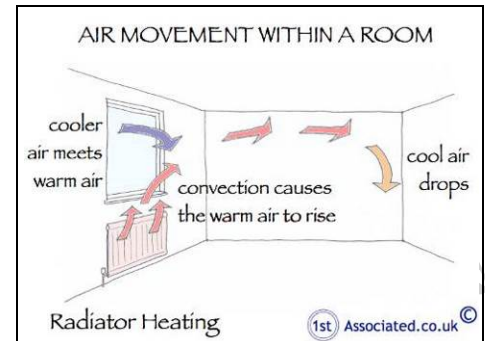
Single panel radiator in hallway

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ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you upgrade to double panel convection radiators, preferably positioned under windows for good air movement.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Air movement from radiator under window

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

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

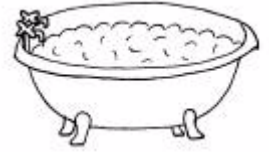
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BATHROOM



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

WC

There is a WC to the front right off the hallway. It is in average condition.

Bathroom

The property has a three piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC.

At the time of our inspection the bath panel was removed and there was damage to the floor and black mould to the wall.



General view of bathroom



Damaged floor



Black mould to corner of wall



Bath panel missing

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ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding black mould and extract fans.

Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of your DIY on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

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MAIN DRAINS



The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.

It is assumed that the foul drains from the property discharge into a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

We normally run the cold taps but as you are living in the property, and you did not mention any problems during our question and answer session, we assume the drains are running freely.

We have lifted the manhole covers; see below and there was no signs of blockages at the time of our inspection.

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 two inspection chambers / manholes.

Manholes Defined

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

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Inspection Chamber / Manhole One, located to right hand corner

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

From what we could see it is brick built.



Manhole to right corner of property

Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two, located to rear

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

Again, from what we could see it is brick built.



Rear manhole

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

Drains are normally shared in a property of this age as this was common practice in this era of property.

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

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Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal. In this era of property they are likely to be combined/shared drains which are where the foul water and the surface water combines. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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

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OUTSIDE AREAS

Sun Map

The Sun Map shows the sun's path as it travels around the property at a specific date; the date can be seen at the very bottom of the picture. The arrows show the sun's position using a 24 hour clock face around the property.



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PARKING



There is parking to the front right side of the property. It is on built up ground, as the property sits on a sloping site.

There are retaining walls, which we noted cracking to both sides.



Driveway drops away top right hand side



Retaining wall around drop from front driveway



Close up of crack

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

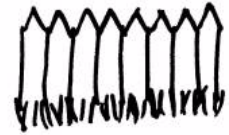
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EXTERNAL



Front Garden

The front is paved and on a sloping site. There was tarpaulin to the front garden at the time of the survey.

We noted a crack to the retaining wall to the left side.



Tarpaulin to front left

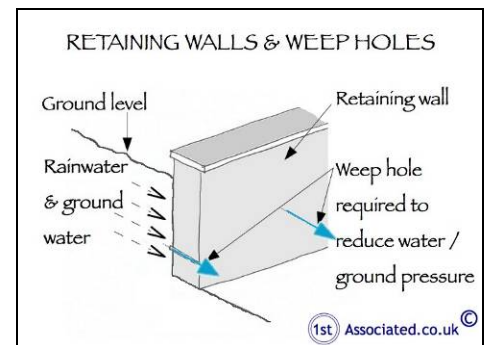


Crack in front left side retaining wall

ACTION REQUIRED: Add weep holes to the retaining walls and repair cracks to all retaining walls.

Remove all the tarpaulin immediately as we feel it will cause dampness to get into the building.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Weep holes

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Rear Garden

The garden is concreted over, with various walls separating it.

This is not a traditional lawned garden and the concrete may hold water which could add to dampness in the property.



Rear Garden



Walled area

Boundaries

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to check and confirm.

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

We would normally chat to nearby neighbours, but in this instance we have not.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - ii) Certificates confirming chimneys have been swept
 - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Confirmation of what type of walls the property has.
 - v) Confirmation with regard to the over-cladding/External Wall Insulation.
 - vi) Amendments/removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - vii) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - viii) Drainage location, maintenance and repairs.
 - ix) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - x) Rising damp treatments.
 - xi) Asbestos
 - xii) Boiler and central heating installation and maintenance.
 - xiii) Electrical test and report.
 - xiv) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - xv) Have there been any structural problems referred to insurance companies, any insurance claims, monitoring or underpinning, etc.
 - xvi) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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Address, South West England

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

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed or indeed any that have not been discussed!

Please do not hesitate to contact us on 0800 298 5424 or send an email directly to whoever produced the report.

For and on Behalf of
Independent Chartered Surveyors

This Report is dated: Date

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

APPROVALS/GUARANTEES

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

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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.

WEATHER

It was a showery autumn day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey, other than getting some rain drops on the lens of the camera.

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

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

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

NOT LOCAL

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

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OCCUPIED PROPERTY

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

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited as:

- 1) We did not have a full view of the roof due to the insulation covering the ceiling joists and general configuration of the roof.
- 2) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.

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Address, South West England

- 3) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.

THANK YOU

We thank you for taking the time to meet us during the survey.

BUILDING INSURANCE

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

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

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

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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

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APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. Client's Photographs
4. Correspondence
5. Contact Information
6. Timeline
7. Sources of Information
8. BRE Search – Wimpey No Fines
9. No Fines Companies
10. BRE Search – Characteristics
11. BRE search – Non-traditional buildings built by X Council
12. List of Designated Defective Non-Traditional Buildings
13. Condensation and Cold Bridging 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 good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

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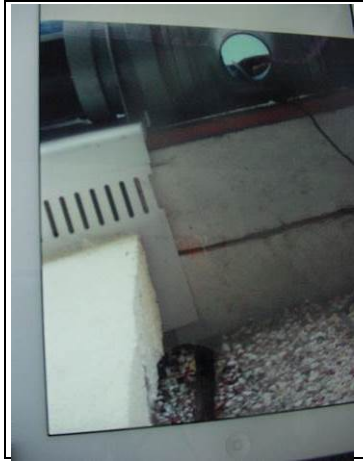
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Photographic Record supplied by client

Fascias and soffits



Trickle vent from fascias and soffit not allowing air movement into roof



Deteriorating timber fascias board

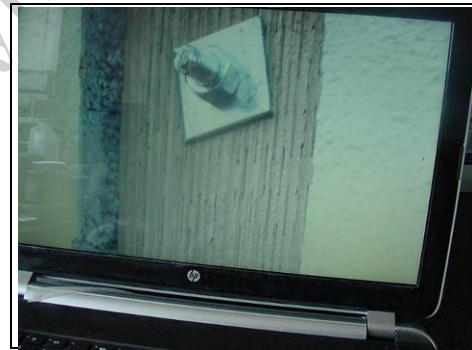


Damaged fascia board where mastic has been added

Walls



Rate Avon fixing the wall plate



Bolted in wall plate



The forming of the drip detail on the side of the property



Roll of green reinforcement mesh



Red reinforced mesh in use with an applied coating on it

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Correspondence

Correspondence letter sent to X Council concerning unfinished External Wall Insulation (EWI) works.



Letter

CONTACT INFORMATION

Company: Willmot Dixon, now operating under the name of Fortem
(Carried out the EWI work)

Address: Eden House, 82 Macrae Road, Eden Office Park, Bristol BS20 0DD

Tel: 0117 934 9214

Website: www.willmott Dixon.co.uk

Company: X Ltd
(Carried out the roof work)

Address:

Tel:

Company: X (external wall insulation installers)

Address: HEAD OFFICE:

Tel:

Email:

Website:

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Company: X
Address:
Tel:
Email:
Website:

Company: X
Address:
Tel:

TIME LINE

This has been based upon emailed information from the client dated Date

DATE	DESCRIPTION
X	Client asked X Council Home Ownership for information about what type of non-traditional structure this is.
X	Client asked the Valuers for information about what type of non-traditional structure this is.
X	Client asked for information from the neighbours about what type of non-traditional structure this is.

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Sources of information

Our source of this investigation of non-traditional houses has been produced from our database, by examination of Building Research Establishment (BRE) material on traditional houses and a visual inspection.

Wimpey No Fines Houses

Wimpey No-Fines


Manufacturer: George Wimpey & Co. Ltd

Designer:

Period built: 1940s-1970s

Number built: 300,000

Alternative names: Butterfly
Butterfly No-Fines
Fortwell
Gatehead Butterfly
Gatehead No-Fines
No-Fines
Wimpey
Wimpey WSM



IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

Bungalows and 2-storey semi-detached and terraced houses
Medium pitch hipped or gable roof covered with tiles, or flat or shallow valley roof covered with bituminous felt or asphalt.
External walls of render throughout, or to front and rear walls and flank wall of brick.
Precast concrete corbel to gable end eaves.
Some dwellings have front bay windows.

NOTES FOR SURVEYORS

Vertical cracking of no-fines concrete external walls.
Horizontal cracking of render above window drips.
Scarcity and corrosion of wall ties to brick cladding.
Low to high rates of carbonation of dense aggregate concrete ring beams.
The system was also used for flats.

CONSTRUCTION

Substructure: Concrete strip footings. Brick under-building (1). Concrete slab, DPC.
External walls: Rendered (2) 10' no-fines RC (3) with horizontal tie reinforcement (4). Dense RC eaves beams (5). PRC lintel (6) with projecting reinforcement above openings. Timber wall plate (7).
Separating wall: 10' no-fines RC with tie reinforcement.
Partitions: Timber stud lined with plasterboard.
Ground floor: concrete.
First floor: Timber boarding on timber joists on metal corbels (8).
Ceilings: Plasterboard.
Roof: timber rafters, purlins and tiles.

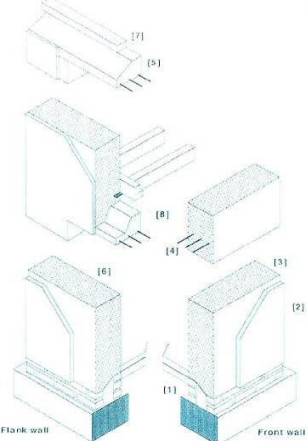
VARIANTS

1945-1952
External walls of 12' no-fines concrete. RC eaves beams. PRC lintels above openings; 2' deep at external face and 3' deep at internal face.

1957 onward
Gable or flank external wall with two 1/2" reinforcing bars or 10' band of mesh reinforcement at ground floor level.

1964 onward
External walls of 8' no-fines concrete with 21' band of mesh reinforcement at first floor level.
PRC rectangular or boat lintel above openings.
Bituminous DPM above lintel.
9" no-fines concrete separating wall, possibly rendered.
Ground floor of suspended concrete or timber boarding on timber joists.
First floor of timber joists in pockets cast into external walls.
Flat or bowstring roofs of timber covered with bituminous felt or asphalt.

S062



Flank wall

Front wall

632

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No Fines Companies

One of the pieces of information you gave us when we met you was that you thought this was a No Fines house.

There are many No Fines companies, the most famous being Wimpy No fines. Below is a list of some of the others. Below is a list of the different names that have been used, which we feel may be useful to you for your investigations as to which type of No Fines this is.

Wimpey W6M

Butterfly

Gateshead Butterfly

Formwall

Weir No Fines (alternative names No Fines or Weir)

War Office No Fines

Unit No Fines

SSHA No Fines

Mow Demonstration No Fines

Farrans No Fines

Brydon No Fines

Boyd Gibbons No Fines

Blackburn No fines

Banton No Fines

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BRE Search

We carried out a search with regard to identifying the type of building from its characteristics.

The Non-Trad Search Engine

Search at: 20:00 04-Oct-20

by identification characteristics
by local authority
by construction class

matches so far: 4

P040	Cornish Unit Type II
P042	Costain
P101	Reema Hollow Panel
P128	Unity Type II

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Examples of Non-Traditional Buildings built by X Council on BRE Database

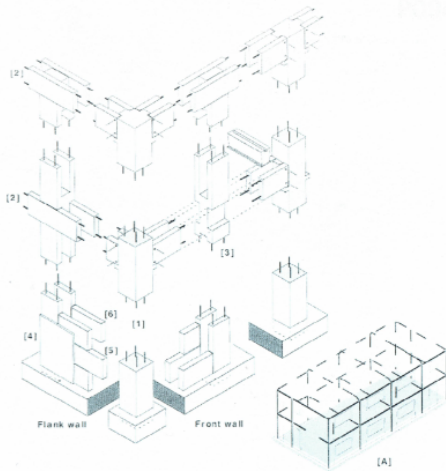

We have summarised the Wates Ltd. construction known problems and we have summarised two other pre-cast concrete non-traditional buildings built in the X area in the Appendices.

The Parkinson

This has known problems with:

1. Cracking of the render.
2. Carbonated corrosion of the reinforcement.

Manufacturer: J Parkinson & Sons Ltd Alternative name: Blackpool
Designer:
Period built:
Number built: 3000



IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS
2-storey semi-detached houses.
Steep or medium pitch hipped roof covered in concrete tiles.
External walls rendered throughout.

NOTES FOR SURVEYORS
Cracking of render.
Carbonation-related corrosion of reinforcement in PRC beams.

CONSTRUCTION
Substructure: RC raft or RC beam foundation.
Frame: Eaves height 8' x 8' PRC columns (1) positioned in foundation pockets with inverted T-shaped corbels at first floor and eaves level, 8' x 2" PRC beams (2), eaves height 8' x 8' PRC intermediate columns (3), see frame layout [A], with formed slots providing continuous cavity.
External walls: Rendered (4) 2" breeze PC blocks (5), 4" cavity, 2" breeze PC blocks (6).
Separating wall: 2" breeze PC block cavity wall.
Partitions: Block to first floor level and lath and plaster above.
Ground floor: Concrete.
First floor: Timber boarding on timber joists.
Ceilings: Not known.
Roof: Timber covered with concrete tiles.

VARIANTS
External walls and separating wall of 3" PC block, 3" cavity, 2" breeze PC blocks.
Partitions of PC blocks throughout.
Central PRC column extends to underside of cranked beam at eaves level.
PRC beams with stirrups and single bar reinforcement placed centrally in bottom flange.
No cranked PRC roof beams.
No PRC transverse beams at first floor level.

REFERENCE
BRE Report BR 52

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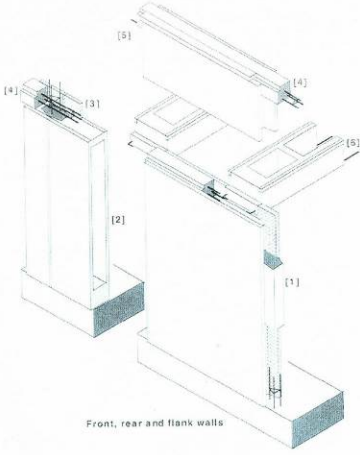



The Reema Ltd

This has the following known problems:

1. Carbonisation and high chloride levels in the hollow dense PC panels.
2. Cracked and spalled windows and door reveals and sills.
3. Cracked floor beams.
4. Pointing at panel joints cracked or missing.

Manufacturer: Reema Ltd	Alternative names: Bourns Engineered Homes Nadder Reema Stour Wylye
Designers:	
Period built: 1945-66	
Number built: 17,600	



IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

Bungalows and 2-storey semi-detached houses.
Medium or shallow pitch hipped or gable roof covered with concrete tiles or asbestos cement sheets.
External walls of storey height exposed aggregate PC panels or tile hanging.

NOTES FOR SURVEYORS

Carbonation and high chloride level in hollow dense PC panels.
Cracked and spalled window and door reveals and sills.
Cracked floor beams.
Pointing at panel joints cracked or missing.
The system was also used for flats.

CONSTRUCTION

Substructure: Pad foundations below junction of each panel. Concrete slab.
External walls: PRC columns (1), storey height room size dense aggregate hollow PRC panels with internal webs (2) with hollow core comprising 1 1/2" external leaf, 6 1/2" cavity, 1" inner leaf lined with fibreglass (3). PRC ring beams (4) at first floor and eaves level cast into trough-shaped panel heads. Timber wall plate (5).
Separating walls: Dense aggregate hollow PC panels.
Partitions: PC panels. Some non-loadbearing walls of timber stud lined with plasterboard.
Ground floor: Concrete.
First floor: Timber boarding on timber battens in 10 1/2" hollow PC beams (6).
Ceilings: Plasterboard.
Roof: Timber rafters and purlins and concrete tiles or asbestos cement sheets.

VARIANTS

External walls of PRC panels cast with integral window sills.
Flank wall recessed relative to the gables instead of joined flush at corners.
Gable wall formed by abutting triangular panels at wall gable level.
First floor of timber joists on jost hangers.

REFERENCES

BRC Report BR 53
BRC Report BR 116
NBS Certificate March 1966, September 1967

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The Wates Ltd

This has the following known problems:

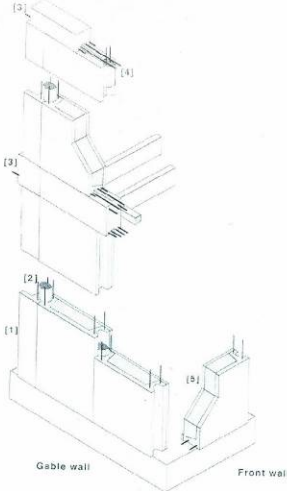
1. Corrosion of reinforcement and structural concrete.
2. Cracking of vertical joints between panels.
3. Cracking and spalling of string bonding units.
4. Spalling around apertures.

Manufacturer: Wates Ltd Alternative name: PH6
Designer:
Period built: 1947-56
Number built: 22,000



IDENTIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS
2-storey semi-detached and terraced houses.
Medium pitch hipped or gable roof covered with concrete tiles.
External walls of storey height PRC panels throughout, or with front upper storey of tile hanging, or with flank wall of brick.

NOTES FOR SURVEYORS
Corrosion of reinforcement in structural concrete between PRC panels.
Cracking of vertical joints between PRC panels.
Cracking and spalling of string bonding units.
Spalling around apertures.
The system was also used for flats.



CONSTRUCTION
Substructure: Concrete strip footings, concrete under-building, concrete slab, DPC.
External walls: Storey height 2' and 4' x 1 1/4' (6") at flanges) PRC panels [1] backfilled with lightweight concrete projecting 7/8" beyond flanges; vertical flanges concrete projecting 7/8" beyond flanges; vertical flanges of units grooved form continuous spaces filled with units to form columns [2] that are reinforced at column and beam intersections, 12" PRC string bonding units [3] at first floor and eaves level, horizontal continuity reinforcement [4], lining of plasterboard with cavity filled with lightweight concrete [5].
Separating wall: Lightweight PRC panels, string bonding units continued at first floor and eaves level.
Partitions: Brick.
Ground floor: Concrete.
First floor: Timber boarding on timber joists on timber wall plate bolted to PRC string bonding units.
Ceilings: Plasterboard.
Roof: Timber rafters and concrete tiles.

VARIANTS
External walls of tray-shaped PRC panels (not always backfilled with lightweight concrete), cavity, lightweight PC blocks, with panels meeting at corners either with male joint or butt joint.
Front upper storey external wall clad with tile hanging on timber battens.
Gable external wall of brick.
Panel width window openings above spandrel panels.
Partitions of block or PC panels.

REFERENCE
BRE Report BR 39

Houses in both BRE searches are:

Costain P042
Reema Hollow Panel P101
Unity Type II P128

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Designated Defective Housing
Page from Building Research Establishment Database of
Non-Traditional Buildings

In the early 1980s, investigation of fire damage to an Airey house revealed cracking to the structural

Airey (P003)	Schindler (S049)
Ayrshire County Council (P010)	Smith (P107)
Blackburn Orlit (P024)	Stent (P110)
Boot Beaucrete (P025)	Stonecrete (P113)
Boot Pier and Panel (P026)	Tarran Temporary Bungalow (P115)
Boswell (S007)	Tee Beam (P117)
Cornish Unit Type I (P039)	Ulster Cottage (P122)
Cornish Unit Type II (P040)	Underdown (P123)
Dorran (P046)	Unitroy (P126)
Dyke (P047)	Unity Type I (P127)
Gregory (P055)	Unity Type II (P128)
Mac-Girling (P078)	Waller (P129)
Myton (P087)	Wates (P130)
Newland (P090)	Wessex (P132)
Orlit (P091, P092)	Whitson-Fairhurst (P134)
Parkinson (P094)	Winget (P137)
Reema Hollow Panel (P101)	Woolaway (P138)

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Condensation and Cold Bridging in Non Traditional houses

What is cold bridging, how does it work?

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



Non traditional house mainly asbestos

Cold Bridging

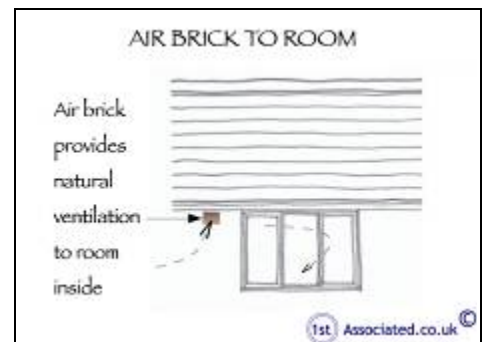
Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure or fabric of the building allowing coldness to pass through. When warm moist air is present in the property and it passes through the colder elements of the structure we have what is known as Cold Bridging. This is often caused by a combination of issues. It can occur from things such as having a shower or a bath, cooking or clothes washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators.



British Steel frame house (BISF)

Ventilation is important

It could, in commercial properties, be a large gathering of people breathing (this can cause a lot of humidity) in a building that has stood cold and empty for some time such as a church, village hall, sports centre or a crèche. These human atmospheres create a climate, which can result in condensation on the cold elements of the structure and fabric if the room is not ventilated properly.



Airbrick provides ventilation

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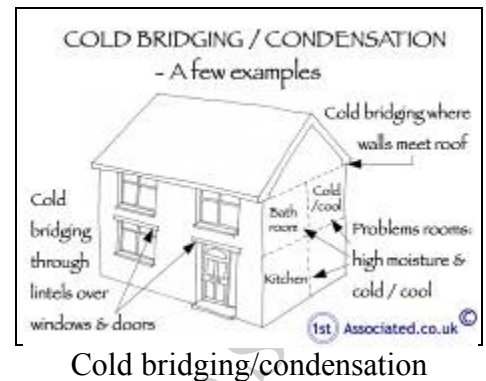
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Condensation and Cold Bridging in certain susceptible constructed properties

Survey sketch on Cold Bridging

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



Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors

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

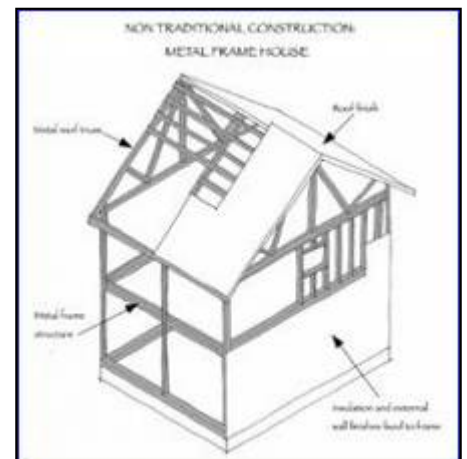
Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure, which you can do very little to change without great expense.



Rusting within the roof between the insulation and plastic protective underlayer

Buying a modern building

If you buy a 1980's property for example, with concrete lintels that cause cold bridging, this is a characteristic of the property and it is very difficult to change. However not only could it be a characteristic of the building it could also be caused by alterations that you make to the building.



Metal frame non traditional construction

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When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in:

- 1) Eras of properties where there are warm elements and colder elements to the building.
- 2) Where you have a mixture of warm rooms and cold rooms.

For example: Lounges and main bedrooms tend to be warmer than guest or spare bedrooms most of the time. Also sometimes rooms can warm up due to large areas of glass and thermal heat gain, which is very true in some conservatories also.



Black mould and high damp meter readings

- 3) Humidity internally is high
- 4) Where it is colder but by no means very cold outside

Problems with 1970/1980 era properties relating to Cold Bridging

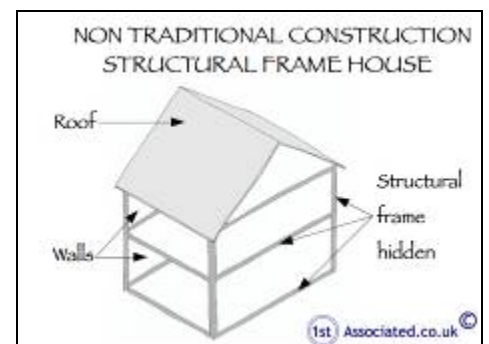
Let us take a look at the 1970's/1980's era of property to give an example of the problems we have come across with this era.

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

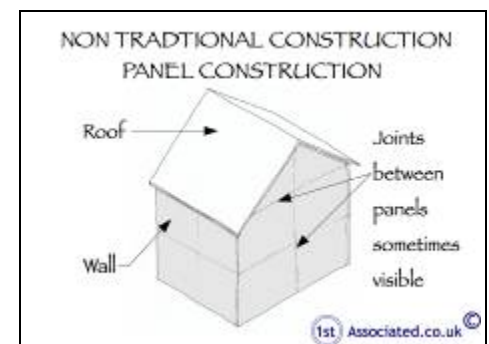
For example with:

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

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



Non traditional structural frame house



Non traditional panel construction

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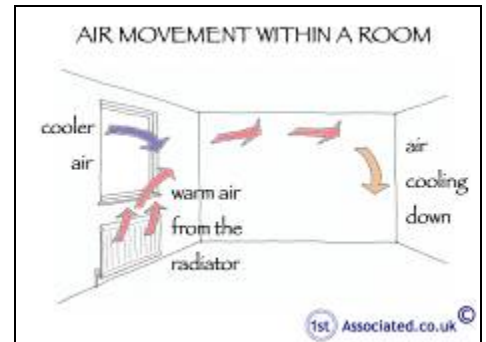
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How to solve Cold Bridging

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



Air movement within a room

Where do we most commonly find Cold Bridging?

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



Metal cladding roofs

Can lifestyle be a factor in Cold Bridging?

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



Cooking produces steam and requires ventilation

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

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

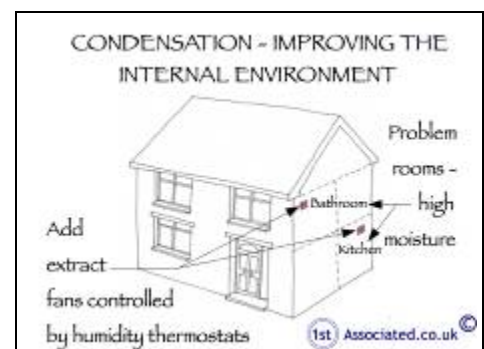
This really is a difficult question to answer. We have been involved in a number of cases as expert witnesses or advocates and the answer can vary. We would comment that there are factors that can be changed and factors that can't be changed. For example, the occupiers' lifestyle can in most cases be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



Non traditional BISF property

Design of the Building

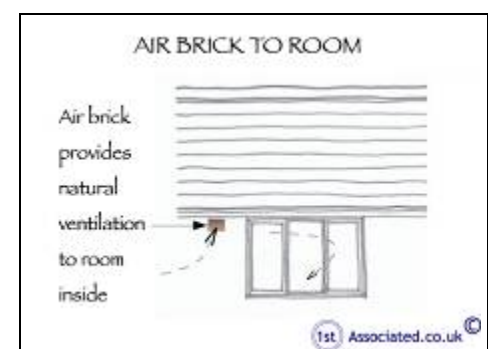
Sometimes it really is down to the design of the property. Where there are cold elements in it, such as a concrete structural frame or concrete lintels, when these are in contact with moist air condensation occurs. Sometimes this is impossible to stop but often it is possible to reduce it by having a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



Condensation

Things to remember about an air brick

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



Air brick may not ventilate room enough

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

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

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

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

Cold bridging what can we do?

There are limited things you can do with regards to cold bridging as it is about the original design of the property and needs to be considered as a characteristic. However, we do always recommend large humidity controlled extract fans are added into the bathrooms, kitchens and any areas that you intend to carry out drying of clothes to ensure moisture is removed as quickly as possible.



Removing electric points to view construction

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