

Victorian Example Residential Building Survey



Call us on 0800 298 5424



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS
PARAPET WALLS
MAIN ROOF COVERINGS
PROTECTIVE UNDERLAYERS
ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES
WALLS
BRICKWORK
RENDER
FOUNDATIONS
TREES, BUSHES AND VEGETATION
DAMP PROOF COURSE
AIR VENTS
FASCIAS AND SOFFITS
WINDOWS AND DOORS
EXTERNAL DECORATION
PARTY WALLS
STONEWORK
SOIL AND VENT PIPE

INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES
CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES
FLOORS
DAMPNESS
INTERNAL JOINERY
TIMBER DEFECTS
INTERNAL DECORATION
THERMAL EFFICIENCY
OTHER MATTERS

SERVICES

ELECTRICITY
GAS
PLUMBING & HEATING
BATHROOM
MAIN DRAINS
BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

OUTSIDE AREAS

OUTSIDE AREAS
EXTERNAL AREAS
SUN MAP

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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INTRODUCTION

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

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 more 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.

This Building Survey is confidential and not to be shared with the vendor (seller) or estate agent or parties working on their behalf without written consent from the surveyor that has produced the Building Survey. During the course of discussions/negotiations with the vendor/estate agent/parties working on their behalf if they wish to see the Report we suggest you ask them which specific section and send them this section via a photograph or a scan. The Report remains our copyright and should not be reproduced without written consent from the surveyor.

THANK YOU

We thank you for using our surveying services and taking the time to meet us during the building survey.

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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

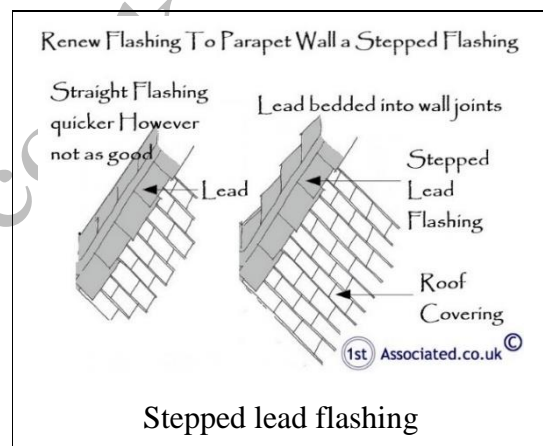
This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.

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.



ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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



SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two storey end terrace property. In our vendors questionnaire the present owners advised they moved into the property in 1957. The property has not been updated for many years and was vacant at the time of our inspection.

The property has a small paved front garden and gardens to the side and rear, with the side garden being the largest area. Parking is roadside on a first come, first served basis. At the time of our survey there were roadworks being carried out to the front of the property. To the rear we noted there was a fairly modern development and a private road ran behind the property giving access to it.

We believe that the property was built in the Victorian era, typically these type of properties were built in the late 1880's onwards. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

We have carried out a brief inspection to ascertain if the building is nationally listed via the website HistoricEngland.org.uk. We have not found it to be recorded as nationally listed, however it may have local listing which needs to be checked.

We have had a brief check to ascertain if the building is in a Conservation Area or not and have found the property is on the outskirts of the Conservation Area. It is important that your legal advisor checks and confirms if the property is in a Conservation Area as this would have implications on what you can do to the property and how you should maintain it.

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

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Putting Life into Perspective!

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

- 1837–1901 Victorian era of building generally means any building constructed during the reign of Queen Victoria, however the Victorian Society advises that ‘Victorian Architecture’ should also encompass the Edwardian period up to 1910.
- 1833 Start of Government funded schooling (1881 – it became compulsory to the age of 11).
- 1838 The great Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens, published *Oliver Twist*.
- 1840s In the 1840s, the average life expectancy was around 40 years. Following improvements in nutrition, hygiene, housing and sanitation during the Victorian period life expectancy approached 60 years by the early 1900s.
- 1840 The first adhesive postage stamp the Penny Black was issued, worth much more than a penny today!
- 1841 The Two Penny Blue (the world’s second official postage stamp) is worth far more than two pennies today at over one million pounds; they are ten times more scarce than a Penny Black.
- 1851 More than 25,000 people attended the opening day of first World Exhibition in London, a great day out!
- 1857 It’s a girl! Queen Victoria gave birth to her daughter Princess Beatrice.
- 1860 The first ever fish and chip restaurant was opened, now they’re a national institution!
- 1863 The opening of the London Underground, mind the doors!
- 1865 Salvation Army opened its doors to the poor giving hope to many.
- 1870 British Red Cross established, saving thousands of lives.
- 1880’s Housing development for workers of the Royal Arsenal.
- 1900 Max Planck formulated the Quantum Theory.
- 1901 The first ever Nobel Prizes were awarded.

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LOCATION PLANS



Note; The photographs identify the building and are not necessarily where the boundaries, etc, are.

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



Left gable



Street view



Front garden



Side and rear garden

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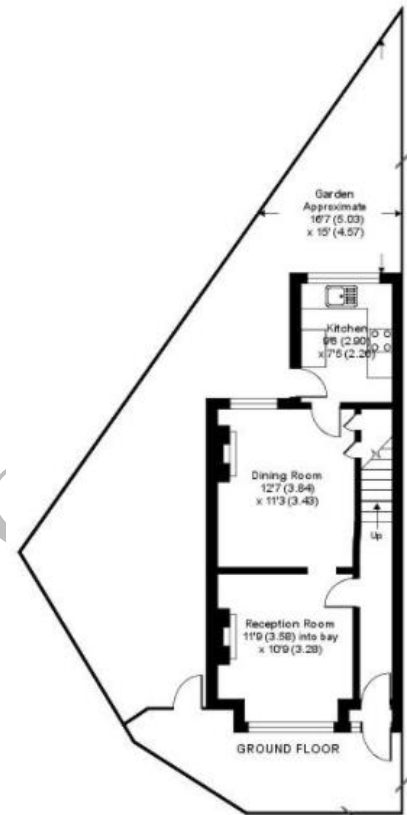
ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

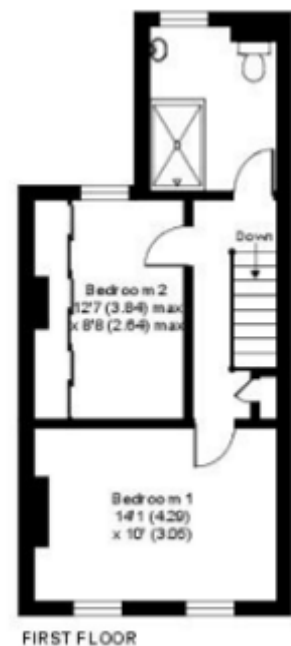
- 1) Entrance hall and stairs
- 2) Reception room front
- 3) Dining room middle
- 4) Kitchen rear



First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 5) Landing
- 6) Bedroom One Front
- 7) Bedroom Two Middle
- 8) Shower room



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Outside Areas

The property has a small paved front garden and gardens to the side and rear with brick walls surrounding, with the side garden being the largest area. The garden includes a shed with an asbestos roof. There is what appears to be a private road to the rear of the property.

Parking is roadside on a first come, first served basis.

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

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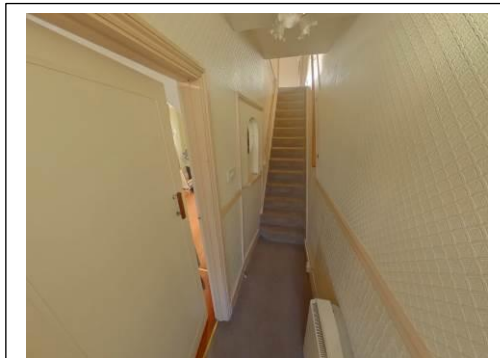
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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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 hall and stairs



Reception room front



Dining room middle



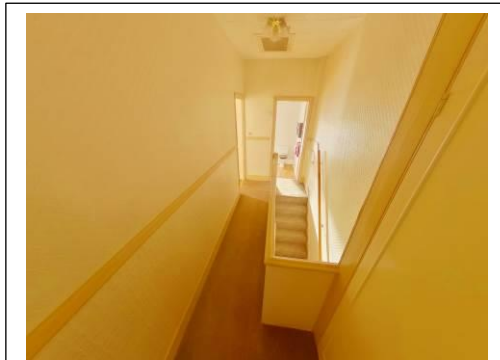
Kitchen rear

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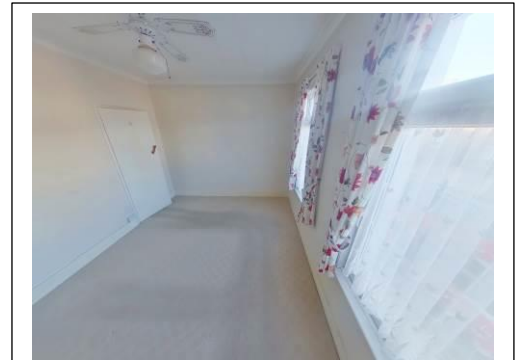
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First Floor



Landing



Bedroom One Front



Bedroom Two Middle



Shower room Rear

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Chimneys/Flues | Three brick chimneys - front left, rear left and rear |
| Main Roof | Pitched, clad with concrete tiles. Parapet wall on right side with a lead flashing. |
| Main Roof Structure | Cut timber roof |
| Gutters and Downpipes | Plastic |
| Soil and Vent Pipe | Cast iron to rear |
| Walls | Flemish bond brickwork originally in lime mortar wrongly repointed in cement mortar. Crazy paving cladding to the front. Pebbledash render to the rear common in the 1960's/1970's (all assumed) |
| Fascias and Soffits | Decorated timber (assumed) |
| Windows and Doors | Mixture of single glazed and double glazed timber and plastic windows. |

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Internal

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Ceilings | Older style lath and plaster ceilings visible in roof space. Polystyrene tiles (assumed) |
| Perimeter Walls | Lime plaster (assumed) |
| Internal Walls | Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed) |
| Ground Floor | Suspended floor to the front with a concrete floor to rear (assumed) Airbricks only visible to front, not to rear |
| First Floor | Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed) |

Services

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Drainage | Manhole to rear in adjoining private (assumed) road, none within property curtilage. |
| Gas | The consumer unit was located in the cupboard under the stairs |
| Electrics | The electric fuse board is 1970's-1980's and is located in cupboard under the stairs |
| Heating | There is a wall mounted Britony boiler located in the kitchen. Heating by gas heaters and portable electric heaters. |

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

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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



It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focused 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 (including 360 degree/aerial photos) during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

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

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

The Good

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

- 1.0) Older properties typically have more space than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms.
- 2.0) The property has potential, albeit there are some fairly basic facilities that are dated and have not been upgraded such as the electrics, or not present such as central heating and manholes.

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



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) Dampness

We found dampness in the property and in many areas obtained high damp meter readings (by high we mean approx. 25% plus more than we would normally expect). Dampness occurs for a combination of reasons, we think the most likely reasons in this particular instance are:



High damp meter reading of 97

1) **Unoccupied property**

The property is not occupied and we assume not heated to the usual levels.

2) **Breathability**

Cement mortar re-pointing has been carried out on the exterior of the property which means that the building can no longer breathe; more about this later on.

3) **Sloping site and drains**

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



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Old drains

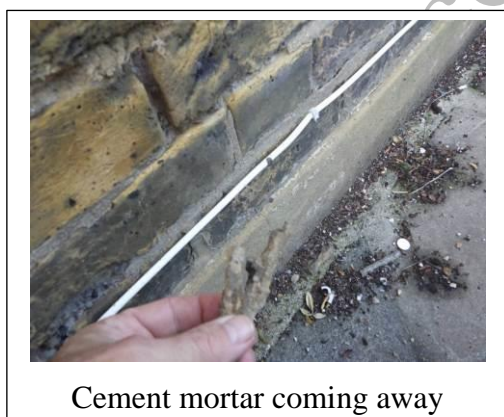
Thank you for the drainage plan. We would add that the drains that surround the property are probably an old drainage system where there could be some leaks.

ACTION REQUIRED: We think moving into the building and generally heating it and adding full heating at some point (central gas heating or electric heating) will help the building considerably and also managing humidity created. Also see our section on removing the cement mortar and getting the building to breathe.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

2.0) Inappropriate Cement Mortar Re-pointing

We would draw your attention to the cement mortar re-pointing that has been carried out on the exterior of the property that we feel is not appropriate to this building. Originally, it would have been built with a lime-based mortar which allows the building to breathe.



This was fairly common particularly in properties like this that were updated in the 1960's/1970's from what we can see from such things as the replacement of the slates with a concrete tile.

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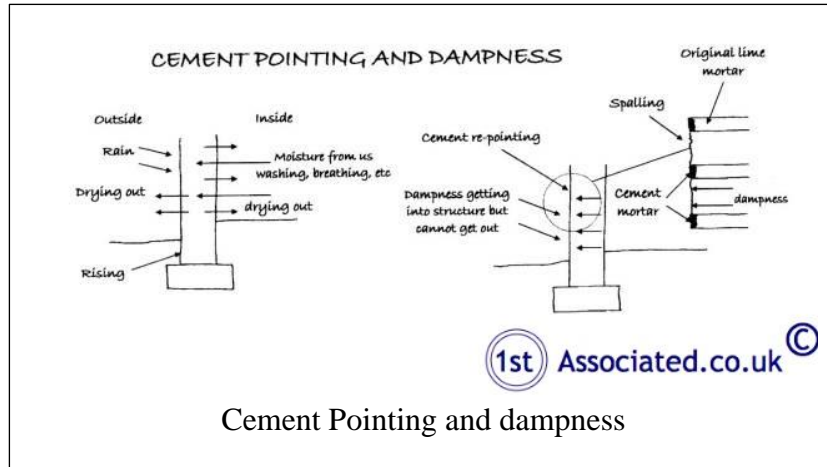
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Lime Every Time and Lime Takes Time

Re-pointing is required in a lime based mortar and this is what should be used for any re-pointing in the future as this allows the property to 'breathe' and dissipate dampness.

The use of cement mortar causes deterioration to brickwork and does lead to the face of the bricks deteriorating and also leads to dampness and cracking.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend repointing with a lime mortar. If you recall, the cement mortar was falling out in many areas and we think a stiff brush would remove a fair amount of it. We would initially concentrate on the base of the property which should help considerably. Care needs to be taken as we feel some of the bricks are starting to deteriorate/shale.



Shale Defined

This is where the face of the brick deteriorates from mortar damage often known as freeze/thawing where the bricks freeze in the winter and then thaw out and gradually the face of the brick comes away.

ANTICIPATED COST: You can do this work in stages and many people do or you can just work on the lower portion of the property. We would expect costs in the region of £2,500 - £5,000. To do the whole of the property we would expect to cost in the region of £10,000 - £20,000

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to repoint, possibly more depending upon the amount of scaffolding required.

As mentioned, this can be done in stages over time and there are courses that you can go on if you wish to help and assist whoever is carrying out the work. Please see our comments with regard to attending a Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) course.

Please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.

3.0) Structural movement and cracking

We could see cracking in the property:

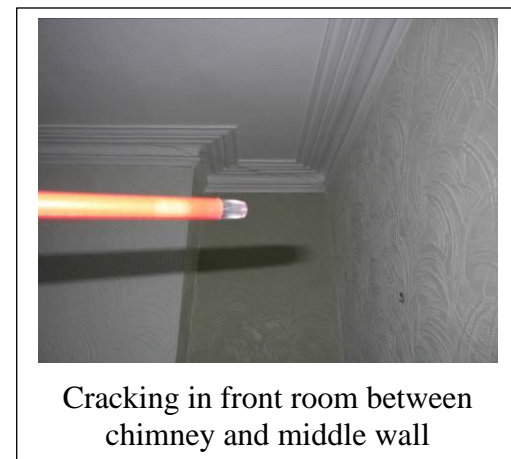
1) Roof Structure

We noted a split in the roof timber which indicates to us that there has been some movement to the gable end. It is very difficult to confirm how long ago it is but to us it means it is essential that you have an insurance claim placed by the existing owners.



2) Internal

Gable end wall internally to the plaster



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3) External

Cracking to the gable end brickwork



Crack to gable end

4) Render

Cracking to render. We would comment generally that the render and the stonework to the front of the property could be hiding cracks.



Crack to rear render



Render and stonework could be hiding cracking

5) Cracking to boundary wall

We noted cracking to the boundary wall which shows there is movement in the area albeit that garden walls are often not very well built.

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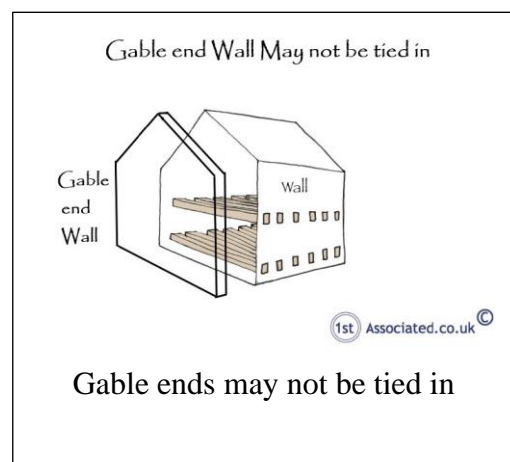
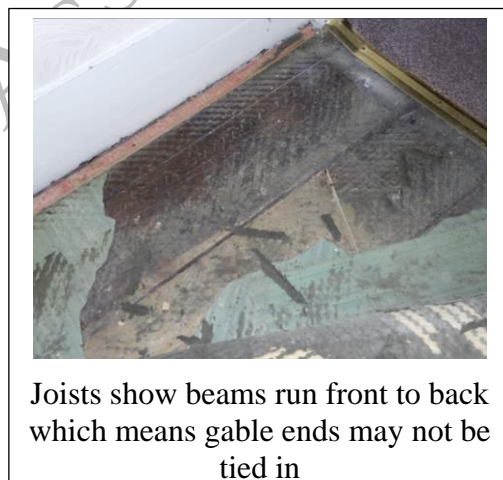


Deflection

There are other signs of problems such as deflection to the floors slightly above what we would expect to find particularly on the first floor bedrooms which can be for a number of reasons, movement being one of them.

Cracking could be for a number of reasons:

- 1) The heavier concrete roof tiles replacing the lighter slates which is often the case.
- 2) Leaking of the drains.
- 3) Gable end not tied in - we noted the joists show beams run from front to back which means the gable end wall may not be tied in (we cannot actually see this area) to the floor joists and as such can move.



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- 4) Sloping site - the property also sits on a sloping site and as you are an end gable it moves down the hill so to speak.

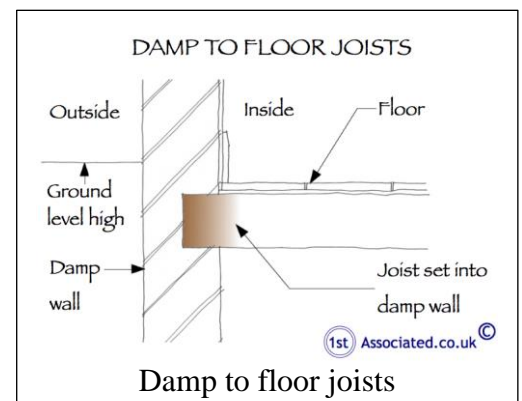
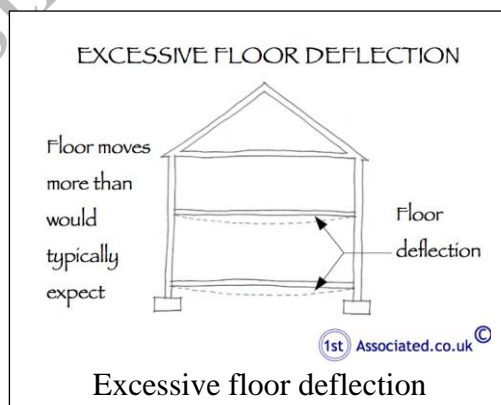
The movement looks to have settled in place and there were no obvious signs of new movement known as progressive movement however having said we cannot be certain and as this is a one-off inspection we believe that caution is the best way forward.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally, we would recommend the existing owners take out an insurance claim, advising that the cracking has been noted by a structural surveyor (this should cost them nothing other than time to write the letter/email). This usually means that the insurance company will carry out a monitoring exercise (the Building Research Establishment recommend monitoring any cracks for a minimum of one year) to establish if there is any progressive movement. Your future liability should be limited to the cost of the excess on the insurance providing the insurance company is happy for you to take over the insurance claim.

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

4.0) Deflection

As mentioned, the property has deflection. This may indicate that the timber joist ends have deteriorated often due to dampness as this is a solid wall construction building and the cement mortar that has been added to it has stopped it from dissipating the dampness which in turn can lead to deterioration of the joists. Equally, it could be that the joists are undersized and there may be some repair needed or strengthening of the joists using herringbone strutting.



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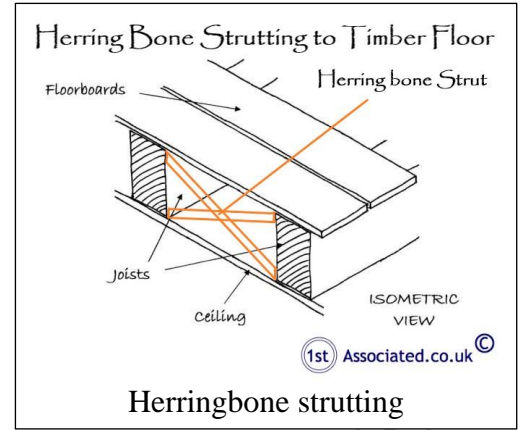
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Herringbone strutting defined

This is a cross brace of timbers between the joists.

ACTION REQUIRED: Open up the floor and check the joist ends and the joist sizes. If you forward us photographs we would be more than happy to comment



ANTICIPATED COST: You may decide that you can live with the deflection, alternatively you may put in strengthening of the timbers (we call back to backing) or herringbone strutting. Budget £1,000 - £3,000; please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.

Please see the Floors Section of this Report.

5.0) Windows

The property has a mixture of timber and plastic double and single glazed windows. The windows have paint flaking and we noted the high level windows look to be in poor condition.

Where the windows are double glazed we noted that some of the seals on the plastic windows looked to be starting to go and we can see them misting over for example the rear left window.



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ACTION REQUIRED: Budget to repair and make good and/or replace the sealed windows.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds for replacing each sealed window; please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.

Please see the Windows and Doors Section of this Report.

6.0) Polystyrene tiles

There are polystyrene tiles throughout the property which were once popular and are now generally considered a fire hazard. We would also advise that many mortgage companies require them to be removed from what we understand to meet their mortgage requirements. Polystyrene tiles are often added as:

- 1) At one time they were considered fashionable.
- 2) Probably more important they were added where ceilings were starting to deteriorate and we tend to find them a lot in bathrooms and kitchens, etc. but in this case they are throughout the house.

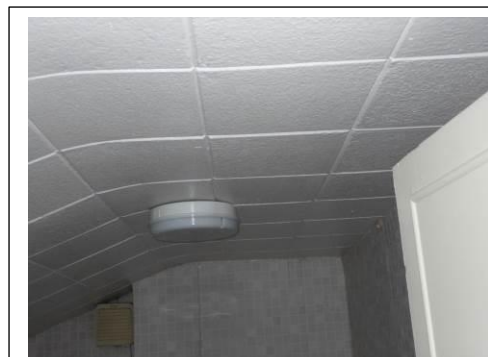
ACTION REQUIRED: Remove the tiles and repair the ceilings as necessary. You do have to be careful when removing the tiles as it can bring parts of the ceiling down.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds to perhaps a thousand pounds per ceiling. This could add up to a fair amount of money in a worst case scenario when you are taking the ceiling tiles down and the ceiling is in a poor condition. Budget £4,000 - £8,000; please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

Please see the Ceilings Section of this Report.



Polystyrene ceiling tiles



Polystyrene ceiling tiles in bathroom

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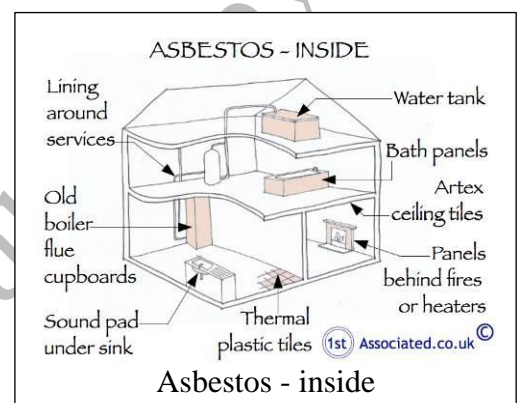
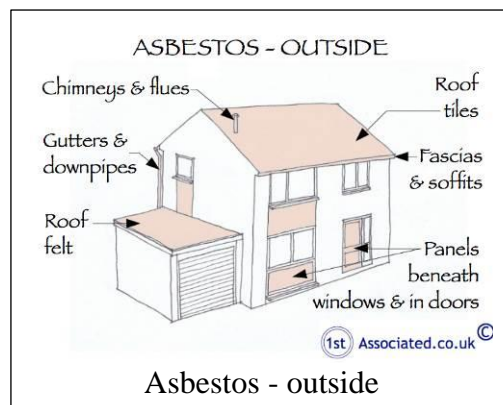
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7.0) Asbestos

There is a shed in the rear garden which looks to have an asbestos roof.

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: The only way to be one hundred percent certain with regards to asbestos in a property is to have an asbestos report with samples taken and the recommended action carried out.

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

ANTICIPATED COST: Asbestos costs can vary considerably; we are forever surprised at the variety in quotes. Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

Please see the Other Matters Section of this Report.

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8.0) Condensation

Although it is difficult to be certain, this era of property often suffers from condensation and black mould. It depends upon how you utilise the property, how many showers/baths take place and how much washing and cooking you do.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend large good quality humidity controlled extract fans are added to the kitchen, the bathroom and any humidity generating areas for example rooms that are used for drying clothes internally during winter months (we would assume that clothes will be dried externally during the warmer months). By large extract fans we mean 150mm.

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required. We always recommend quotes are obtained before work is agreed/commenced.

9.0) Boundary wall

As mentioned, we noted cracking to the boundary wall. As you have pedestrians walking around the outside of it we would recommend repairs are carried out sooner rather than later.



ACTION REQUIRED: It may be a case of repairing it or it may be a case of partial rebuilding; you need to speak to a bricklayer.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of a few hundred pounds to five hundred pounds; please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.

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Services

10.0) Dated electrics

The fuse board is 1970's-1980's and better are now available.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a new fuse board with a metal casing; modern standards require half hour to one hour fire resistant casing around a fuse board.



We would recommend re-wiring of the property and additional socket points.

We would advise as the property is changing occupancy 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.

ANTICIPATED COST: We expect costs in the region of:-

- 1) £250 - £500 for a test and report
- 2) £250 - £500 start with a new fuse board to make the property as safe as possible as quickly as possible as we are aware you have children.
- 3) £4,000 - £6,000 for additional socket points and updating
- 4) Plus any further work recommended

Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

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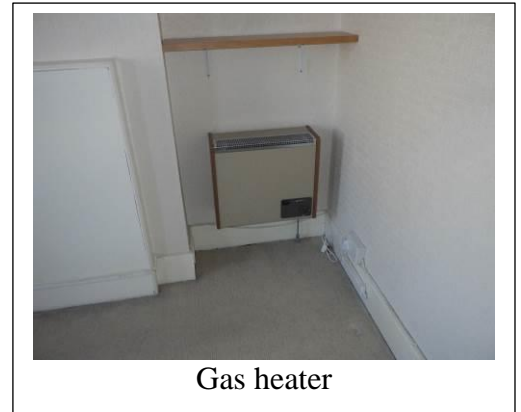
11.0) Heating

The property has gas heaters, these have very much gone out of favour. The owner advised that they were not condemned when we spoke about them but we do not know whether this is simply because they have not been tested for some time.

We could see electric heaters were in use at the time of our survey.

ACTION REQUIRED: Install a new central heating system. Today you generally have a choice between gas or electric although most people tend to stick with traditional gas systems.

ANTICIPATED COST: £5,000 - £8,000 if some of the existing plumbing/radiators can be used; please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.



Gas heater



Electric heater

12.0) No manhole found

Thank you for forwarding the drainage layout which shows that the property is surrounded by drains.

As discussed, there were no manholes on the property curtilage which is slightly unusual as they are often added in more recent times although they may not have been an original feature.

We did find a manhole to the rear of the property in the private road nevertheless it would be better to have your own manhole particularly as discussed the road will be discharging towards you downhill then if there are any problems it would probably mean digging up in the area of your building. Having said that, as they are shared drains they will usually be the responsibility of the local authority.

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Manhole to rear



Manhole in road to rear

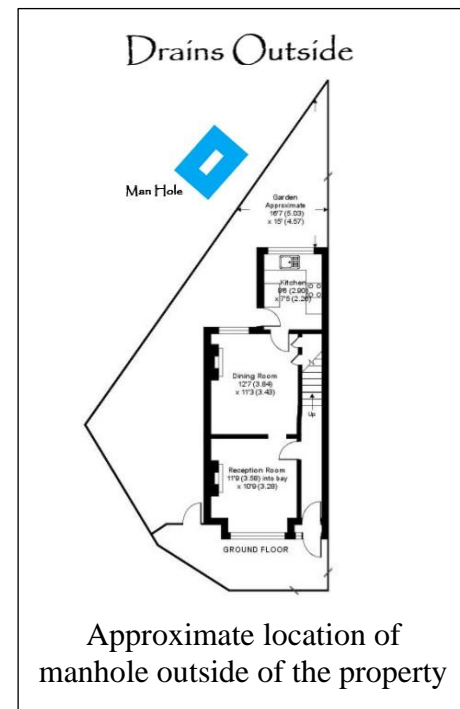
Manholes Defined

Access areas usually large enough to fit a person in so work can be carried out. Manholes are used where there is a change in direction of pipes or new pipes join the main run. It is a good location for clearing any blockages.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor to check and confirm who would have responsibility if there are blockages in the drains. When this occurs we would then recommend you have a manhole added.

If you wish to be one hundred percent safe then we would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains; please see our earlier comments.

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £500 for a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains; please obtain quotes.



Please see the Services Section of this Report.



The Ugly

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

With regard to this property it is not for everyone, there are some risks/costs on the property that would put many people off. One of these things is the general dated nature of the property and not having some of the basics such as central heating and up to date electrics, etc.

Another problem of course is the dampness and another problem that would put a lot of people off is the cracking that is visible.

We think the other problems can be solved, our concern is the movement that we can see that may have been hidden by repointing over the years inadvertently or not.

We would recommend that the existing owners take out an insurance claim and then for you to be one hundred percent safe you take this over. This would allow the insurance company to then investigate properly and we recommend that you insist that they monitor the building to see if there is any progressive movement or not. Without this insurance claim being in place it will make things very difficult and we would not purchase the property without this insurance claim being placed.

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SERVICES & YOUR OWN SPECIFIC TESTING

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

The electric fuse board is 1970's-1980's and is located in a cupboard under the stairs

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a new fuse board with a fire resisting metal case and re-wiring of the property.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. The test and any recommendations should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

Heating

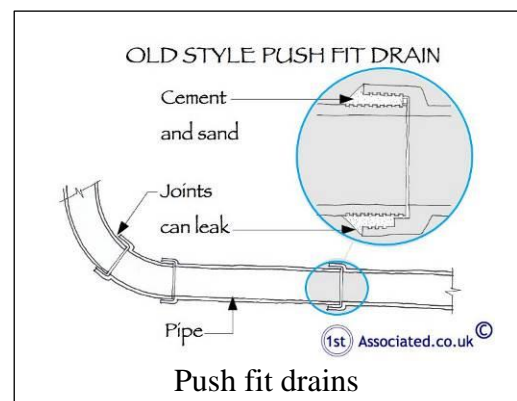
There is a wall mounted Britony boiler located in the kitchen. Heating is by gas heaters and portable electric heaters. It is likely you will need a new boiler system and of course radiators installed.

ACTION REQUIRED: Install a new central heating system.

ANTICIPATED COST: £5,000 - £8,000 if some of the existing plumbing/radiators can be used; please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase the property.

Drainage

As we discussed, there is not a manhole within the curtilage of the property. The only manhole we have seen is in the rear private road, which we have not had access to. In years gone by, in older properties such as this, drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together and they can leak.



ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our earlier comments.

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Water Supply

There is a 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 or are there any remaining lead pipes.

ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES: We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

Maintenance

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

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating to turn the property into your home. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Getting to know more about older properties - SPAB course

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

Purchase Price

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

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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. 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 probably be best to supervise the work 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:

Thank you for coming along to the building survey, we hope the Executive Summary makes sense and we also appreciate you doing some research and investigation with regard to the previous survey that we carried out for you so you could get a better understanding of this building survey. We would be more than happy to discuss this further.

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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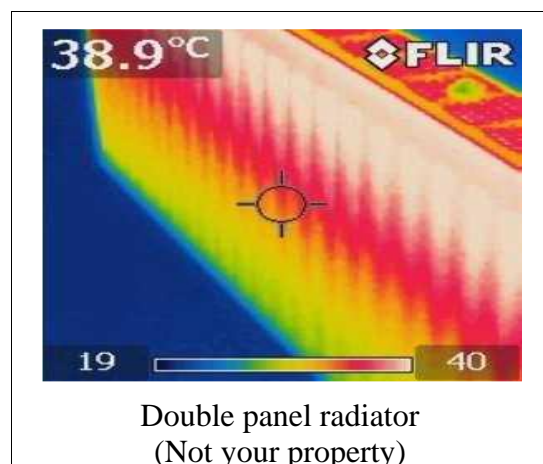
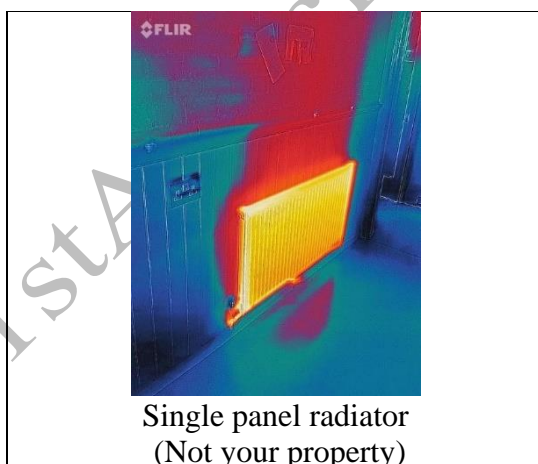
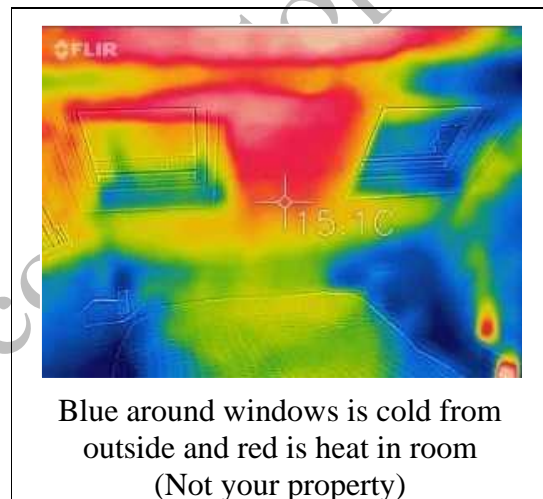
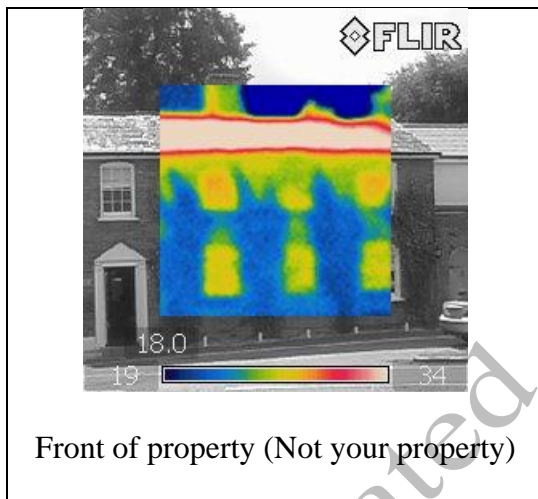


EXAMPLE THERMAL IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

– Not Your Property

Thermal imaging photography can establish warm and cold areas, it also helps us identify materials within the property. In this case we have not carried out any thermal imaging as the property was not pre-heated and therefore we would not have obtained any beneficial results. Below are example thermal image photographs (not your property).

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



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

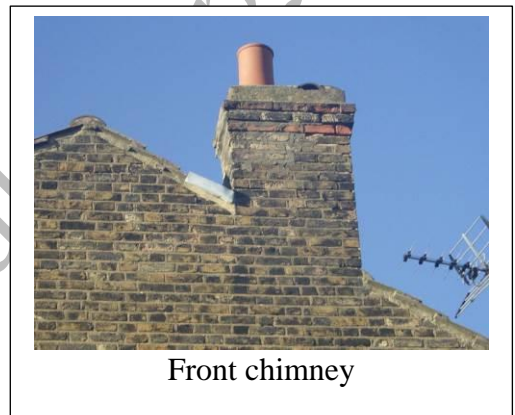


Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.

There are three chimneys to this property they are located to the front left, rear left and rear (all directions given as you face the property).

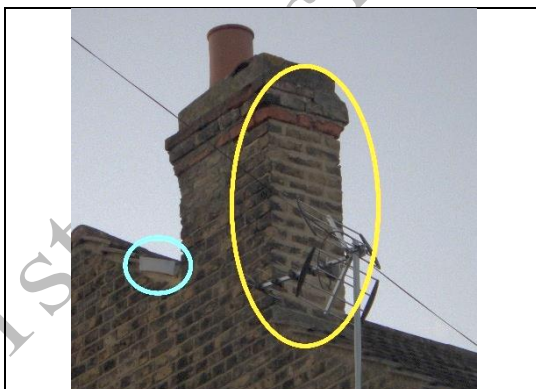
Chimney One – Front Left

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. Our view was limited of the chimneys. From what we could see from ground level it looked in slightly below average condition considering its age, type and style which typically relates to problems with the flashing.



Front chimney

We could see dampness to this chimney within the roof space which may be due to a problem flashing.



Front chimney poorly repointed and problem flashing allowing dampness in



Dampness to front chimney

ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney.

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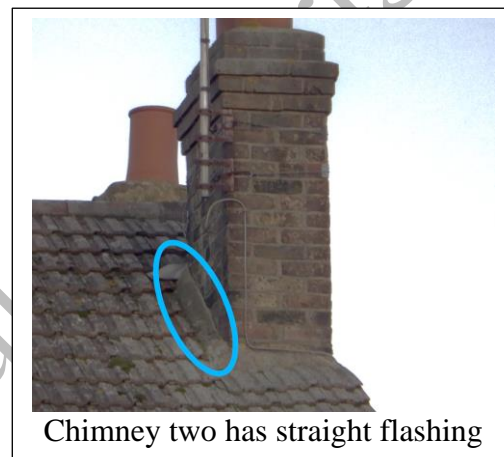
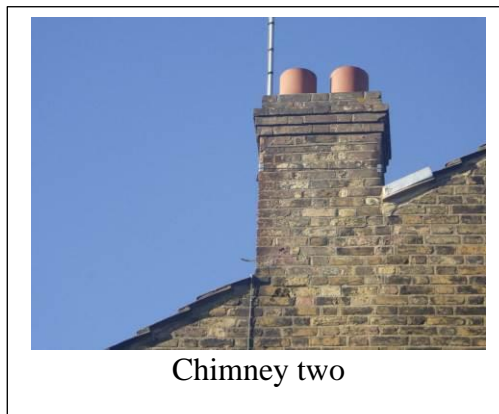
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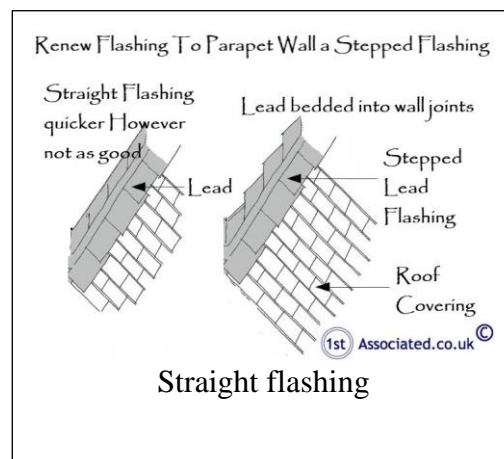
Chimney Two – Rear Left

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and two chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style. We could see dampness to this chimney within the roof space.

We noted an aerial attached to the chimney which we are not keen on as it can de-stabilise the chimney.



ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney.



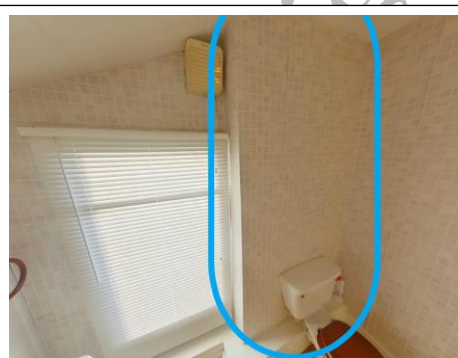
Chimney Three – rear of property

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and two chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style although having seen the dampness problems to the other two chimneys we suspect there may be problems with this flashing as well. We could not physically see this chimney within the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: Periodically inspect the chimney.



Rear chimney



Chimney three within bathroom

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

Our view of the chimneys was limited from ground level.

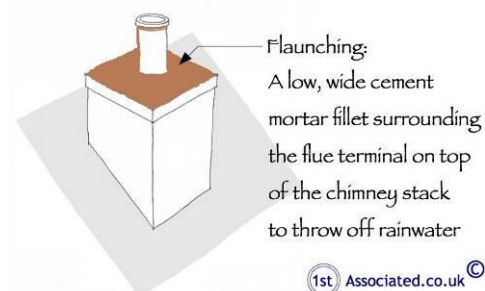
Flaunchings Defined

A low, wide cement mortar fillet surrounding the flue terminal on top of the chimneystack to throw off rainwater.

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 TO A CHIMNEY



Flaunchings

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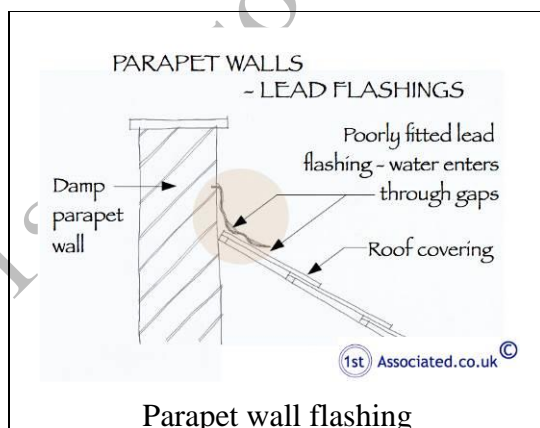


PARAPET WALLS

Parapet walls are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.

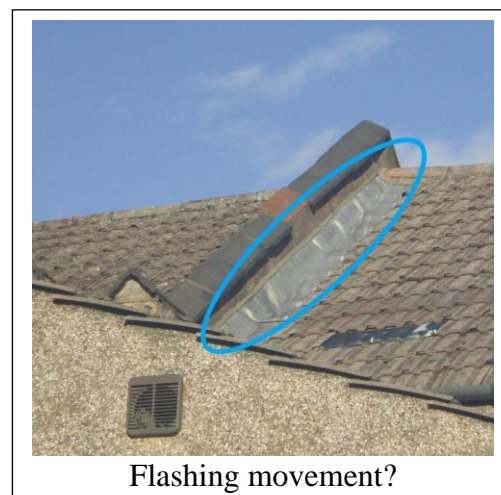
The parapet wall is render finished with a coping stone or tiles and lead flashing. From what we could see from ground level it looked in average condition considering its age, type and style.

We would comment the flashing has a poor quality straight cut rather than being stepped. It was either not originally laid very well or there has been some movement. Please see our comments with regards to the existing owners taking out an insurance claim that you then take over with regard to possible movement in the property.



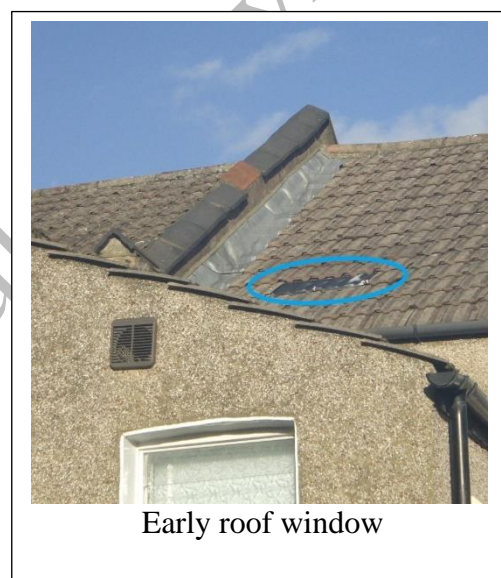
Movement?

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



ROOF WINDOW

The property has an early roof window, which looked in average condition.



PARTY WALLS

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the parapet wall and firewall. If you do any work on these, you will need to deal with the Party Wall Etc. Act 1996. 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, requires agreement under the Party Wall Etc. Act 1996. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.

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Specifically, in this case if you are doing work to the parapet wall or the chimney then it is best to get agreement with your neighbour.

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

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

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MAIN ROOF COVERINGS



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

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

Main Roof

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

A heavier concrete tile has replaced the original slate and therefore there should be additional roof support. We think a purlin support may have been added although it is difficult to be certain; your legal advisor to check and confirm if there were any Building Regulations applications with regard to strengthening the roof.

There are glass roof tiles. Early glass tiles are prone to leaking and are not as good as a modern day roof window.



Concrete tiles



Glass roof tile



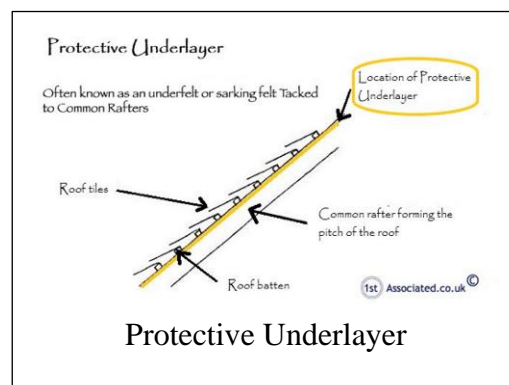
Glass roof tile within roof space

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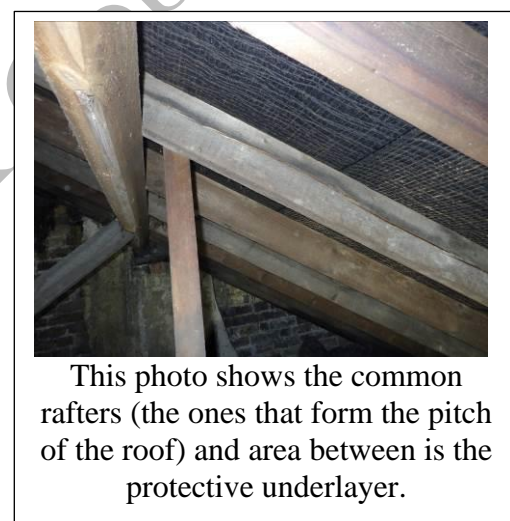


PROTECTIVE UNDERLAYERS

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.



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



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

Finally, 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



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

Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch on the landing. There is no loft ladder, electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend 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

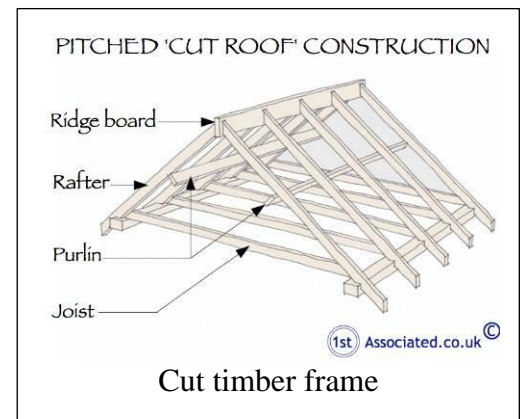
This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. The roof is in line with what we typically see, possibly what we would term as lightweight as we normally see thicker timbers for the purlins.

Common Rafters Defined

Timbers which form the pitch of the roof.

Purlins Defined

Purlins are the horizontal cross members that give support to the common rafters.



Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:-

1. Serious active wood destroying insects
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 and insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in slightly below average condition for its age, type and style. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

ACTION REQUIRED: We think a purlin support may have been added although it is difficult to be certain; your legal advisor to check and

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confirm if there were any Building Regulations applications with regard to strengthening the roof. It may be that the roof was put on before the legislation came in but it does need checking.

Purlins Defined

Purlins are the horizontal cross members that give support to the common rafters.

Firewalls

The property has one brickwork firewall located to the right side (all directions given as you face the property). The firewall is also a Party Wall.

Firewalls Defined

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

Water Tanks

There is an old cast iron water tank.

We would always recommend that the water tanks are drained down and cleared of any debris, etc.



Old cast iron water tank

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case, there was insufficient quantity of wiring for us to feel that we could comment.

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

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

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GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

Gutters and Downpipes

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

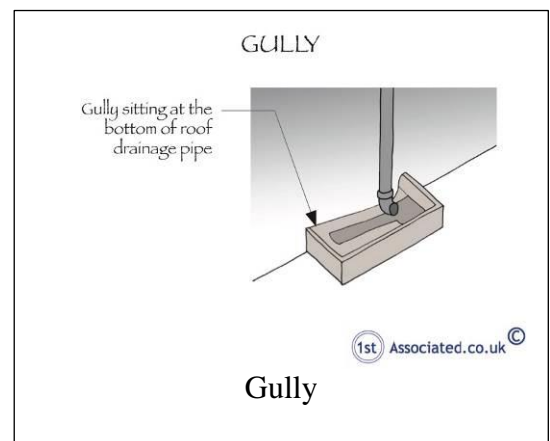
There may be some minor leaks but most people would be happy to live with these providing repairs are carried out within the next six to twelve months.

Downpipes discharge onto ground

The downpipes discharge directly onto the ground; we would much prefer a gully.



Gutter discharging directly onto the ground and also into a gully



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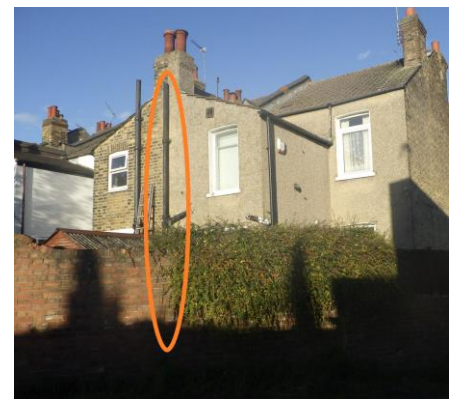
ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints.

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

SOIL AND VENT PIPE

The property has cast iron soil and vent pipes. It would benefit from redecoration.

Cast iron of this age can crack and rust and needs regular maintenance; if regularly maintained it lasts longer than plastic, in our experience.



Soil and Vent Pipe

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 one hundred percent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

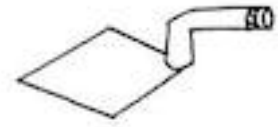
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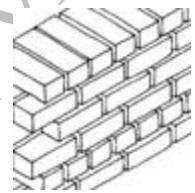
WALLS



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

The walls are finished with brickwork with areas of render and cladding to the front.

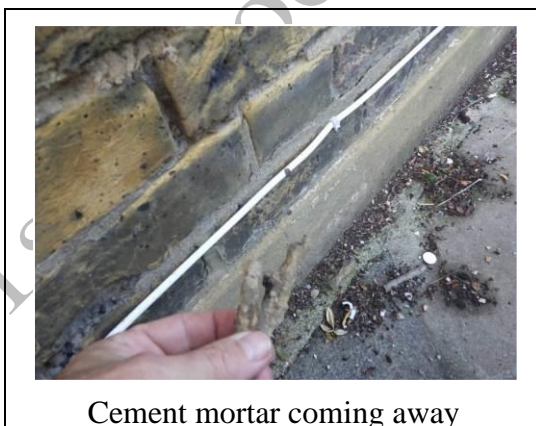
BRICKWORK



The property is finished in a brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork which has now been wrongly repointed in cement mortar.



Spalling red brick



Cement mortar coming away



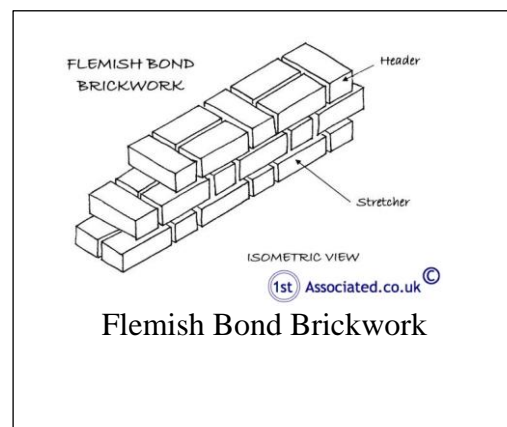
Cement repointing

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The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.



Timber lintels and bonding timbers

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

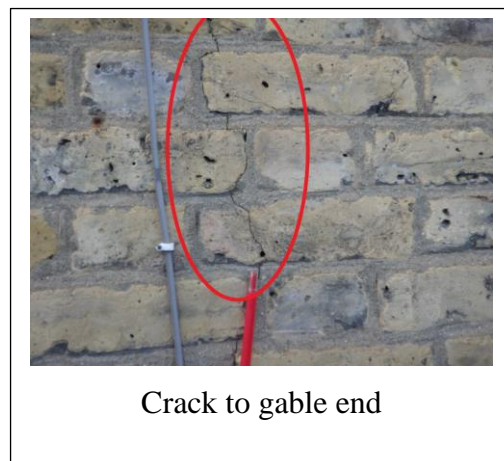
Condition

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. It is essential that external faces be kept in good condition. In this case we found dampness internally which we believe is due in part to the property being empty and in part due to it having a cement repointing where it was originally bedded in lime.

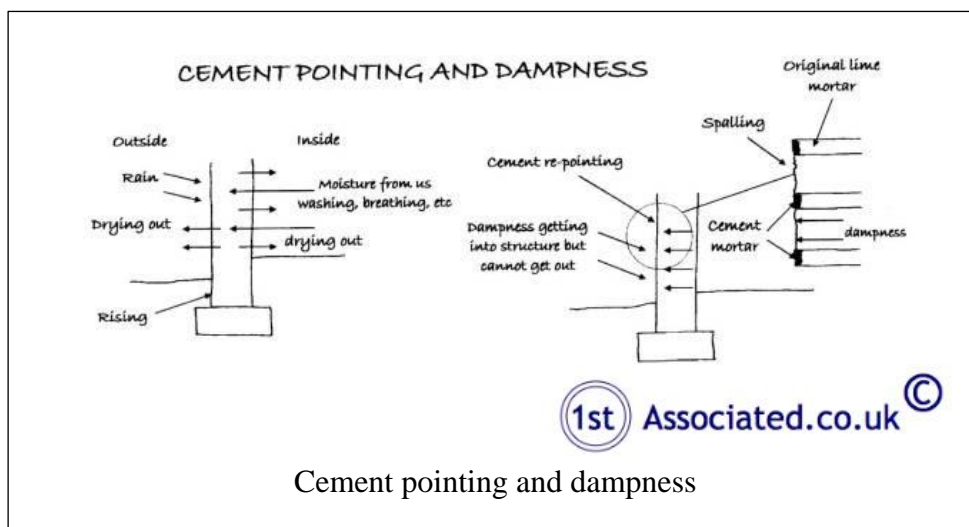
Cracking

We would remind you that any hairline cracks that appear need to be repointed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in.

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



Lime every time and lime takes time



We would draw your attention to the cement mortar re-pointing that has been carried out on the exterior of the property that we feel is not appropriate to this building. Originally it will have been built with a lime-based mortar and this is what should be used for any re-pointing in the future.

The original lime mortar is a softer material which allows dampness to dissipate, whereas cement mortar is a harder material that does not allow the walls to 'breathe' and in turn causes dampness to come into the walls. The use of cement mortar causes deterioration to brickwork and does lead to the face of the bricks deteriorating, which in turn leads to dampness. This is a very important point.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would replace the cement mortar with lime mortar gradually and carefully over a long period of time, using the oldest/most experienced builder you can find who is experienced with lime work.

Lime Mortar Defined:

Lime mortar is a mix used to bed bricks upon; its characteristics being that it flexes and moves with the structure. It was used up to the War years.

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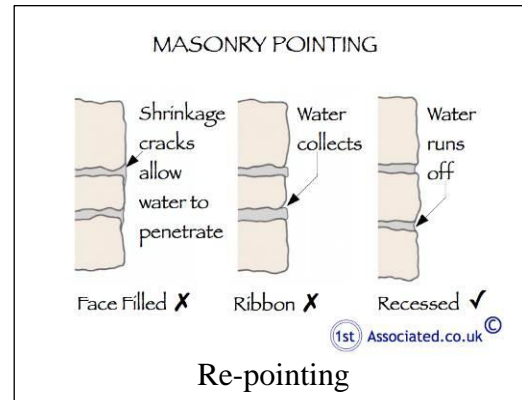
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Re-Pointing Defined

Re-pointing is carried out where the existing mortar has failed and broken away to stop damp penetration and further deterioration. The mortar should be raked out to approximately 20mm and then replaced with a mortar of a similar type, therefore, stopping damp occurring.



RENDER

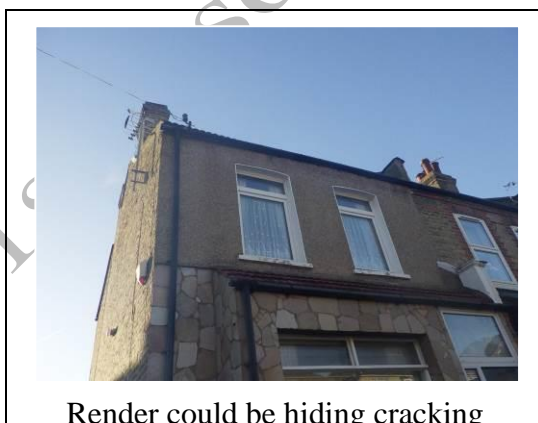
Render

The external walls are finished in a pebbledash render which was common in the 1960's/1970's.

We have carried out a tap test (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer). We found it to be in average condition for its age, type and style.

Cracking

We would remind you that any hairline cracks that appear need to be sealed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in.



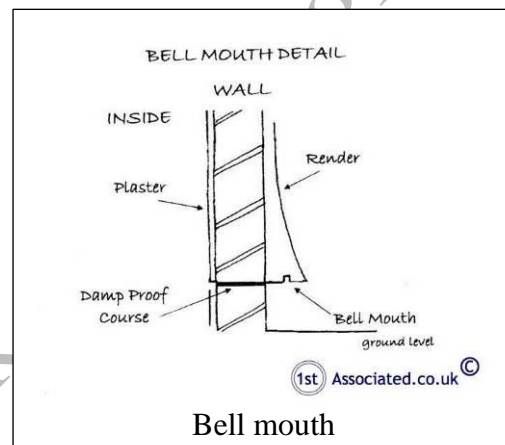
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Render detailing

We would normally comment on the render detailing where we like to see drip details however it is often argued with a pea shingle render like this that it is not a requirement for drip details however we still think a drip detail would probably be better to the base of the property.

Bell mouth to base of render

To the base of the render there was no bell mouth detail. We would much prefer to see one, which would also help with dampness in the building.



CLADDING

There is a crazy paving type cladding to the front of the property. The difficulty is what to do with it. We assume it was added as a feature.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you test to see how removable it is as removing it may cause damage to the front of the property and you would then have to think about whether you would want to render the front of the property or not. Often, if you walk up and down a road you will see examples of what other people have done and you will be able to pick one of those that you like if you dislike the crazy paving type finish.



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Conservation Area

Be aware that the property is in a conservation area.

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

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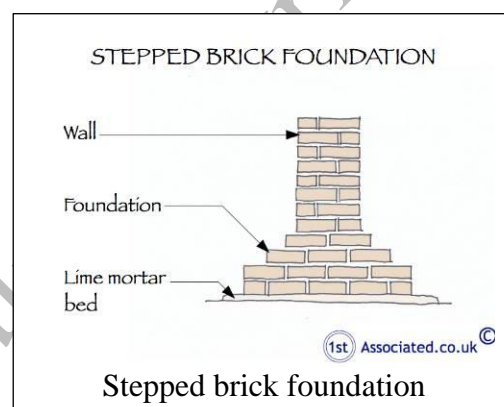
FOUNDATIONS



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

Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar.



London Clay

As with most properties in the London area, this property stands on London Clay. It is therefore more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

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.

The owner's mother advised that they were not aware of any settlement, subsidence or movement in the property nor any external or internal cracking. This may be because they have not lived at the property.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor to specifically ask the owners are they aware of any cracking, subsidence, settlement, etc in the property.

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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.

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

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

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

Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property. As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be one hundred percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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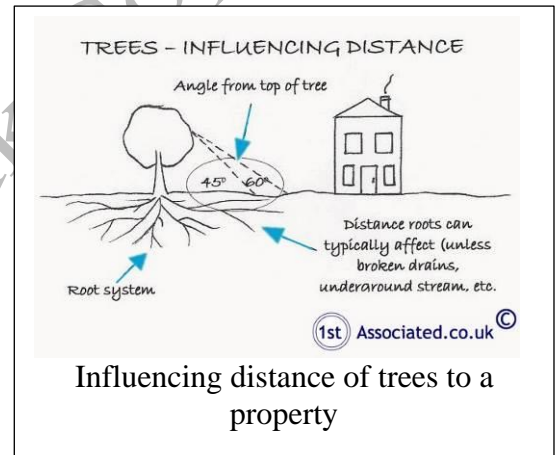
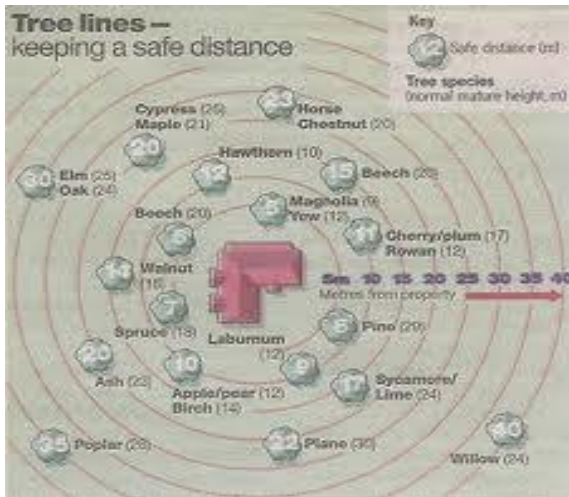


TREES, BUSHES AND VEGETATION



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

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.



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.

In properties of this age it is unlikely that a damp proof course (DPC) would have been built in originally however often they have had damp proof courses added at a later date.

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

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

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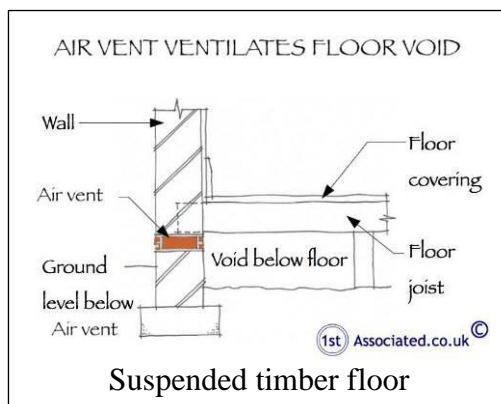
AIR VENTS



In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of air vents. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances of the property.

Low Level Air Vents

Air vents are essential to have a through flow of air as this helps to reduce the chances of wet rot, dry rot and woodworm. In this case, we noted air vents to the front of the property but no air vents to the rear.



ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend further vents are added and we would also open up the floor to check its condition.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions based upon our visual inspection of the outside of the property and our general knowledge of this age, type and style of construction. We have not opened up the floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

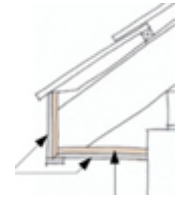
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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS



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.

The fascias and soffits are decorated timber and we would comment we had a limited view as they are hidden by the gutters. They are in average condition for their age, type and style from what we could see.

ACTION Periodically repair, prepare and redecorate.

REQUIRED:

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



Fascias and Soffits

WINDOWS AND DOORS



The property has mixture of single and double glazed plastic and timber windows.

Generally we would comment they are below average quality for their age, type and style.



Knife test

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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. We would also advise that some of the seals on the plastic windows are starting to go and we can see them misting over for example the rear left window.



Knife Test

We have tested the windows by pushing a knife into a random selection. We generally tend to do the lower windows as access to these is easier.

Building Regulations/Transferable Guarantees/FENSA certificates

Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees/Building Regulations Approval /FENSA certificates by your Legal Advisor. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten to twenty years.

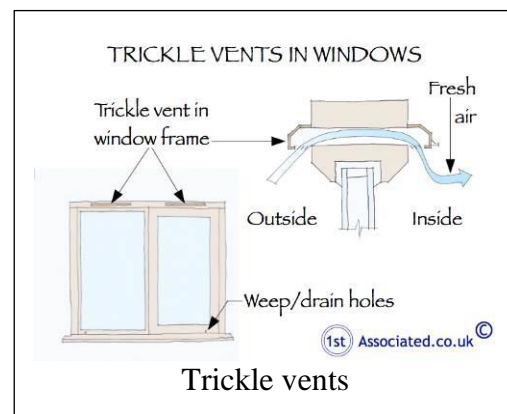
ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to specifically ask the existing owners if they have got Federation Self Assessment Scheme (FENSA) certificates/Building Regulations Approval.

Conservation Area

Be aware that the property is in a conservation area.

Trickle Vents Defined

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



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

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EXTERNAL DECORATION



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

The external decorations are in average condition where we could see them to the windows. We would recommend you redecorate the sooner the better although considering their condition at low level where we knife tested them the windows were better than we expected.

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 this is not carried out repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration and/or cleaning should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



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

Ceilings

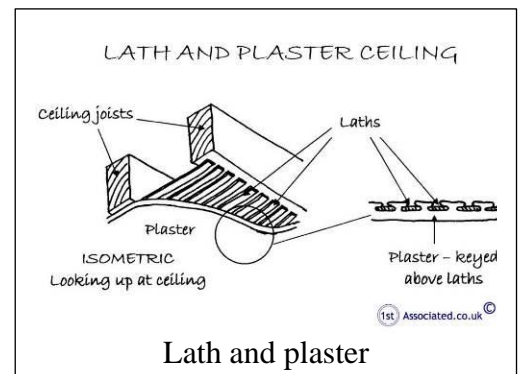
From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction, we believe that the ceilings are likely to be lath and plaster to the older parts of the building.



Lath and plaster visible within roof space

Lath and Plaster Defined

Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.



Lath and plaster

Internal Walls and Partitions

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

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Perimeter Walls

Originally these would have been constructed with a wet plaster, possibly a lime plaster. We now believe they are lime plaster with a finish in a modern plaster although it is difficult to be certain.

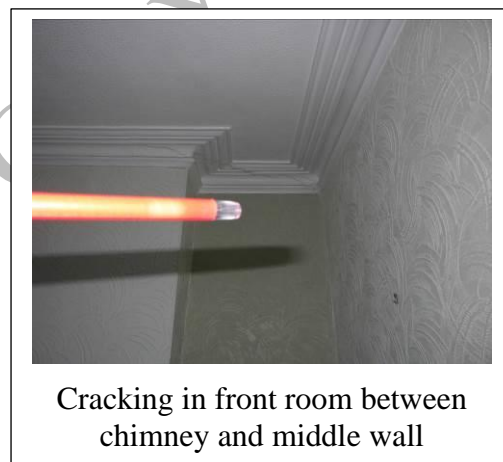
This comment has been based on the visual look of the wall which is relatively “smooth” and normally means a modern finish.

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

Cracking

We noted cracking internally particularly to the front room.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and the defects that we found in the roof.



Cracking in front room between chimney and middle wall

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.

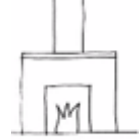
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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

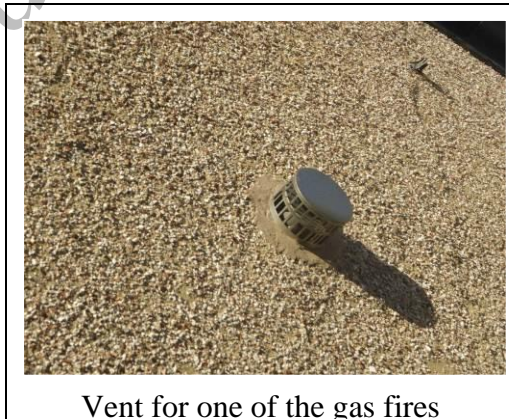
The chimney breasts are located to the left hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey the chimneys look to be being used partly as a ventilation system for the gas fires. We think if the gas fires are checked they may be condemned and not usable.

ACTION REQUIRED: Have the gas fires checked if you intend to use them and removed if you don't intend to use them.



Gas fire



Vent for one of the gas fires

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.

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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.

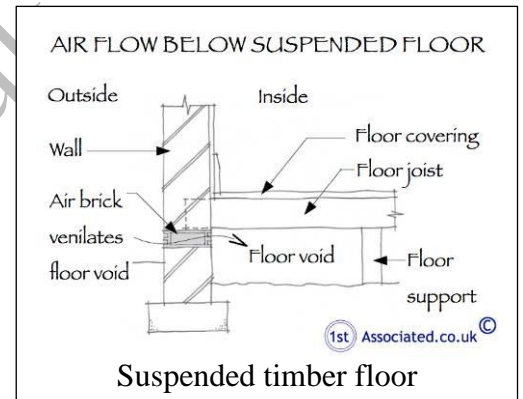
Ground Floor

There is a mixture of a suspended timber floor to the front of the property, which require air movement underneath to minimise wet rot, dry rot and woodworm, and a concrete floor to the rear.

Please see our comments with regards to the lack of ventilation to the floor.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined:

A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via airbricks within the walls.



First Floor

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

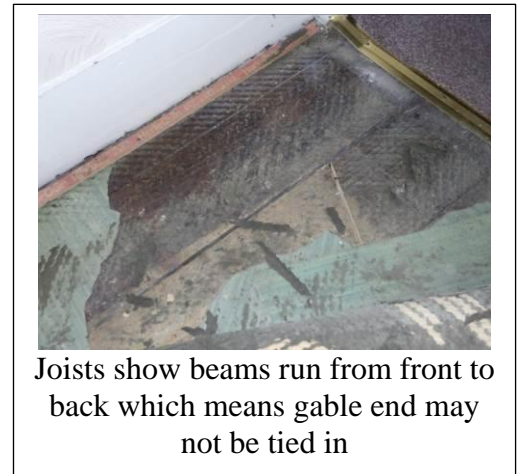
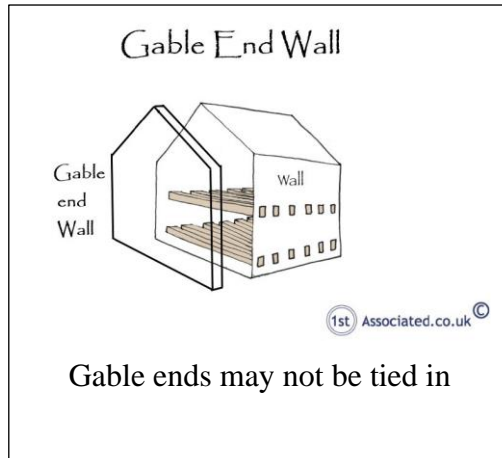
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We noted the joists show beams run from front to back which means the gable end may not be tied in.



Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets, floor coverings, timber flooring 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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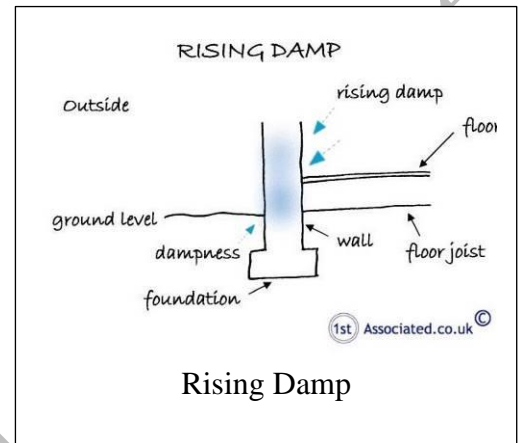
DAMPNESS



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.



A visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case, we have found significant rising damp.

This is based on our damp meter readings, as well as our knowledge and skill in identifying dampness in this age, type and style of property.

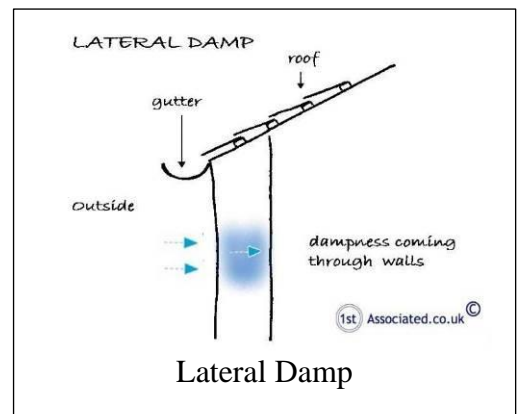


High damp meter reading of 97

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

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.



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We used a resistance meter on the external walls. We found it to be in line with what we would expect for this age, type and style of property.

This is based on our damp meter readings, as well as our knowledge and skill in identifying dampness in this age, type and style of property.

Condensation

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

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

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

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 any areas where you intend to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas.

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

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required; please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

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

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INTERNAL JOINERY



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

Doors

The property has flush doors with trim.



Flush door with trim

No safety glass to glazed doors

We cannot see a British Standard Institution safety kitemark on the glazed doors and we therefore assume that this glass is not safety glass therefore it can shatter. We would recommend changing the glass to safety glass.

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace glass with safety glass.

ANTICIPATED COST: Set aside the sum of £75 to £200 per door depending upon the quality of door you want; please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.



Older style glazed door

Staircase

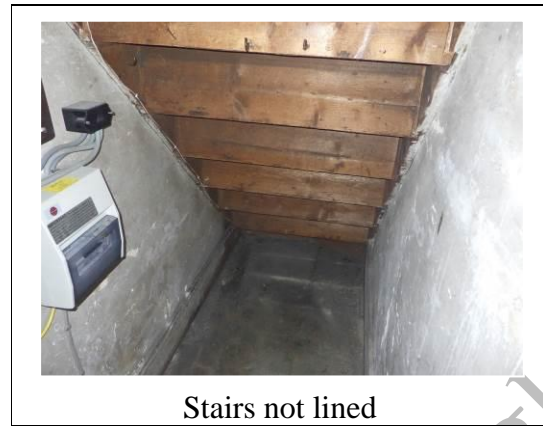
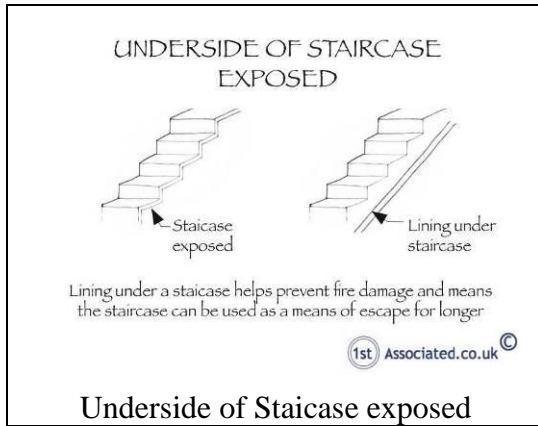
We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor in a worst case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.

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Kitchen

We found the kitchen in average/dated 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.

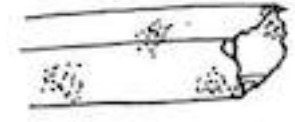
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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.

Dry Rot / White Rot

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

Wet Rot / Brown Rot

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

Wood destroying insects (such as woodworm and beetles, etc)

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



The roof is usually the main area where we look for wood destroying insects. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of significant wood destroying insects activity or indeed past signs of significant wood destroying insects activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of wood destroying insects that are not active.

Wood Destroying Insects Defined

By this we mean wood boring insects. Historic England identify between 20 and 30 different types. For the avoidance of doubt, we would refer wood boring insects to include beetles and/or similar however we do not identify specific types.

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Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

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

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



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.

The internal decorations are in dated condition. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY



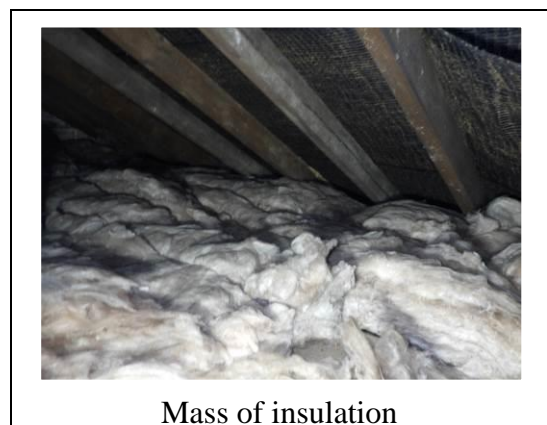
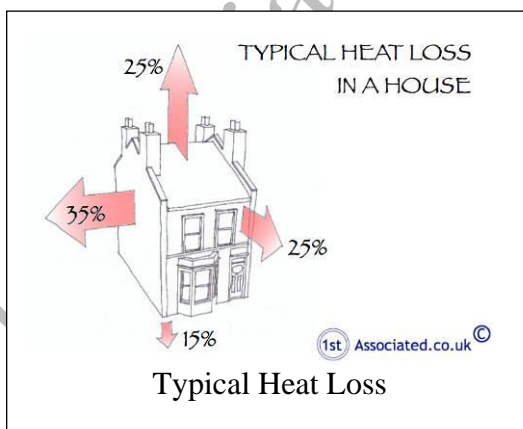
Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation.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

General

Older properties will not be as thermally efficient as a modern property. Having said that, modern properties range considerably in their thermal efficiency as we develop and improve our methods of insulating buildings.

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this instance there is 200-300mm; if anything without ventilation it may cause some condensation.



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Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have. Also they are unlikely to have any substantial insulation, however, unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property.

Windows

The windows are a mixture of single and double glazed and will therefore have poor / reasonable thermal properties.

Services/Boiler

The property has a boiler - service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that you ask for service bills for the past few years; the more that you can get the better.

Please note we have not seen the Energy Performance Certificate.

Summary

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

Further information

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

- 1. www.gov.uk, Google: 'Energy Grants' and 'Energy Efficiency'. There is generally information available on the website which is constantly being updated.*
- 2. www.cat.org.uk , <http://www.cat.org.uk> (Centre for Alternative Technology)*

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3. *You Tube Video: The Hypocrisy of Being Green by Belinda Carr*

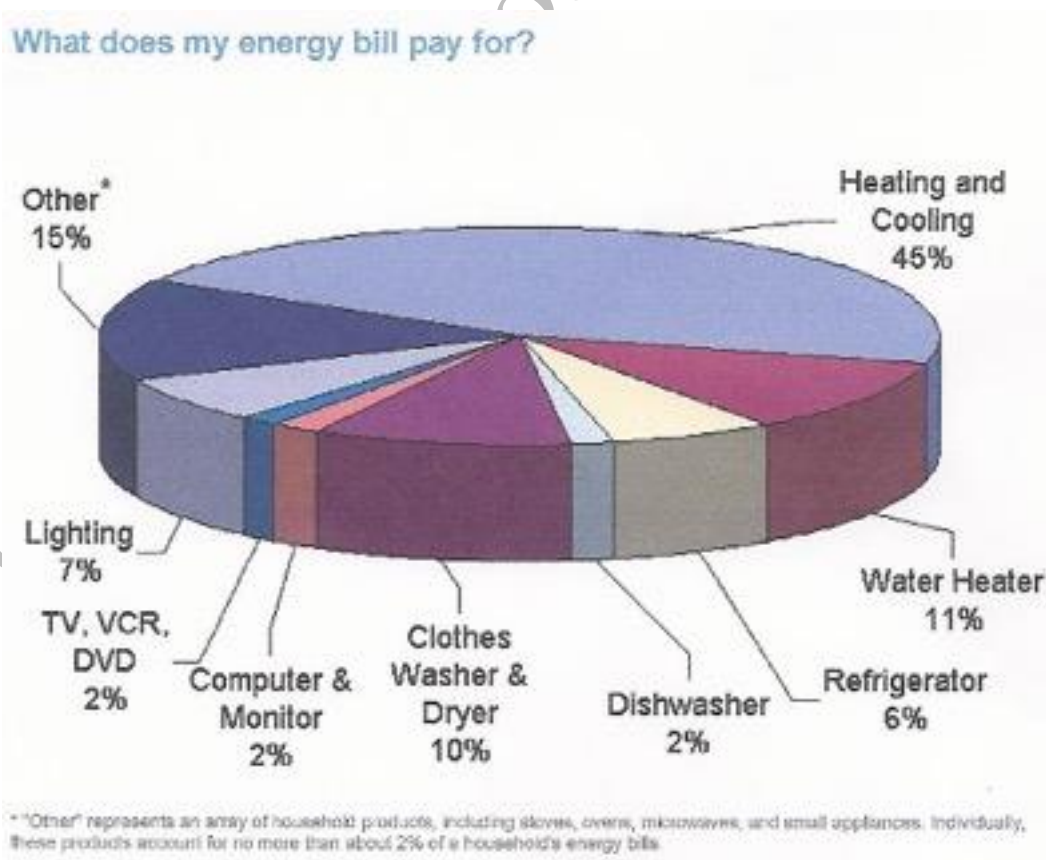
4. *It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay – can be viewed on YouTube.*

5. *SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings) have produced a book called The Old House Eco Handbook. We believe there will be further research into older buildings as we progress down the path of energy conservation. It is worth checking their website for the latest information at www.SPAB.org*

HIPs

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

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



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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

No smoke detectors were noted. When installing smoke detectors we prefer detectors to be hard-wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

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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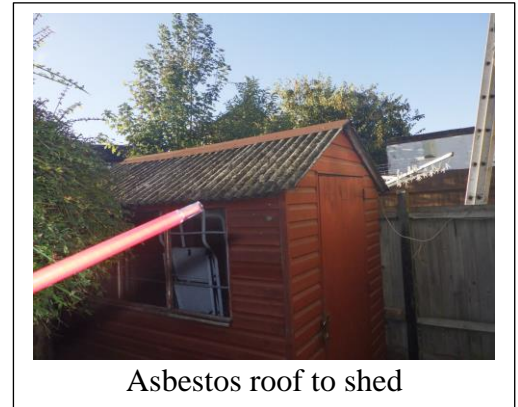
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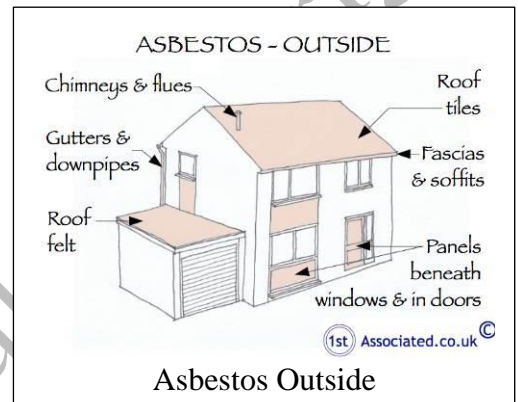


Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case, we have noted asbestos to the shed roof.

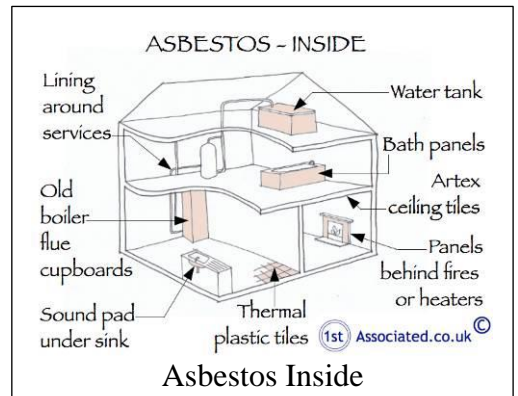


In years gone by asbestos was commonly used as wood and can be found in all sorts of places. Asbestos was used post war until it was banned only in the UK relatively recently. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.



Our insurance company 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: If you wish to confirm you are one hundred percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.



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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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 are sometimes asked with regard to the Broadband Connectivity in the area. We have identified some websites which we believe are useful for this:

<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.

However, we would always recommend speaking to the occupiers of properties as to what they have used.

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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 under the stairs.

The fuse board looked 1970's-1980's and better are now available.



Dated fuse board under stairs

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 a new fuse board and re-wiring of the property.

As the property is changing occupancy 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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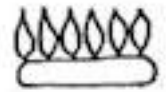
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GAS



There is very little we can check for in a gas installation, we do inspect to make sure there is a gas supply, 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.
There is a dated gas boiler.

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 boiler

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

No carbon monoxide monitors were noted. However many fire alarms also incorporate this.

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 & 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

We were advised by the owner that the internal stopcock is located under the kitchen sink and they did not know the location of the external stopcock. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage test, we checked the pressure literally by putting a finger over the tap and this seemed average. The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

Cold Water Cistern

Please see our comments in the Roof Section.

Plumbing

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

Heating

There is a wall mounted Britony boiler located in the kitchen. The boiler is a make that we rarely come across therefore it may be difficult to obtain spare parts.



Boiler

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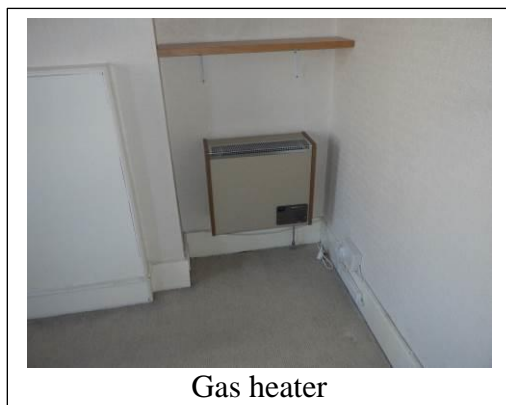
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Heating is via gas heaters. The owner advised that they were not condemned when we spoke about them but we do not know whether this is simply because they have not been tested for some time.

There are also portable electric heaters.



Gas heater



Electric heater

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.

Ten Minute Heating Test

The only heating at the time of our survey was the electric heater.

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.

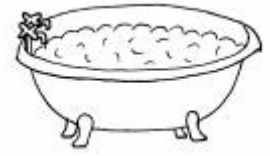
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BATHROOM



In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings.

Bathroom

The property has a three-piece bathroom suite, consisting of a shower cubicle, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition considering its age. We would add it is a good sized bathroom and has scope for improvement.

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

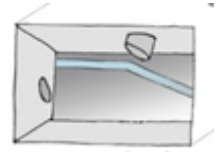
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MAIN DRAINS



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

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

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the bathroom. No build up or back up was noted.

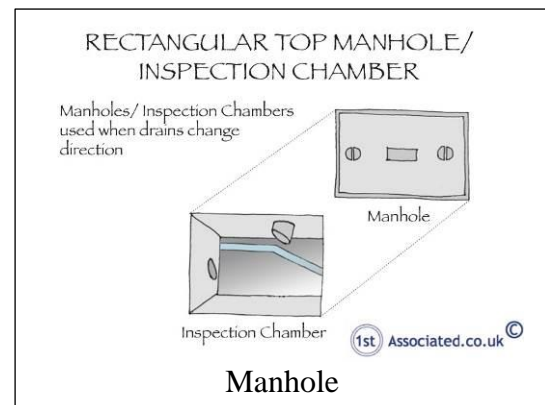
Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole.

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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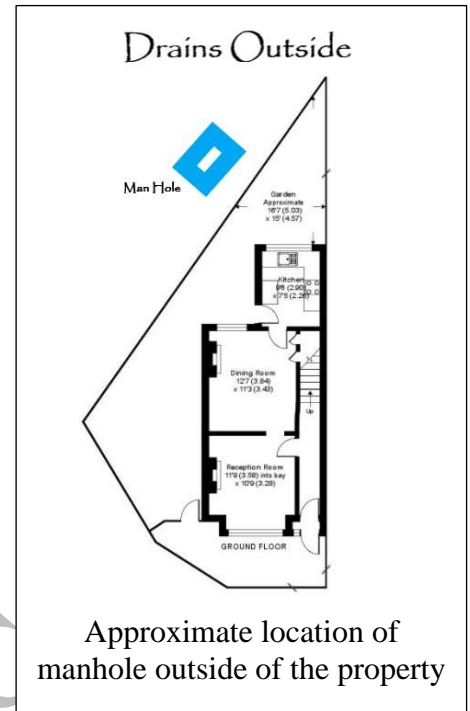
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Inspection Chamber/ Manhole One - located to the rear private road

We have not lifted the manhole therefore are unable to comment.

Thank you for forwarding the drainage report.



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.

Future Development and Drains

From 1st October 2011 the water authority took over responsibility for shared private sewers. These private sewers are now public sewers. However, general drainage searches will not show the location of all the public sewers within the boundary of a property and other such matters that may restrict development.

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The water authority's prior consent is required to build within 3 metres of a public sewer. The owner is responsible for the cost of obtaining the water authority's consent which may include the re-routing of the public sewer. If you intend to carry out any such development at the property you should obtain a speciality drainage report to ascertain the route of the sewers and drains.

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 8/9 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.



OUTSIDE

SUN MAP

The Sun Map shows the sun's path as it travels around the property on 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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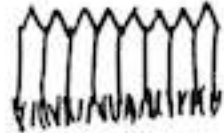
OUTSIDE AREAS



PARKING

Parking is on the roadside on a first come first served basis.

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

There is a small garden to the front of the property.



Front garden

Rear Garden

There is a reasonable size rear and side garden. The shed has an asbestos roof.



Asbestos to shed roof



Boundary wall and paved area to side

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

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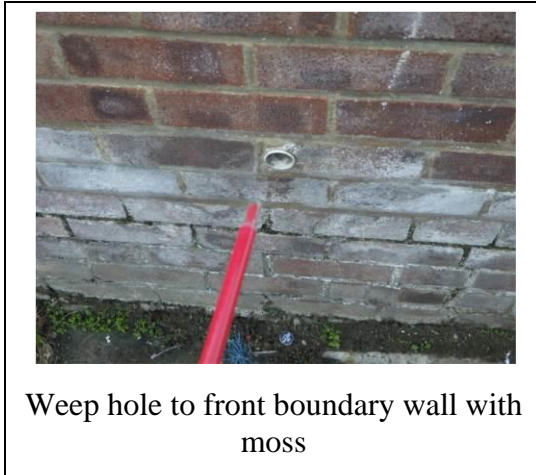
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Boundaries

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

There is cracking to the boundary wall. In this case, we assume that the wall is the boundary wall but you should not assume anything; your legal advisor to check and confirm.



ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to check whose boundary is whose. There is normally a 'T' marking which boundary is yours on the Deeds which you can obtain from the Land Registry.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend you chat to the neighbours before you legally commit to purchase the property.

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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) Walls repairs and alterations such as cement repointing.
 - v) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - vi) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - vii) Drainage location, maintenance and repairs.
 - viii) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ix) Rising damp treatments.
 - x) Asbestos
 - xi) Boiler and central heating installation and maintenance.
 - xii) Electrical test and report.
 - xiii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - xiv) Have there been any structural problems referred to insurance companies, any insurance claims, monitoring or underpinning, etc.
 - xv) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
 - i) General development proposals in the locality.
 - j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other 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

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property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Environmental report or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Environmental reports or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

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

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REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components
*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings
*By Malcolm Hollis
Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible
*By Mark Brinkley
Published by Burlington Press*

Period House Fixtures and Fittings
*By Linda Hall
Published by Countryside Books*

The Rising Damp Myth
*By Jeff Howell
Published by Nosecone Publications*

Putting Life into Perspective House Price Information
Source: Sunlife.co.uk

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LIMITATIONS

Our limitations are as the agreed Terms and Conditions of Engagement.

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated xxx and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

APPROVALS/GUARANTEES

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

LAYOUT PLAN

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

SKETCHES

We have used sketches throughout the report, these are for illustration purposes only and we would not expect these to be used as technical details for work being carried out. We would be more than happy to advise further if you wish specific help on any elements.

WEATHER

It was a dry winter's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. As you are probably aware there has been some record breaking weather recently:

2020 being the driest summer

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

1914 Meteorological Office began recording weather although there are informal diary records as is evidence of plant growth, etc. which also indicates weather patterns and is available for a much longer period.

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

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FLOODING

We are often asked about floods and how likely is the property to flood. We no longer think it is possible to predict due to our changing weather patterns and rainfall often being more intense. We simply do not have a crystal ball good enough to be able to advise of the certainty on this matter, other than the obvious that if you are near rivers, springs and on a sloping site you are more likely to flood than most. We have, however, been involved in some cases where flooding has occurred when it has not occurred for many decades/in living memory and this we feel is due to new weather patterns; we do not believe there is a one hundred percent accurate way to establish if a property will flood or not.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to carry out your own research on this matter/due diligence before you legally commit to purchase the property.

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 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 Japanese knotweed could be in neighbouring properties which you do not have direct control over.

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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 have not taken any aerial photographs, everything was viewed from ground level.
- 3) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.
- 4) 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 building 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. Settlement, Subsidence and Heave and the part clay soils in this
4. Victorian and Edwardian property problems with Condensation and Cold Bridging

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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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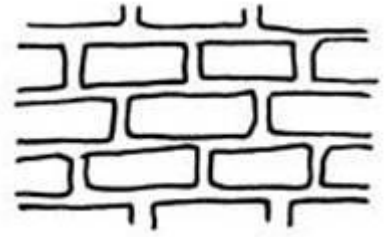
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Settlement, Subsidence and Heave and the part clay soils play in this

The magical properties of clay

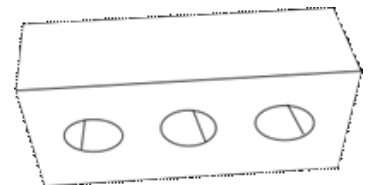
Clay has several unique properties. It can both cause problems when it is a clay soil that your house is built upon and be useful when it is used for the bricks that your house is made of.



Clay expands and contracts, depending upon its moisture content. It is at its bulkiest at 40% to 60%, however, it changes form if it gets wetter or dryer. It is this change of its bulk that causes problems. When the clay soil gets too wet the clays bulk becomes larger and almost pushes the property out of the ground. This is known as heave. When the clay dries out it becomes dust like, then we get settlement of foundations and subsidence of the building, as its bulkiness has reduced considerably.

Its ability to change size wouldn't be such a problem if it weren't that most London properties are built on clay, and there are many areas of clay throughout the country, such as Bedfordshire and Peterborough, which, interestingly enough, are also known for brick making.

Finding out if your property is built on clay soil



There are several ways of finding out if your property is built on clay soil.

Cracks

If the property has historic cracks it may be that it is built upon clay. It is best to check before you panic. You can do this by looking at geological maps or ringing up your friendly insurance broker, as they have a postcode index as to what areas are considered high risk with clay and which aren't. However, we must add that these maps are quite general and that when we were on a course many years ago we asked how these maps were originally made. We were advised that students were employed during their summer holidays, so the reliability of them, it could

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be argued, is limited for the purposes of identifying if clay is under your building, as they were originally produced to help farmers.

Clay test

This is what a good surveyor would do if they had come to investigate problems with your foundations and the owner of the property was happy for them to dig up the garden! We take a lump of soil from the garden; this should be approximately the depth of the foundations. If it is a Victorian or Edwardian property it may be a lot less, in a modern property it is likely to be 1 metre to 1.2 metres, to even 1.4 metres deep.

On a summer's day you can leave the lump of soil in the garden for it to dry out in the sun. When it dries out if it becomes powdery and much lower in volume then it is clay. Equally, if it rains and it becomes a larger volume then it is clay. Also, if it is not warm you can leave it inside on the radiator. We believe (although we would need to check it) that a growth or reduction of approximately 30% (for some reason 28% is ringing bells). This type of clay is known as shrinkable clay.

Not all clay expands and contracts

We would add that not all clay expands and contracts. The deeper clay tends to be the more stable and harder clay and therefore doesn't expand to the same extent.

Clay that is used for brick making

We thought we would just add something about clay that is made for the use of brick making.

Old soft red bricks

The older bricks, were possibly even sun baked rather than fired, used a softer red clay. They have their own oil so they can affectively cook themselves.

You will also notice that it is the softer red clay bricks, even up the post-war era, that tend to be affected first by spalling.

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Blue clay

Blue clay is fairly well known. This type of clay tends to be the harder clay and produces harder bricks and you may find bricks made out of this clay. A classic brick, and generally considered the hardest brick, is the Accrington brick and you would have to dig deep for this clay, i.e. normal clay would be dug at about 30 feet, or the metric equivalent!

Yellow or white clay

A yellow or white clay, that is used in a London stock brick, is harder than the soft red bricks but not as hard as the blue clay bricks.

Fletton brick

The one thing that used to confuse us for many years is what is the difference between a Fletton brick, a stock brick and a common brick. A Fletton brick, we believe, has its origins in Fletton near Peterborough, where bricks are produced in such quantities that it became the common name. Stock bricks tend also to be a common brick, but it specifically relates to bricks that don't have their own oils to fire, they would typically have to have methane today and years gone by coal dust to fire them, whereas the soft red bricks tend to have their own oil that they can fire in. Therefore, you tend to find many of the older properties have a red brick as they were fired in the sun. The term common brick is a generic name.

Silicone brick

This isn't a brick at all, but, we believe, is made from concrete.

You may also be interested in these articles regarding cracking in properties:

<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/structural-cracking1.asp>

<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/cracking.asp>

<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/cracking.asp>

<http://www.1stassociated.co.uk/articles/structural-cracking2.asp>

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Victorian and Edwardian property problems with Condensation and Cold Bridging

Victorian properties that have been extended and altered over the years with new thermal properties can have cold bridging because of the mix of old and new standards.



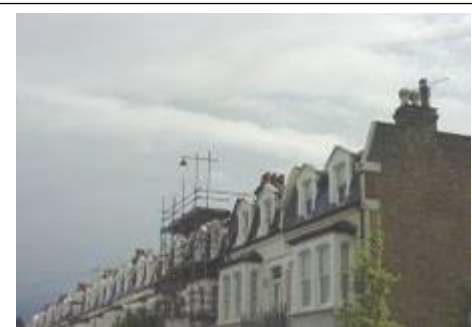
Victorian properties

How does cold bridging 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.

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.



Loft conversion and dormer windows

Loft conversions and dormers

Loft conversion and dormer windows can allow heat to escape.

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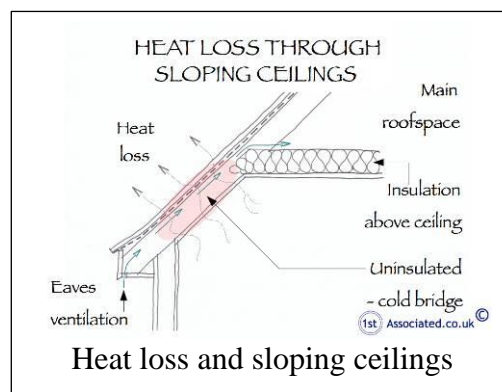
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Heat loss and sloping ceilings

Our original survey sketch adjacent shows how heat can be lost when sloping ceilings are present in properties such as in loft conversions and dormer windows.



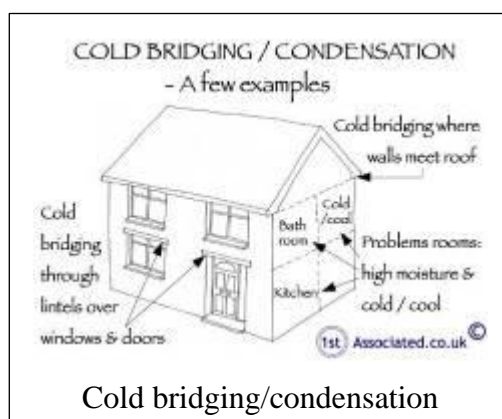
Combination of issues can cause cold bridging

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. 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.

Condensation and Cold Bridging in certain era properties

Here is our 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.



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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.

When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in:

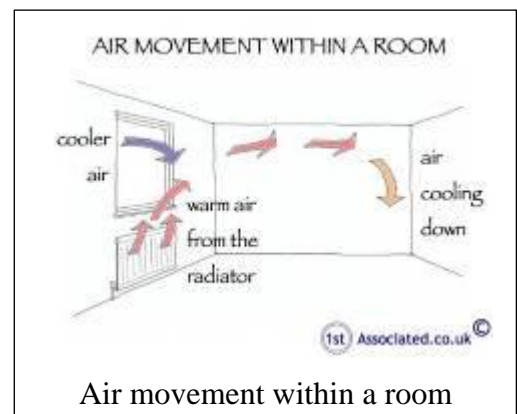
- 1) Eras of properties where there are warm elements and colder elements to the building.
- 2) Where you have a mixture of warm rooms and cold rooms.

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.

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

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.



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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 1960s/1970s. 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.



Victorian property that has been modernised

Red oval is original sliding sash window

Green oval is new large window that has been added

Is your lifestyle 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.



Very old Victorian water heater

Winter months and cold bridging

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.

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.



Older style cylinder with loose insulation jacket

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Design problem or a lifestyle problem?

Condensation and cold bridging explained further

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.

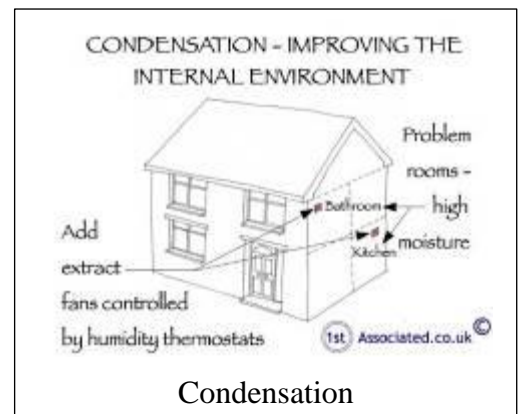


Inappropriate double glazed windows change the look of the property

Red circle is insulated roof indicated as snow is not visible

Design of the Building

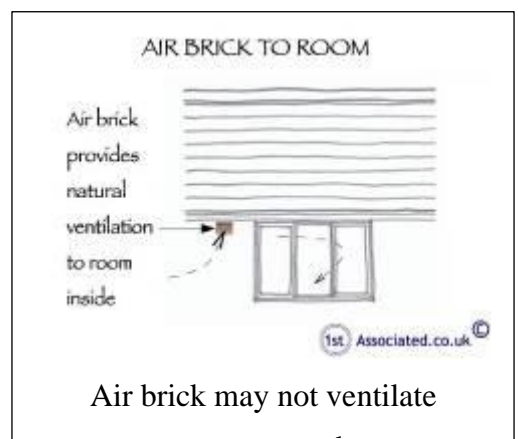
Sometimes it really is down to the design of the property. Where there are cold elements in it, such as a concrete structural frame or concrete lintels, when these are in contact with moist air condensation occurs. Sometimes this is impossible to stop but often it is possible to reduce it by having a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

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Seasons change and condensation and cold bridging problems occur

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.



Classic Victorian Sliding sash windows where they have managed to put in one pane of glass

Lifestyle can cause cold bridging

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.



Sliding sash windows can swell in the winter months

