

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

OF
Luton, Beds LU2



1950's
Semi-detached Property

FOR

Mr K

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
REPORT FORMAT
SYNOPSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS, PARAPET WALLS
ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS
ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT SPACE
GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES AND SOIL AND VENT PIPES
EXTERNAL WALLS
FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS
EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

INTERNAL

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

SERVICES

ELECTRICITY
GAS
PLUMBING AND HEATING
BATHROOMS
MAIN DRAINS

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES AND /PARKING
EXTERNAL AREAS

POINTS FOR LEGAL ADVISOR

APPENDICES

LIMITATIONS
ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS
GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 has been used to highlight a specific area. The sketches are not 100% technically accurate; we certainly would not expect you to carry out work based upon the sketches alone.

ORIENTATION

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

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property.

Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

A two storey semi-detached extended property with an adjacent single garage to the left hand side.

It has a garden to the front which has been given over mainly to hard standing for off road parking and access to the garage. To the rear there is a patio area which steps down to a large garden due to the whole property being on a sloping site. At the rear of the garden there is a large shed which we don't believe would meet local authority approval as it is two stories in height.

We believe that the property was built in the 1950's. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

The property was un-lived in at the time of our survey with few possessions in the house.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

- 1950 The concept of artificial intelligence for computers was developed by Alan Turing (MOD).
- 1951 Colour TV first introduced.
- 1952 Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen at the age of 25
- 1953 Roger Bannister breaks four minute mile
- 1958 Eight Manchester United footballers killed in a light aircraft crash, whilst returning home from Yugoslavia after qualifying for the European Cup semi-finals.

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front View



Rear View



Rear garden

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Entrance hall
- Cloak room
- Front lounge
- Rear lounge
- Kitchen breakfast room area
- Shower underneath the stair area

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Bedroom one (double sized)
- Bedroom two (double sized)
- Bedroom three
- Bathroom (bath removed)
- Landing giving access to roof space

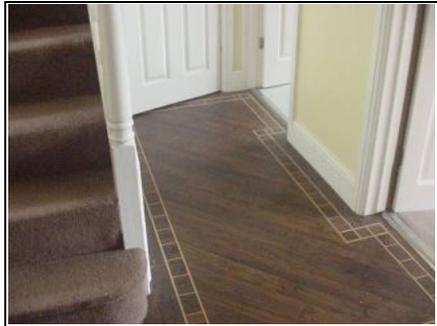
Outside Areas

A garden to the front which has been given over mainly to hard standing for off road parking and access to the garage. To the rear there is a patio area which steps down to a large garden.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

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

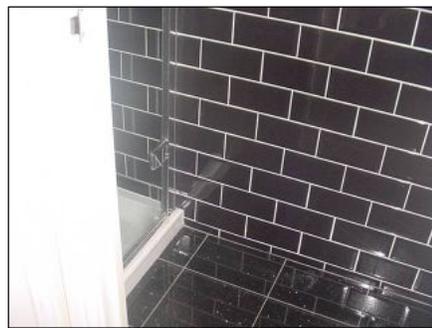
Ground Floor



Hallway



Cloakroom



Shower under stairs



Kitchen



Front Lounge



Rear Lounge

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

First Floor



Master Bedroom



Landing



Bathroom



Bedroom rear left hand side



Bedroom rear right hand side

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Three bricked chimneys
Main Roof:	Hipped and clad with a small concrete tile
Garage Roof:	Clad with a large concrete single pitched tile
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Walls:	Stretcher Bond and also some vertical tiling to the bay window at the front of the property.
Fascias and Soffits:	Plastic possibly overclad
Windows and Doors:	Plastic windows without trickle vents.

Internal

Ceilings:	Tacked over plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Predominantly plasterboard finished. The internal walls being stud work. (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Suspended timber floor (assumed)
	First Floor: Joist and floorboard (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed). The electric is fuse board 1990s/2000s, alarm controls (not working at the time of our inspection) and gas meter are underneath the staircase. The Worcester boiler is located to the rear left hand bedroom.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Summaries are dangerous as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

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

Generally we found the property to be in a slightly below average condition considering the property's age, type and style and we have identified these in the following section. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

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

1. There is a high internal specification of decorative finish although you need to appreciate this is only superficial.
2. The property has good natural light through parts of the bay windows and French doors.
3. It benefits from good off road parking including a garage.
4. Rooms are larger both in size and height than you would typically find in a more modern property and they have good natural light.

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) **Chimneys and ridge tiles to the roof**

The chimneys generally appear to have weathered pointing and will require re-pointing in the next few years as do the ridge tiles.

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out a general high level check to the chimneys, the ridge tiles and the roof before the summer of 2012 to stop any future deterioration and dampness.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1000-£2000.
You are likely to need some scaffolding as well; quotations should be obtained.

Please see the Chimney Section of this Report.

2) **Garage Roof/Awkward Guttering**

There is a very awkward gutter that has been formed for the garage that sits over your left hand wall. This means that if it leaks it gets damp. However, what is probably far worse is that the water from the garage roof discharges against your neighbour's wall in No 24 Kingsdown Road. We knocked on the door to have a chat with them about any problems they have but unfortunately no-one was in at the time of the inspection.



Main chimney in the middle of the property



Awkward guttering

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to speak to your neighbour before you purchase the property and view the inside of the garage to see what problems are being caused. You could minimise the problem by adding a lead flashing to your neighbour's wall but for this you would need their permission.



Awkward guttering

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1000-£2000 as this is very awkward work. We would also add that should the gutter leak it will leak onto an "I" beam beneath it so you need to check that this is not rusting from time to time.



"I" beam sitting under the awkward gutter detail

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

3) **Increased Likelihood of condensation**

We note that the windows had no trickle vents and that some of your radiators were internal. This means there is a lack of general air movement and airflow within the property which increases the likelihood of condensation. You need to ensure that any moisture/humidity created in the bathroom and kitchen needs to be extracted from the area as quickly as possible.



Plastic double glazed window without trickle vents

Trickle Vents Defined

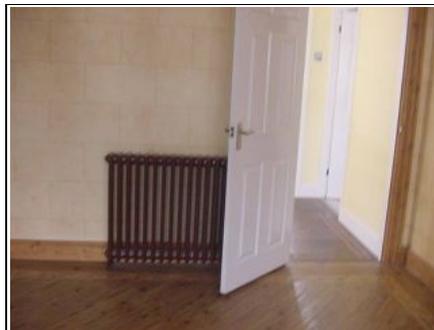
Small vents to the windows to allow air movement inside the property to stop a build up of fumes or humidity.

ACTION REQUIRED: The best way to do this is to have extract fans that are thermostatically controlled, recommend these are added.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £150 - £300 and always recommend that extract fans are added; quotations required.

Internal Radiators

The property has internal radiators. Where internal radiators are used you have a higher than average chance of having condensation as you do not get the same amount of air flow around the property as you do when radiators are positioned underneath the windows. Where the warm air rises it meets the colder air of the window and circulates around the room.



ACTION REQUIRED: Relocate the radiators underneath the windows

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

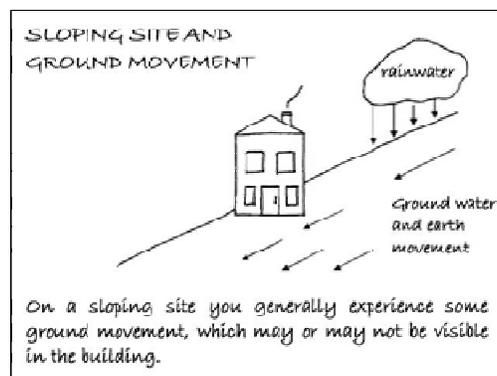


Internal radiators

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

4) **Sloping Site**

The property sits on a sloping site which impacts several different things on the property.



Hard standing to the front

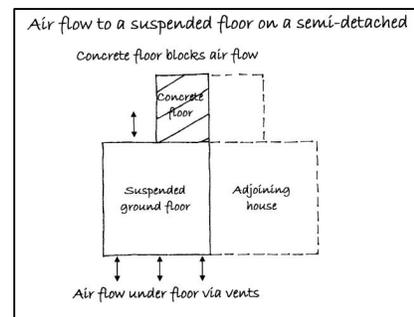
This means that rainwater that lands on the hard standing to the front is directed towards the house and in turn the garage. Due to its position the water discharges towards the house where there are air bricks at low level which effectively act as gutters allowing rain water in underneath the suspended timber floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to protect the air brick and ideally open up the floor to check its condition before you purchase the property. To elaborate further, you have a suspended timber floor which can be affected by dampness getting into it.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds to open up the floor and protect the air bricks. Protection of the air bricks is normally done by putting bricks on edge around them. In a worst case scenario there may already be damage to the timber under the floor; quotations required.



Air bricks acting as gutters



Retaining Wall to the rear

There is a retaining wall to the rear garden just beyond the patio. It needs to have weep holes added into it. This will mean that the water pressure behind the wall will then be reduced by the water coming out of the weep holes.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add weep holes.



Rear retaining wall

ANTICIPATED COST: Protecting the air bricks and opening the floor we would expect costs in the region of £500-£1000. Remember it is very important that the floors are opened up as currently the condition of the floor is completely hidden by the vinyl floor covering. To the rear the adding of the weep holes a few hundred pounds for a diamond core drill; quotations required.

The Ugly

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

There is nothing which we feel falls within this category though there are a larger number of items in the Bad Section than we would typically expect on this age, type and style of property.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Electrics

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you of the following:

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend an NICEIC (or equivalent) registered and approved electrical contractor carry out an inspection, test and report.

Maintenance

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

DIY/Handyman Type Work

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

Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of 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 £100 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.

SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



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

This property has some awkward problems that may not be resolvable; obviously the way the garage has been built so close to your neighbour's property may mean there will be long running almost unsolvable problems (without major expense). You need to decide whether this is acceptable to you having spoken to your neighbour and consider it as a characteristic of the property! Equally the sloping site is also characteristic of the property and you need to make sure you are happy with this. If you do not manage to get the floors open you need to understand you are taking on a risk when buying the property.

We did notice minor movement in the property and some mortar missing to the ridge of the hipped roof. This often applies to movement in the roof but we can also see some hairline cracking internally. We are slightly concerned that the new decoration internally could be hiding latent defects in the structure.



Mortar missing to ridge of hipped roof

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend your solicitor specifically asks the existing owners if there has been any structural movement in the property and if a structural claim has been made with regards to the property.

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 and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

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

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

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

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

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

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

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

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Residential Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen and signed a copy of our terms of engagement please phone immediately.

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.

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



Independent Chartered Surveyors

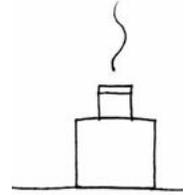
Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



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.

This property has three chimneys. The chimneys are located, one in the middle of the property and two to the left hand side (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One located in the middle of the property

This chimney is built in brick with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see the chimney looks weathered and we can also see some moss to the top of it. We were unable to see the very top of the chimney known as the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon it. We suspect from the moss we can see that there will be some deterioration.



Chimney one

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out repointing as soon as possible, check flashing immediately and replace with lead in the long term.

Chimney Two located on the front left hand side

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and a flue. Brickwork pointing looks slightly weathered.



Chimney Two

ACTION REQUIRED: This needs to be

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: _____

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

checked when the main chimney is checked.

Chimney Three,
located on rear left hand side

Again this brick built chimney is slightly weathered and we would recommend it is viewed when the main chimney is viewed. In this case the chimney looks to be capped and we notice there is a vent there for the Worcester boiler in the rear left hand bedroom.



Chimney Three

ACTION REQUIRED: Again, this needs to be checked when the main chimney is checked.

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.

Capping Defined

Capping is a practice used when chimneys are no longer in use to prevent moisture from entering the structure in the form of rainwater via the chimney. This usually involves the closing of the chimney with a tile or slab positioned across. It should include vents to allow air circulation.

Party Wall

The central chimney is likely to be sitting on a party wall. Here is a bit of general information with regard to party walls which you will need to look into when you do work to the chimney.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall etc Act 1996

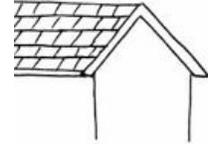
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

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

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks, parapet walls from the parts we could see. 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 the Chimney breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



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

The underlayer's function is to minimise wind and water damage. Dependent upon the age of your property this may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in two areas; the high level main roof and the low level roofs.

Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad in a small nibbed concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying level and true and look in average condition. We did note that the pointing to the ridge needs renewing and you will need to periodically check these.



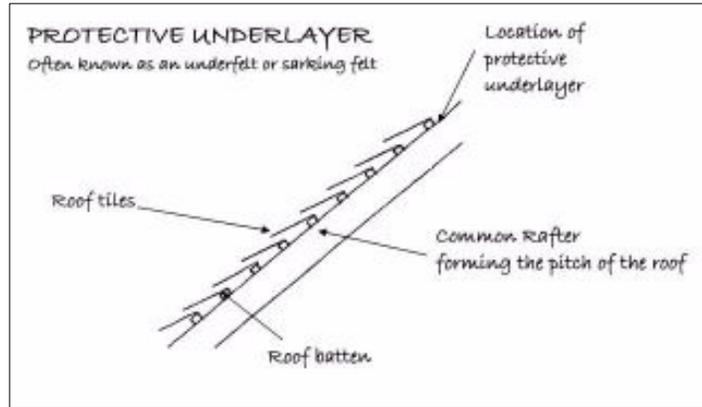
Main roof

It is noted that there were some areas of moss on the roof. This can build up and ultimately block gutters. Ensure the gutters are cleared periodically. Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridge as in this case and exposed areas such as the perimeter and so you should periodically check these areas.

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

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

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



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, it is damaged in a few more places than we normally find.



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

Side Roof

The roof is pitched and clad in a concrete tile. From what we could see the concrete tiles are lying level and true and look in reasonable condition. Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridge and exposed areas such as the perimeter and so you should periodically check these areas.



Side Roof



Large concrete roof tile



Roof tile

The garage to the left hand side has a shallow pitched large concrete tile roof. From what we can see it is in reasonable condition. However, we would comment that the angle of it is relatively low and may allow wind driven rain in and also it has a very awkward gutter detail that you need to see. The flashing is coming away as it has been wrongly pointed.

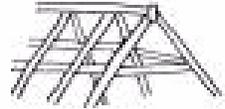
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and repair the flashing.

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

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately 70% percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see. However a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

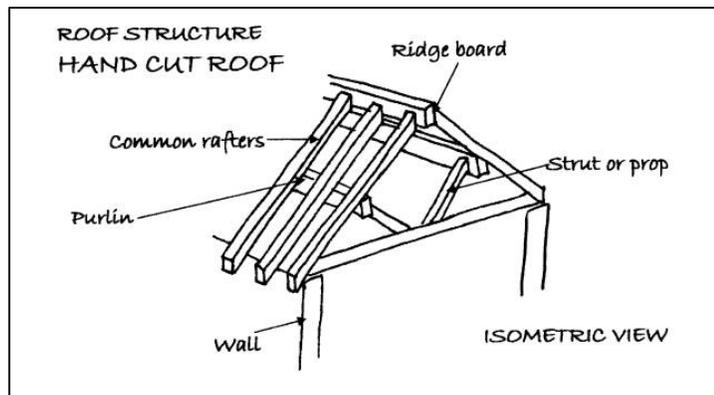
Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing. There is a loft ladder (although it wasn't fixed at the time of our inspection), electric light and floorboards (some are unsecured so you need to take care when going in the roof). The loft perimeter has been viewed by torch light which has limited our viewing.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof, which is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see.



Roof Timbers

We found the roof timbers generally in average condition considering their age. There was an unusual stepped purlin detail. We have inspected the roof structure for:

- Serious active woodworm
- Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- Structurally significant dry rot
- Structurally significant wet rot



Roof timbers

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items. As mentioned what we could see was generally found to be in average condition with exception of the stepped purlin detail. It is feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

Purlin Defined

Purlin is a horizontal timber that gives support to the common rafters that form the pitch of the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be 100 per cent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked.

Fire Walls

In this instance the firewall is built in brickwork. Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

Water Tanks

The water tanks are in the roof space but no longer in use.

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

Ventilation

We were not able to see any ventilation in the roof.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that ventilation is added.

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

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 is insufficient quantity to comment.

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

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

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 profile gutters from ground level and look to be in reasonable condition and be formed of plastic. We would comment that there is moss on the roof which can block the gutters. We also note that you have a different profile gutter to your neighbour. They have a half round gutter and you have a shaped square gutter. This can cause problems but you do need to look to have the correct connector fitted. Although we would add, from our experience, half round pipes work is better than profile pipes or drain pipes such as these.



Guttering

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always 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

There is an internal soil and vent pipe located in the bathroom. These are known as air inlet valves and are a fairly modern invention. We are not a great lover of internally vented pipes and much prefer them to be vented externally.



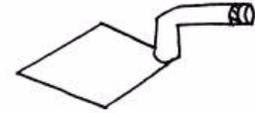
Soil and vent pipe located
in bathroom

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally extend the soil and vent pipe so it becomes externally vented.

ANTICIPATED COST: We are not certain of the work involved; quotations required.

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

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.

We will consider the walls in two areas; the main brickwork and the vertical tiles.

Brickwork

This property is brick finished and laid in a cement mortar (likely to have some lime content given the age of the property) or bedded in what is known as stretcher bond. In this property it has an original cavity before insulation was commonly used. However, we can see circular holes drilled in the walls that indicate insulation has been added.

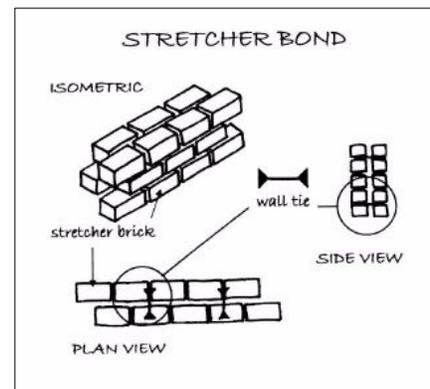
ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal advisor needs to specifically request what insulation has been added as the wrong sort of insulation can cause wall tie problems.

WALL TIE FAILURE DEFINED

Wall tie failure occurs on pre 1970s properties, the wall ties used can rust. It is possible to replace defective ties and a specialist contractor should be engaged to investigate further to establish the extent of the problem and the cost of replacement.



Brickwork



Circular holes drilled in wall

Vertical Tiles

The property has vertical tiles. These are to the bay window area.



Vertical tiles

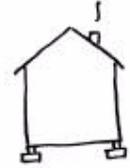
General Information

Tiles may be fixed directly to a wall or battens or, indeed, counter battens. It is necessary to nail all tiles and it is also good practice to use an underfelt and lap the tiles to approximately two inches (30 mm).

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / vertical tiles / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age of property we would have concrete lintels and metal lintels.

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

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 that the property is brick built, we would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar.

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.

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

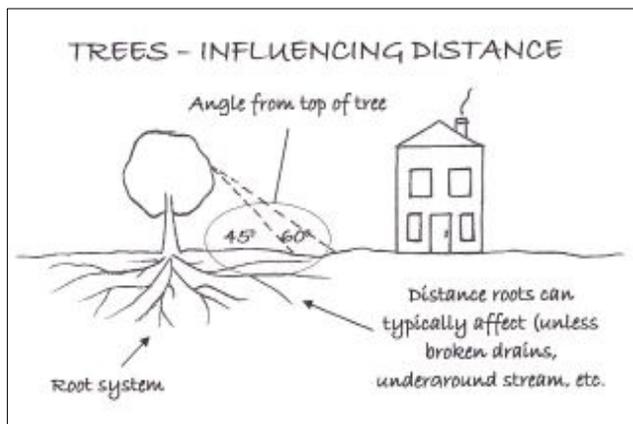
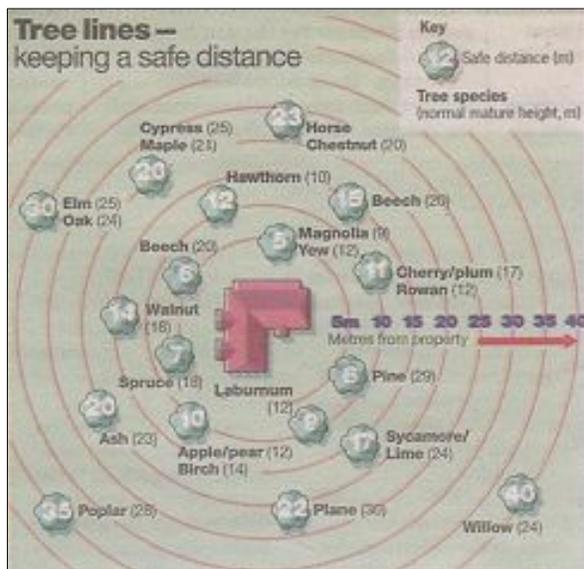
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



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

There are no trees within your garden that are within influencing distance of the main house.



Influencing Distance Defined

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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE



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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case we noted a thickening of the cement, which usually means a built in DPC.

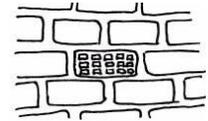


Please see the Dampness Section of this report.

DPC – thickening of cement mortar

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.

AIRBRICKS



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

Airbricks are visible to the front and rear of this property, which is usually seen when suspended timber floors have been used and that would be my thoughts in this case. However, without opening up the structure we cannot be certain of the structure or its condition.

Some air bricks are acting as gutters, this can cause dampness and rot to the floors they need protecting.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend bricks are bedded around the air bricks to stop water getting into them. Without opening up the floor we cannot confirm its condition we would be very surprised if the floor did not have some rot. Please see Executive Summary.

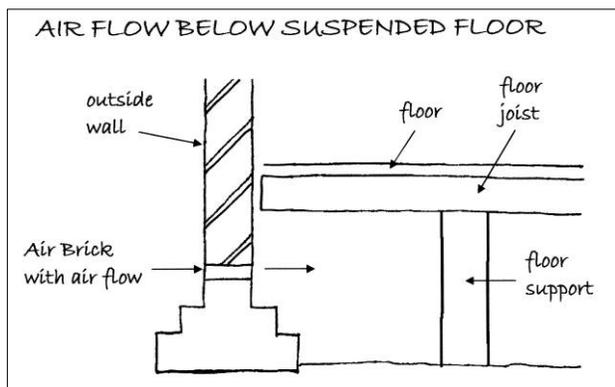
Finally, we have made our best assumptions based upon our visual inspection of the outside of the property and our general knowledge of this age, type and style of construction. We have not opened up the floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.



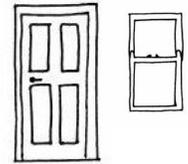
Airbricks

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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



FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



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

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

Fascias and Soffits

The property predominantly has plastic fascias and soffits, which are in average condition. We are uncertain as to whether these are in place of the original timber or if they are covering the timber. It is very difficult to be certain without opening them up.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally add a vent to the soffit, which will allow ventilation to the loft space and help to prevent condensation forming.



Fascias and soffits/bargeboards

Windows and Doors

Double glazed generally look to be of an average quality for the year made. We did not see any trickle vents, indicating the windows are pre 1990s.

Trickle Vents Defined

Small vents to the windows to allow air movement inside the property to stop a build up of fumes or humidity.



Plastic windows

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



Seal not finishing properly

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



Bay window to the front

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the fascias and soffits and windows and doors. 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 fascias and soffits and windows and doors. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

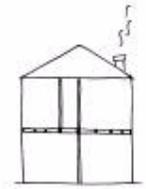
The external decoration is minimal; it is really just the fences and the garage door.

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

Please see our comments in the Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors section.

INTERNAL

CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



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

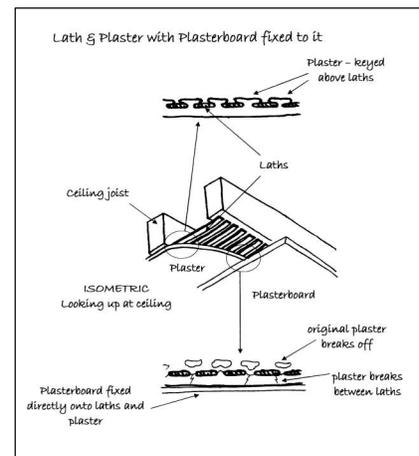
Ceilings

From what we can see of this construction we believe the original ceilings have been tacked over. This type of work is normally carried where the ceilings are in poor condition.



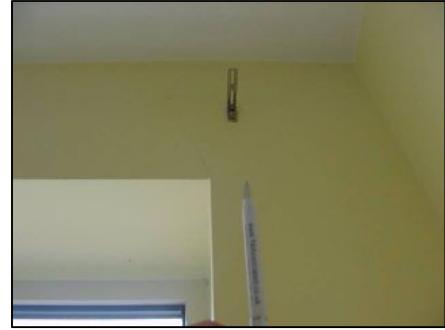
Plasterboard Defined

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



Internal Walls and Partitions

The internal walls of the property are mainly solid. We notice some hairline cracking in some of them. There could be latent defects hidden behind the decoration and we have no way of knowing.



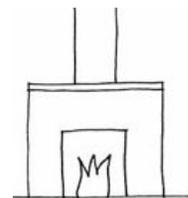
Perimeter Walls

We believe the original walls have been skimmed coated with a plaster as the existing walls are very smooth.

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.

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 fireplace has been removed in the main lounge but was obviously a feature of the room.

Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness. In this case we have identified problems with the chimneys that need to also be rectified prior to using them. We are not able to advise whether a lining has been added.



ACTION REQUIRED: You should specifically request your solicitor asks the vendor's solicitor if any linings have been added to the chimney.

Finally, it is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstruction prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

FLOORS

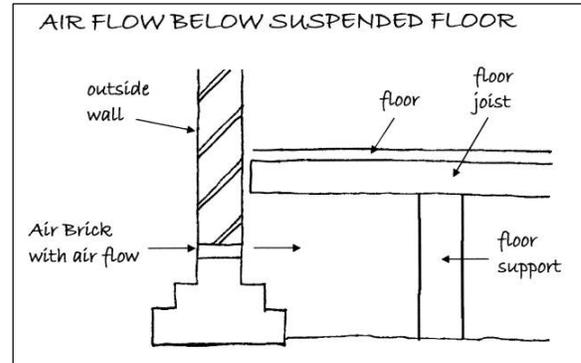


Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

The ground floor construction is predominately a suspended timber floor. This type of floor needs air circulation under it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections.

The remainder of the floor is solid under foot and assumed to be concrete.



The floor covering means we cannot see the floor structure.

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We are concerned that we are unable to see the floor timbers and the floor structure. There may be dampness beneath it due to the way the air bricks are acting as gutters to the front of the property. We strongly recommend the floors are opened up prior to purchasing the property. If they are not opened up there is an element of risk you are taking on.

First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards although we have not seen anything due to the vinyl covered floors.

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

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



Floor covering not allowing you to see floor beneath

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with floor coverings, laminated flooring and tiles. 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.

DAMPNESS

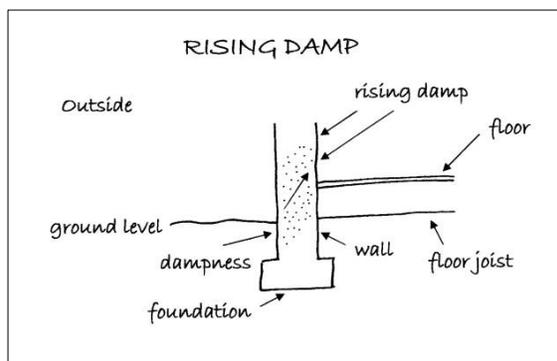


In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

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.

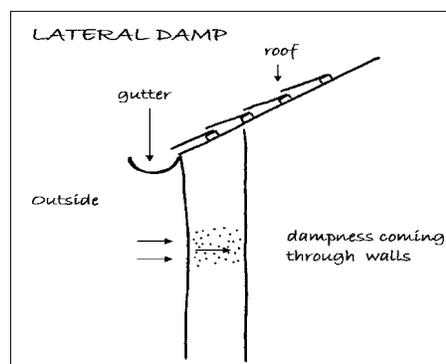
There is now much debate over whether true rising damp does exist after research over a 10 year period.



No evidence of any significant rising dampness was detected in the areas checked. It is not usual in a property of this type and age to have minor damp particularly to the front where the slope at the front discharges water against it.

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.



A visual inspection was carried and tests were taken with an electronic conductivity meter at selected points to walls. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected considering the properties age type and style.

Condensation

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

We cannot imagine that the small shower under the stairs is not getting condensation. It does of course depend how you use it and for how long. We can see no obvious signs of condensation, however, it depends upon how you utilise the building.



Small shower

If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

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.

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 pressed panelled doors. These are from the cheaper end of the market. Unfortunately if they get damaged they are difficult to repair.



Panelled door

Staircase

Would recommend it is lined.



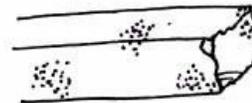
Underside of staircase
(unlined)

Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in average to good condition with exception of the flooring and has had some wear and tear. 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 Fascias and Soffits and Windows and Doors Section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



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

Dry Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot. Please note we have not opened up the floors and the roof inspection is limited

Wet Rot

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

In the areas visually inspected no evidence was found of any significant wet rot. Please note we have not opened up the floors. The roof inspection is limited due to the floor boards in the roof we cannot see a lot of timbers.

Woodworm



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

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage.

In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and

general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings. We would comment in this instance that the floorboards have limited our view has been restricted due to the floor boarding that has been put down in the roof.

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

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

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

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



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

The decoration is average to above average. There has certainly been a lot of thought and time spent on the internal decorations. Our concern would be from a surveying point of view that it may be hiding latent defects.

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place, as it very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, hallways will need tending to more often than a spare bedroom.

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.

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.

HIPs (Home Information Packs) Report

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

Roof Insulation

The roof is boarded and, therefore, we could not see the insulation. Current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. We typically find in roofs between 100mm – 150mm of insulation.

Walls

We can see circular holes in the walls which are either for the adding of insulation or the repair of wall ties.

Whilst the cavity wall construction allows the opportunity to put insulation in, in this age of property it was not originally common practice. Without opening up the wall we cannot confirm if insulation has been added or not.

Please see our comments in the executive summary

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser should make full enquires and investigation to see if insulation has been added and report any findings to us immediately. Problems can occur where insulation has been added at a later date.

Windows

The windows are double glazed and therefore have reasonable thermal properties. Windows have no trickle vents to aid the ventilation balance.

Services

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

Summary

Assuming our assumptions are correct we believe the property has an average to above average thermal efficiency.

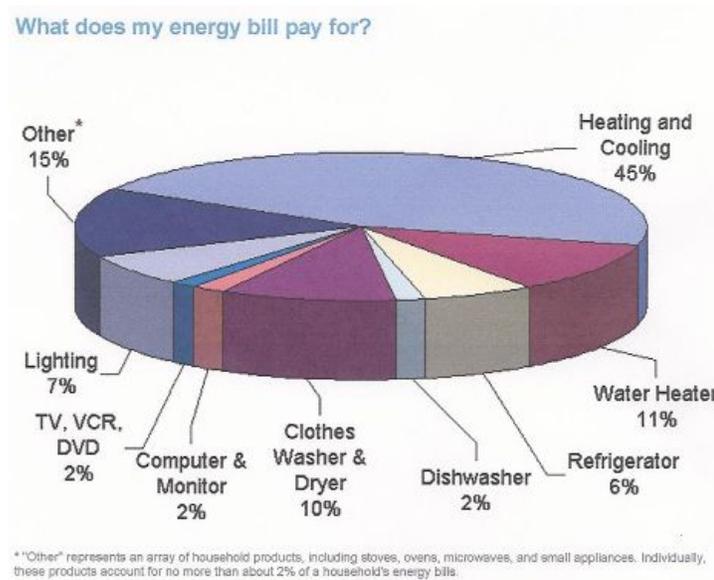
Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

or www.ecocentre.org.uk for an alternative technological view.

Finally, we would advise that an energy rating is required for future house sales.



OTHER MATTERS



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

Security System

A security system has been installed. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer at a later date.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

We did not note any smoke alarms. No smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed.

We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on, providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year. We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

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

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. This was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time. We are not asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

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.

ELECTRICITY



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

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located under the stairs. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1990s – 2000s and, whilst not the best now available, it is reasonable.



Fuse board

Earth Test

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

Neither of these indicators can give certainty as to the condition of the rest of the wiring.



Earth Test

ACTION REQUIRED: If there is no record of an electrical test having

Independent Chartered Surveyors

Marketing by: ———

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

been undertaken within the last five years, it is recommended that the installation be tested by a competent electrician (NICEIC registered) and all recommendations implemented. Thereafter, the installation should be re-tested every five years.

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.

Also note that Building Regulations require certain electrical work to be certified by an approved contractor. Please see the appendices at the end of this survey for further details.

GAS



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

The gas meter cupboard is located under the stairs. All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a Gas Safe registered heating engineer; works to any gas appliance by an unregistered person is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.



Gas meter cupboard located under stairs

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.

PLUMBING AND HEATING



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

Water Supply

Assumed there is a mains water supply.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners.

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

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

Plumbing

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

Heating

The boiler was located in the bedroom, it is manufactured by Worcester. This is not an ideal location due to the noise they make when you are trying to get to sleep and also the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no unusual visual signs. We would therefore 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

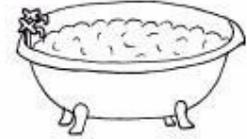
We would normally ask the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, but the owner was not present. So the heating has not been tested

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owner to confirm the heating is working satisfactorily and provide any guarantees or/ and annual inspections

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.

BATHROOM



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

Bathroom

The bathroom suite looks in average condition albeit that the bath has been removed. At the time of our inspection the bath was in the garage, we are not certain that this is the same bath but it certainly looks similar and it did look like it would fit.

Shower

There is a shower under the stairs which is of a relatively high spec our concern would be the condensation in this area and it is not an ideal place to have a shower as there is minimal room.

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.

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 property has mains drainage and that the foul drains 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 and kitchen. No build up or back up was noted.

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

Shared drains can have problems during heavy rain fall 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.

No manholes found

We have not found any man holes/ inspection chambers or rodding eyes, this is unusual. We often find that man holes have been covered over. As there was no-one present at the property we were unable to ask in this instance.

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 age of property it is likely to be into shared drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES/PARKING

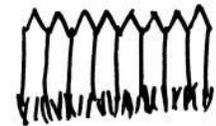


Garages are a useful addition, there was no car at the time of our inspection so it is difficult to gauge if cars can go into it and you do need to be aware that it is likely to leak.

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



EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

Given over mainly to parking with a hard standing area.



Rear Garden

Wendy House – it is likely to require Planning Permission or it needs to be taken down.



Huge Wendy House

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

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

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

No-one was in at the time of our inspection.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - iv) Roof and similar renewals.
 - v) Central heating installation.
 - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vii) 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 property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.

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

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

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

APPENDICES

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

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

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

WEATHER

It was an overcast spring day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

Our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from relatively mid range. A few interesting facts in Britain over the years have been:

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
2009	Third wettest August since 1956
2010	Heaviest snowfall in march since 1991
	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years

References BBC News www.bbc.co.uk

This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

EMPTY PROPERTY

The property was empty at the time of our survey, we were therefore not able to carry out our usual question and answer session or have our questionnaire filled out.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to not opening up the floors and the unsecured boarding in the roof space.

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.

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 - British Gas or NICEIC Electrical Contractor.
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.

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

This records the ownership of interests in registered land in England and Wales and issues a residential property price report quarterly, which is free of charge. The Land Registry is a Government body and records all transactions as far as we are aware, although critics of it would argue that the information is often many months out of date.

www.rics.org.uk

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors offer quarterly reports via their members. Although this has been criticised as being subjective and also limited, historically their predictions have been found to be reasonably accurate.

www.halifax.co.uk and www.nationwide.co.uk

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. Information from these surveys is often carried in the national press. It should be remembered that the surveys only relate to mortgaged properties, of which it is generally considered represents only 75% of the market. It should also be remembered that the national coverage of the two companies differs and that they may be offering various incentives on different mortgages, which may taint the quality of information offered. That said they do try to adjust for this, the success or otherwise of this is hard to establish.

www.hometrack.co.uk

Independent Chartered Surveyors

—— Marketing by: ——

www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

From what we can see this is an internet based company who say they offer independent property research (in fact they say they are the only independent company), although they also advise that they are part of a property related group that has bought and sold over 60 million pounds worth of residential property, which indicates that they may have a vested interest. They do also comment that they have carried out their own independent surveys and they have at least two Hometrack recommended estate agents in each postcode area. We would refer you to the 'About us' section within their website to understand better where their information is coming from. We would comment that we have been pleasantly surprised with the quality of information provided by the company.

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.

<http://www.nethouseprices.com/>

This website offers information on land registry recorded property sales, by postcode or address.

www.globrix.com

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