

JOB REFERENCE:

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY
OF
A Post War 1960's Bungalow



FOR ANY HELP OR ASSISTANCE CALL FREE PHONE:

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or

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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 house 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 house 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 to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil has been used to highlight a specific area (with this property we have taken approximately one hundred photographs in total and we have enclosed a sample of these within the report).

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 good-sized detached chalet bungalow, conservatory and patio to the rear, views out towards the sea.

To the front there is an off road parking area, giving access to an integral garage. To the rear is a garden laid mainly to lawn, which adjoins Shoebury Common, which has a sloped bank area being used as an overflow car park as and when needed.

We are advised that the property was built in the 1950/60's. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were going on around the time the property was built.

Old Properties:

1948	The Manchester Mark 1 developed (arguably the first computer)
1950	Alan Turing developed the concept of artificial intelligence in computers
1960	The Internet was developed as a communications system for the defence industry
1965	The Death Penalty is abolished
1970	Decimalisation

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



Patio Area



Rear Garden



Shoebury Common

ACOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Storm Porch
- Entrance Hall
- Double Bedroom
- Bathroom with WC
- Separate WC
- Kitchen
- Lounge and Dining Area
- Study/Second Bedroom

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Third bedroom
- Shower room
- The area gives access to the roof space

Outside Areas

We would refer you to our earlier comments and add that there have been various issues over the years relating to Shoebury Common from gypsy's occupying the area (albeit we are advised for a short time), the planting and removal of trees. Of course, the area together with the rear of the property is exposed to strong winds during the winter months.

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.

Please note that some of the photos may have been taken with a concave lens, to enable us to show you as much of the room as possible, which sometimes does make the photos slightly blurred.

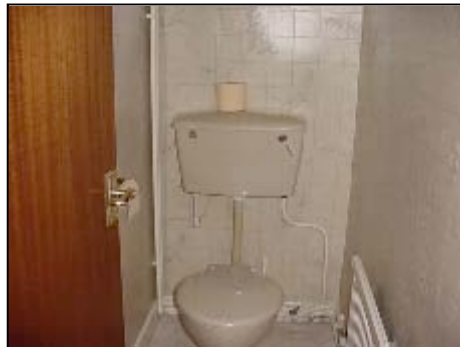
Ground Floor



Entrance Area



Front Right Hand Side Room,
which is set aside as a study



Ground floor WC



Lounge Dining Area



Lounge Area



Conservatory

First Floor



Main Bedroom – front left hand bedroom



Bathroom



First floor shower room. If you look closely behind the WC you will see the shredder manufactured by Saniflow.



This is the drainage pipe from the WC – the white pipe.

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	Brick chimneys
Main Roof:	A hipped pitch roof clad with interlocking concrete tile and two flat roof areas covered with felt (assumed)
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Walls:	Finished in brickwork stretcherbond (assumed) cavity walls
External Joinery:	To the ground floor replacement plastic double-glazed windows, to the first floor timber windows and painted timber fascia and soffits

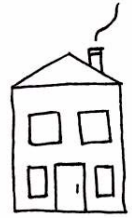
INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Solid walls (assumed) brickwork
Floors:	Ground Floor: Solid underfoot (assumed) Concrete floor First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

SERVICES

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, drains, electricity, gas.

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 100 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if a comment has not been discussed that you are interested in/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.

Having said all of that, here are our comments:

Generally we found the house overall in average condition, considering the property's age, type and style. However this is a sweeping statement so we would, in addition, draw your attention to the following and also recommend that you read the report in full. 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 filled only with faults so we thought we would start with a few good points!)

The property is well located for the sea (if you like that sort of thing).

The property also has good natural light, which often in somewhat older properties cannot be so good.

Good sized rooms, off road parking, a garage and a workshop.

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

The Bad

1) Location

Here again we have put location. It has many advantages if you like the sea, in the winter months you will be subject to the strong breezes coming from the sea. We did hear one story about some beach huts arriving at the bottom of the garden and also the sheds and gardens being overturned etc!

2) Services

Electrics

The electrics are dated; we particularly noticed the fuse board, which we recommend, is changed.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a new fuse board and consumer unit. We would therefore always recommend that a test and inspection is carried out by a registered NICEIC electrician. We would suggest that the electrician also advises on any upgrading that is necessary

ANTICIPATED COST: New fuse board and test, £250 plus the tests and the cost of carry out any work.

Please see the Services Section of this Report.



Fuse board.

3) Drainage

You have a Saniflow WC, which consists of an electrical shredding unit (to allow the waste to go down a small pipe). Which do make a bit of noise, this allows waste to be fed down almost any diameter of pipe.

In this instance the diameter used looks to be about 20 mm (half an inch) which is much thinner than we have seen previously; also it does go on quite a torturous route before it gets to the soil and vent pipe at the rear left hand corner (all directions given as you face the property). We suggest that this is liable to block if you are not very careful what you put down the WC.



The white pipe is a close up of the Saniflow waste pipe.

4) Windows

Not so much a bad point but something you need to be aware of.

The double glazed plastic windows to this property are not of the best of quality. The windows are part of your protection against the strong winds in the winter. We noted that some were wooden on the first floor and some are secondary glazing.

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace all of these windows with a better quality double glazed window.

ANTICIPATED COST: This may cost anything from a few thousand to ten thousand pounds.

Please see the Internal Section of this Report.

5) Flat Roofs

These were nearly in the ugly section. The low level flat roofs are of a reasonable quality; although they have had work recently carried out they are not up to current building regulations, which would require insulations added, and also ventilation. In fact, when we walked on them there was some give in the roof decking, which indicated a thinner decking than we would normally expect.



A view of the rear low-level flat roof.

Here is the main high level flat roof, which we wish to bring to your attention, is the high level flat roof, which although work was carried out at the same time as the rear roof it has not been carried out with the same quality finish. It has been left without a protective layer of chippings – the chippings protect the roof from the extreme temperatures, they reflect the sun and they help stop frost attack. There was next to no fall on it. Please see the next section. We would say that this roof has a life of approximately ten more years assuming you are happy to carry out various repairs etc. Again, no insulation or ventilation has been added.



A view of the high level roof



This is the beam internally where water looks to be getting in.

ACTION REQUIRED: Although we could not see where the dampness was getting in we do believe that some dampness was getting in where the flat roof joins the pitch roof from what we can see internally. We would also recommend that solar paint is added to the bitumen finish to help prolong its life and protect it from the sun.

ANTICIPATED COST: We feel this is repairable; it is just a matter of doing the roofing job properly! We would anticipate costs in the region of a few hundred pounds to a few thousand pounds at the most. If you have to chase, as it is sometimes very difficult to identify exactly where water is coming in.

Please see the External Section of this Report.

6) **Side Flat Roof (left hand side, all directions as you face the property)**

This is over what we would describe as the utilities area on the left hand side. It is in acceptable condition for a utilities area. With the roof, expect repairs on this from time to time but nothing that we can see immediately.

Please see the External Section of this Report.



An older style flat roof

7) **Heat Gain and Heat Loss**

Not so much a bad thing, just something you need to be aware of. You will get heat gain and heat loss in the rooms directly below the flat roof, as we do not believe they are insulated.

8) Fascias and Soffits

In theory, under current building regulation (but there is no need to). You should add ventilation to the main roof to stop condensation, often these vents can be found in the soffit boards of the property. We could not see any signs of condensation but we just need to make you aware of the possibility of it.

The Ugly

9) Dampness within First Floor Shower Room

As already mentioned, there is a beam to the rear of the first floor shower room that shows signs that dampness is getting in the property or condensation is occurring on this area or indeed there may be a combination of both.

We think that dampness is likely to be getting in through the roof due to a defect in the flat roofing although we could not particularly see one. However, we cannot rule out the condensation option onto what is termed a cold bridge i.e. a cold part of the structure. The best way to resolve this is by process of elimination. We suggest that you add ventilation to the room which should stop the condensation occurring and then re-decorate and see if the plaster still deteriorates – we did not actually get any readings on our damp meter at the time of our survey which makes the problem more intriguing! Either way, we do not think it is sufficient to stop a sale going through. We do think you need to set aside some money to investigate further.

ACTION REQUIRED: As already mentioned, we believe repair works are necessary to the roof.

ANTICIPATED COST: As already mentioned, from a few hundred pounds to a few thousand pounds or so if it is difficult to find exactly where the water is coming in – there is no obvious visual signs.

Please see the Internal Section of this Report.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as clearing the gutters and the gulleys. These problems are fairly typical for this age, style and type of property. 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, we are currently using up to £50 per day for unskilled labour up to £100 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:

The main issue is the dampness coming in from the high level flat roof, which is relatively minor in the scheme of things, but it is certainly not ideal. You should set aside some money to ensure this is resolved.

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.

If you so wish we can prepare specifications and obtain quotations for the work, whatever you do don't allow the estate agent to organise the quotes as he will utilise people he regularly uses who know they have to keep in with him/her to get further work and therefore are very keen to please the estate agent, as opposed to you the real client and at the end of the day it doesn't take long to organise.

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

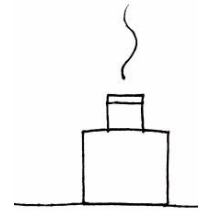
Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your house purchase - just phone us.

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



Front Elevation

EXTERNAL



CHIMNEY STACKS AND DORMER WINDOWS

Chimney Stacks

Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it has both the function of heating the room and is often also the focal point.

There are two brick chimneys to this property they are located to the left and to the right. Considering each in turn:

Chimney One – Left Hand Brick Chimney

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and has one chimney pot. It generally looks in reasonable condition with the exception of a split to the side of it. We believe this chimney is used as a flue for the boiler system.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to occasionally check the chimney (whilst you are checking the flat roofs) and repair the split if it gets any larger. There are sometimes splits in these chimneys due to heat and condensation that occurs.



Left hand brick chimney



A very small split to the chimney

Chimney Two – Right Hand Brick Built Chimney

This to has a brick built chimney and in reasonable condition, with lead flashing. We believe the chimney acts as a vent for the gas feature fire in the main reception room.

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.



Right hand brick built chimney

Inside the roof we did find some dampness in the chimneys, the right hand chimney to be exact which we believe is probably condensation from the gas fire below. We could not see any obvious deterioration in the timber around the chimney, which would normally indicate that dampness is getting in via the flashings.

Dormer Windows

Dormer windows are often used where rooms are formed within the roof space and have the advantage of allowing light into the area and also giving the head space to allow them to be stood next to.

The dormer windows to this property; form the upper floor. Please see our Executive Summary for our comments on the roof. Vertical tiles have been utilised to form the walls, these all look in reasonable condition.

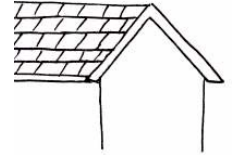


The dormer window

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimneystacks and dormer windows 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 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 Roofs and the Low Level Roofs.

High Level Roofs

Main Roof

The main roof is hipped and pitched and clad with and a large concrete tile.

As a general comment on the roofs as a whole, as viewed from ground level, the roof coverings showed nothing out of character for their age and type. Although we would add that some of the tiles have opened up slightly as we often find on hipped roofs, which do tend to settle into place particularly where they have been disturbed with the adding of dormer extension as in this case.

Sometimes we find that deterioration occurs to the ridge and exposed areas such as the eaves, you should periodically check these areas.

Concrete tiles come in two forms; nibbed - this is where ridges on the back of the tiles allow fixing to the roof battens and the roof structure; and interlocking or "mechanical" fixings - this is where troughs or grooves in the tiles allow the fitting of the joining tiles together as well as the nibs previously mentioned. In this instance, they are interlocking concrete tiles that have been bound very well together.

Valley Gutters

Valley gutters are weak areas often in roofs, we would much prefer to see a lead valley gutter you have a tile valley gutter which looks in reasonable condition.



A view of the right hand side of the hipped roof

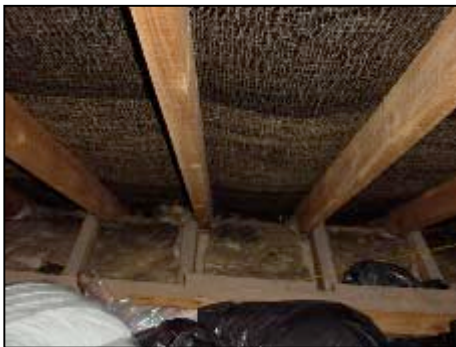


A view up looking at one of the valleys

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 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 places but this is not unusual considering its age.



A general view of the layers (in black) between the common rafters, which form the pitch of the roof

Roofs

A general comment on flat roofs.

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.

Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

High Level Flat Roof

This has a black bitumen finish, which will be affected by heat. Please note our comments in the Executive Summary about the overall life of this roof, the heat loss and heat gain that it will cause.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally, we would recommend that a layer of insulation is added which is cut to falls, a layer of high performance felt then added over this together with decking being checked which did have more give than we would normally expect and it indicating that a thinner board has been used. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

ANTICIPATED COST: This option is a top quality specification but you may wish to consider it if you are going to be utilising the first floor rooms.

Low Level Rear Extension

This is a flat roof with a mineral felt finish. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

There is awkward detail where the roof changes levels and meets the main pitch roof. The roof looks relatively new. With discussions with the owner we are advised that it was replaced in April 2001, the same time as the main roof (although not to the same quality). However, they did not realise that the main roof was not the same quality of material as the lower roof. We believe the rear roof to have a life of 20 to 30 years with the main high-level flat roof to have a life of 10 to 20 years.

Side Flat Roof Over Utilities Area

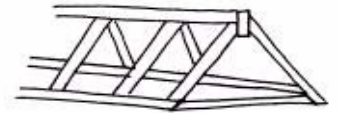
This is an older style bitumen roof, probably with due care and maintenance has another ten years to run. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Awkward flat roof detail when we have changes in levels.

Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and/or ground level.

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

The main roof is accessed via a doorway leading from the shower room. It has lights, although these give off limited light but probably sufficient for storage purposes and there are some floorboards down although they are not secured in all cases.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that you spend a weekend securing boards down in the roof space and making it more user friendly and safe.

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

This roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof, which is purpose made and hand built on site. Although it has been much amended from its original design with the addition of the first floor rooms, which we think, were added at a later date although we cannot be certain. Without the design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see.



A view of the corner of the roof, which is an area where hipped roofs normally slip, as you can see in this instance there is no problems.



A view of the roof and the back of the shower room.

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof for serious active woodworm and for structurally significant defects to the timber together with dry rot and wet rot. Whilst our examination is usually impeded by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items, from what we could see generally we found the roof to be in average condition. In this instance we think it unlikely although we would add that there was a fair amount of stored items in the roof.

It is however feasible that there are problems in the roof, which are hidden. The only way to be 100 per cent sure is to have the roof cleared and checked. In this instance we do not feel this is necessary.



Old woodworm? Somewhat unusually, we found a section of the roof timbers had the markings of quite severe woodworm attack. It looked almost as if it had been there when the timber was cut – we have not come across this before.

Water Tanks

The water tanks are formed in plastic and hidden under a mass of insulation, we therefore assume they are relatively new (in surveying years this means the last 30 years). We were pleased to see that the water tanks were insulated.

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

Flat Roofs

Due to the nature of flat roof construction there are no accessible roof voids. We cannot therefore comment on the construction of the flat roof, the condition of supporting materials, standards of ventilation, levels of insulation or the presence of a vapour check.

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.

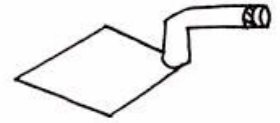
The property's gutters and downpipes are fairly typical of what we see; they are in average condition. There may be some minor leaks but most people would be happy to live with these.

We did note for example that the left hand flat roof discharged directly onto the ground, which is not ideal.

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.

Finally, gutters and downpipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 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.

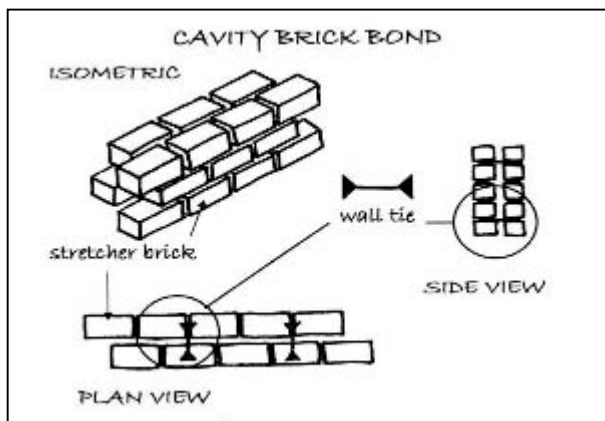
WALLS



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.

Brickwork

This property is brick finished and laid in a cement mortar, which in turn has been re-pointed in a cement mortar. This is all bedded in what is known as Stretcher Bond.



Cavity Wall Ties Defined

A fastener across a cavity wall to hold the two leaves together. Usually made of stainless or galvanised steel wire or strip, sometimes plastic, and has a twist or bend near the middle to form a drip so that water cannot pass. Wall ties are built into the brickwork bed joints

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

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

Walls of cavity construction should incorporate ties to hold together the inner and outer leaves of masonry. As there is no access to the cavity it has not been inspected and we cannot comment on the presence or condition of wall ties.

In properties built before the early 1980s there can be problems with wall tie failure. At present there are no outward and visible signs of wall tie failure. As this is a progressive condition you should be aware that there is a risk that repairs/renewal might be required in the future.

In view to the properties proximity to the sea you often find accelerated wall tie failure pattern in these areas. However, we have closely inspected the walls and at the time of our inspection there was no obvious visual signs of horizontal cracking, which is what we would expect to see if the wall ties were failing. The horizontal cracking is caused by the wall ties corroding, the metal rusting and expanding forcing open the bricks.

Render to the Base of the Property

You often find accelerated wall tie failure. Please see our comments in the damp proof course section of this report.



Render to the base of the brickwork

Conservatory Area to the Rear

The rear of the property is formed in raised conservatory style walls. We have considered these in the external joinery section of this report.

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

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / 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.

We would expect with this age and type of property to have a strip concrete foundation or a brick foundation depending upon the local byelaws of the time, national building regulation standards generally came in around the 1950's.

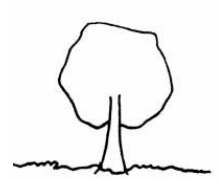
Building Insurance Policy

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.

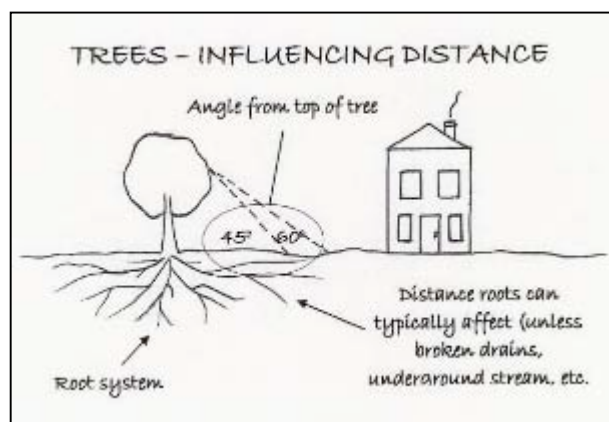
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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 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.

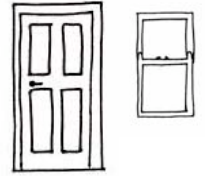
Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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 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 can see a rendered plinth all the way around the property. It is likely to be either the damp proof course or forming part of it often a slate or bitumen damp proof course behind. 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.



EXTERNAL JOINERY

The external joinery part of this section covers fascias and soffits, 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 has painted timber fascias and soffits; these are in reasonable condition there is no vent to the soffits. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about possible condensation.

ACTION REQUIRED: Redecorate or replace fascias and soffits.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Windows and Doors

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

We would add that the timber windows at first floor level look in reasonable condition. We could not find any soft areas in them and the decorations only looked to be a few years old.

We can tell that the double-glazing is at the poorer quality end of the market, for example, they do not have trickle vents in them.

Trickle Vents Defined

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



Double-glazed plastic window

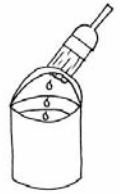


First floor timber window

Conservatory Section to the Rear

There is a glazed room to the rear of the property. Some brickwork to this is only single skin thick, but it is not to national house building standard, we feel it is acceptable for a conservatory. A mixture of windows is used on the conservatory, generally all are in, we feel acceptable condition.

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.



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.

These consist of the fascia and soffit boards together with the first floor window which will need doing in a few years time and the rear windows which you may wish to replace at a time it comes round to redecorating them.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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. The concept of internal finishes is relatively modern. Partitioning developed originally to separate the livestock from the human occupants. Finishes have developed from this very functional beginning to their decorative nature of today.

Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be plasterboard.

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.



Here we are exposing the plasterboard in the roof.

Internal Walls and Partitions

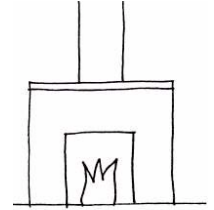
We have carried out a tap test on the internal walls (this is not rocket science, it is literally tapping the walls and listening for the sound made) and found the majority to be solid when tapped, indicating that internal construction is likely to be, for this age of property, brickwork. We much prefer this type of construction as it minimises noise transfer between rooms.

Perimeter Walls

The plaster to the perimeter walls was generally in good condition when we tapped tested them i.e. no hollow areas.

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 chimneybreasts are located to the left and right hand side, both chimneys are located externally. (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.

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



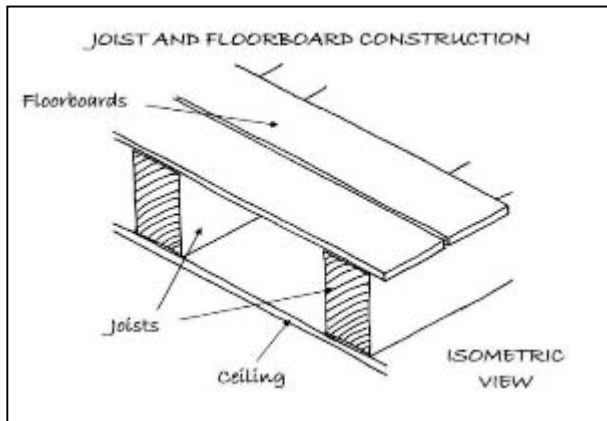
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

The floors felt solid and firm underfoot so we have assumed they are formed in concrete, we have not accessed the floor.

First Floor

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



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.

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

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.

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls. No evidence of any significant rising dampness was detected.

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.

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. No evidence of any significant penetrating/lateral dampness was detected.

Condensation

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

We could see no obvious 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. 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. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary, reference the first floor bathroom.

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. In this instance the walls were also dry lined, which stopped us taking tests with our electronic damp meter, therefore we carried out a random, visual inspection.

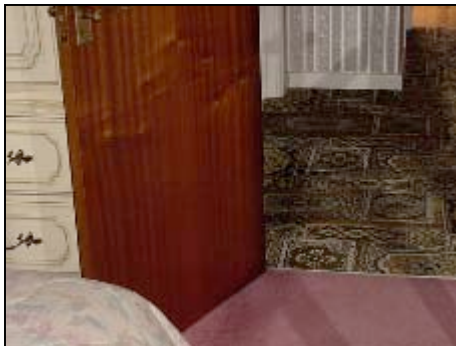
INTERNAL JOINERY



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 veneered hollow core doors also known as egg box doors as this is what they look like if they are opened up.



Veneered 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 worse case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.

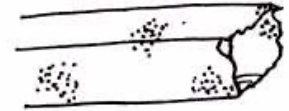
Kitchen

From our cursory visual inspection the kitchen looked in reasonable condition, although it has suffered from some general day-to-day marks. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

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.

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 inspected no evidence was found of any dry rot and we feel it is unlikely that it is occurring, given the conditions found.

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 inspected no evidence was found of any wet rot, however there is an outside chance that there is wet rot in the property, this would be to the flat roof structures or where the flat roof and the pitch roofs join as this is a weak area, if anywhere at all. That said, from the conditions that we have seen and the style and age of this property we do not consider this likely.

Woodworm

In the areas inspected no evidence was found of any woodworm. However, given the age of the property, there is an outside chance that there may be some present, although we have not physically seen any.

Interestingly enough, we noticed woodworm markings in some of the timbers but it looked like they have installed into the property like this, which is very unusual in this age of property.

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 active woodworm, having said that, we do not consider what we saw to be ‘structurally significant’ damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain get the property checked when it is empty of fixtures, fittings and furniture etc.



Sorry to use the same photo twice but it does show the woodworm markings.

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.

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste. It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place. This very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, within hallways this tends to be greater than for example within 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.

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 200mm. We would not be overly concerned about this as we typically find in roofs between 100mm – 150mm of insulation. In this instance we found 100mm. If you do add more insulation you definitely need to vent the roof to stop condensation.

Walls

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

Windows

There is a mixture of double glazed, which will have reasonable thermal properties, and single glaze, which will be a lot poorer. Where this occurs there is always the possible problem of condensation occurring on the single glazed window.

Services

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

Summary

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

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

HTTP//www.est.org.uk, 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 likely to be required for future house sales.



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 NACOSS (National Approval Council for Security Services), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

Smoke Alarms

One smoke detector was noted to the top of the stairs. 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.

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 last century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the garage. The fuse board looked dated.

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

Visible wiring and fittings are of a dated, probably original. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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



Kettle test

GAS

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

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

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of CORGI (the Council of Registered Gas Installers); 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.

ACTION REQUIRED: As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and made good, as necessary, by a CORGI 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

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

Water Pressure

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 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 kitchen and looks to be about 20 years old. Typically, this type of floor-mounted boiler has a life of 30 years although it does depend upon the servicing.

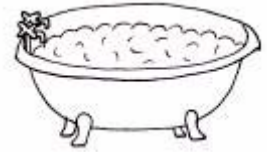
Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Soil and Vent Pipe

It is to the rear of the property. There is a new one on the rear left hand corner, which has been added to take the pumped and shredded waste from the saniflow WC system, please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.



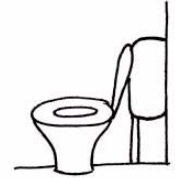
BATHROOM

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

The property has a family bathroom on the ground floor which includes a WC and there is also a separate WC on the first floor there is a shower room this being fitted in the past few years therefore having newer sanitary wear, the ground floor being older dated and generally slightly more worn. You may wish to replace some of these items.

We would comment that any colour bathroom suite but white (or close to it) tends to date fairly quickly.

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 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 and kitchen. No build up or back up was noted.

Inspection Chambers/Manholes

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

Identified Inspection Chambers/Manholes

We have identified two manholes were located both on the left hand side of the property, one within the brick paved parking area and could not be lifted, the other was close to the house and was lifted and was found to be free flowing and clear and finished in concrete.

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



Manhole finished in concrete.

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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

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

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

Please also see our comments within the Rainwater Goods section.

OUTSIDE AREAS

GARAGES AND PARKING



This is an integral part of the property built in a similar manner although we would add we could not see the right hand sidewall.

Parking

Most of the front garden has been given over to parking, it has been brick paved recently by the owners.

We would just comment that where brick-paving is added often it can reduce the height of the damp proof course to the house and allow some dampness in although we could not see any in this instance.

EXTERNAL AREAS

Rear Garden

Usually the left hand boundary is the responsibility of the subject property but in this case we are advised it is the right hand boundary and the rear. At the end of garden it drops away to a bank, this area is used for overflow car parking in the summer; please see our other comments earlier in this report.

Front Garden

We note that one of the boundary walls is single skin or one brick thick, whichever way you wish to term it. This type of wall is prone to damage from impact and hedges etc. as they are integrally unstable.

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 and Right Hand Neighbours

Both the left and right hand neighbours were in and both spoke very highly of the present occupier.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this 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
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) Cavity wall insulation
 - iv) Double glazing.
 - v) Roof and similar renewals.
 - vi) Central heating installation.
 - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - viii) 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.
- 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) We strongly recommend that Envirosearch or a similar product is used by your Legal Advisor to establish whether this area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc., and brought to its logical conclusion. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of the system please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it.
- n) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

When you booked this survey we asked you if you required us to carry out a verbal check on the status of the property with the Local Authority regarding whether it is a Listed Building, in a Conservation area and any history that is available over the phone with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. In this instance you have not requested that we carry out this work.

Finally, your Solicitor should carry out Local Authority enquiries and any additional enquiries he/she feels necessary, advising us if they feel that we can have further input.

Finally, an extract from the book “Sold”!

“When you receive your full structural survey (now known as a Building Survey) or House Buyers Report, do remember that you have requested a list of the property’s faults so it is unlikely to make cheerful reading. Every property has its faults but what you are looking for are the serious ones. If your Report does reveal a serious problem that you had not anticipated when making your offer, the first thing to do is to decide whether you want to take on the repairs if an adjustment is made to the price. If you do, then get quotes for the work as quickly as possible and present your case in a fair manner. Most people are reasonable under such circumstances and will compromise but inevitably there are those who are sufficiently confident of their position to say take it or leave it. In a very active market, prices may have moved up sufficiently to cover the extra expenditure in theory and the vendor will not hasten to point this out but remember that he has probably got a vendor pressing him to proceed quickly and starting with a new purchaser will cause him delay”

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

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

For and on Behalf of

**GEM Associates Limited
Chartered Surveyors**

This Report is dated:

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 4th edition published by Royal Institution of
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible

By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

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 16th November 2004 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 a bright sunny winters day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

We would add that some defects only become apparent upon physical occupation or are only present as a result of the extremes of weather (which are becoming a more frequent occurrence). As you are probably aware the year 2000 was the wettest year on record, 2003 the driest year on record and August 2004 was the wettest August on record in many areas, this may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

NOT LOCAL

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

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.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to the amount of stored items in the roof space and also by the lack of being able to see the right hand side of the property and half of the left hand side.

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

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.