

# ***Building Surveying***

***Site Notes, part of the framework  
for carrying out Building Surveys***

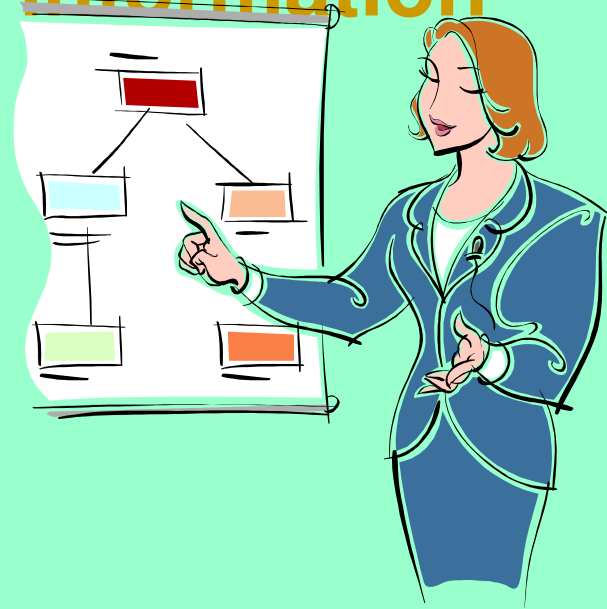
# *Learning outcome*

## **Part 1**

- **Site notes and collecting information**

## **Part 2**

- **Make notes of the detail**



## **Part 3**

- **Understanding the Framework for carrying out a Building Survey**

# ***Building Surveying Framework***

**A systematic approach  
to allow  
you  
to carry out a  
building survey**

# ***Site Notes***

- 1/Collect information on site notes and with photographs**
- 2/Collate information**
- 3/ Prioritise information**
- 4/ Present information**
- 5/ Double check**

# *Why Use Site Notes?*

**1. Allows a systematic collection of information and retrieval of information.**

**2. You need site notes for your Building Survey assignment because it gets you marks!**



# *Hot Tips – How to lose marks*

- **Most students lost marks on this because they were not filled out!**
- **This shows no understanding**
- **Examples**
- **Cover sheet**
- **And sketches**
- **And Good Bad and Ugly**

# Site Notes Cover Sheet

- RBS Site Notes
- PROPERTY ADDRESS
- COMPLETED BY:
- SPECIFIC CLIENT REQUIREMENTS

DATE:

LOCATION  
PLAN (Indicate trees etc)

- »
- »
- INSURANCE
- . . . . .
- . . . . .
- . . . . .
- . . . . .

Area  
Rate  
Garage

Outbuildings

Extras

- LOCAL POINTS OF INTEREST
- 
- Good
- Bad
- Ugly
- DIY

***Site Notes –Cover sheet –  
Hot tips – fill it out***

**Plan drawing**

**Identify any features,**

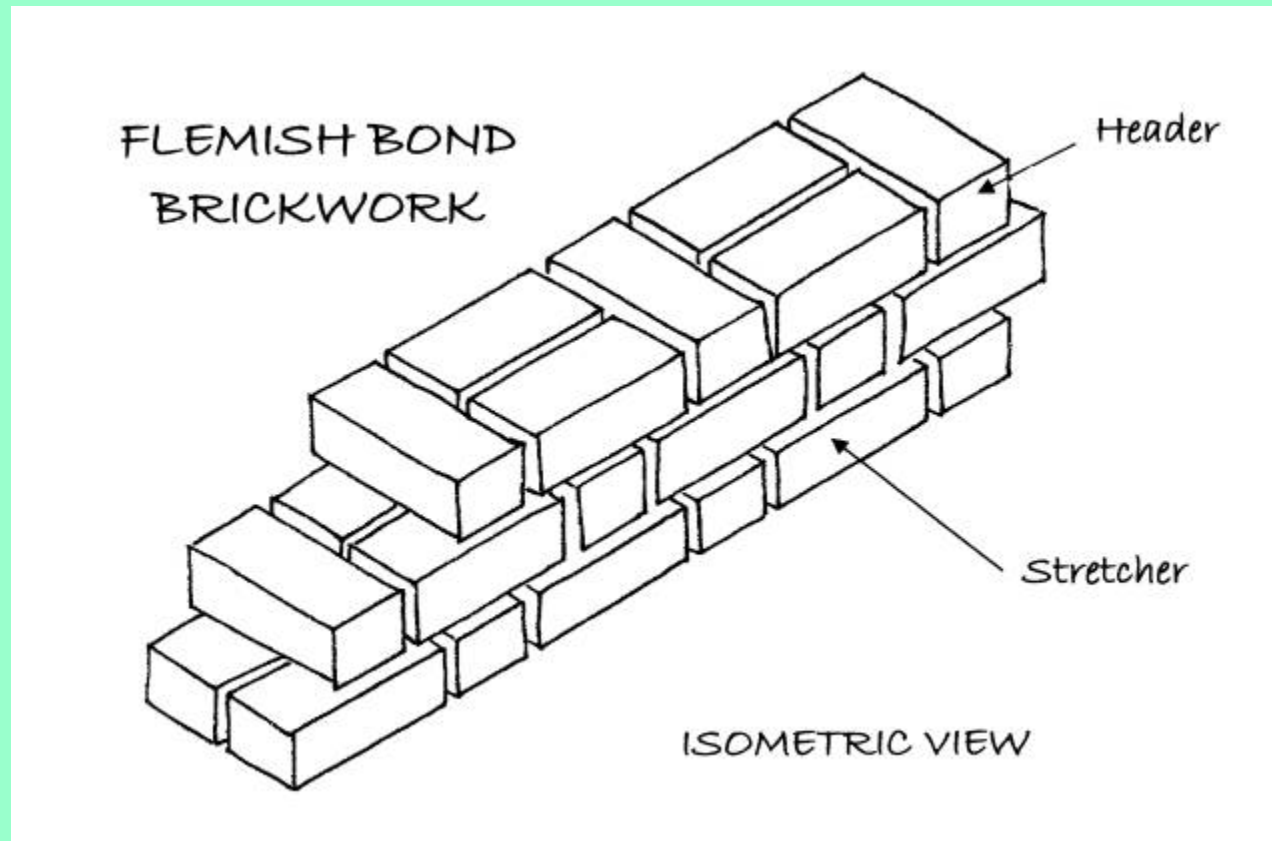
**such as trees,**

**Rivers lakes**

**steps in roofs, identifying chimneys,  
etc.**



# Site Notes – Use Sketches



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# Site Notes - Use Sketches

Use the back of the pages for more sketches.

Typical things we sketch are:

- **Hidden details**
- **Cracks that are difficult to photograph, identifying the width and length of them**
- **lintels (timber defective)**
  - **causing the cracking**
- **Floor plan drawings**
  - **checking the walls sit upon the walls, checking that chimneys are there from first floor and ground level and in the roof space**

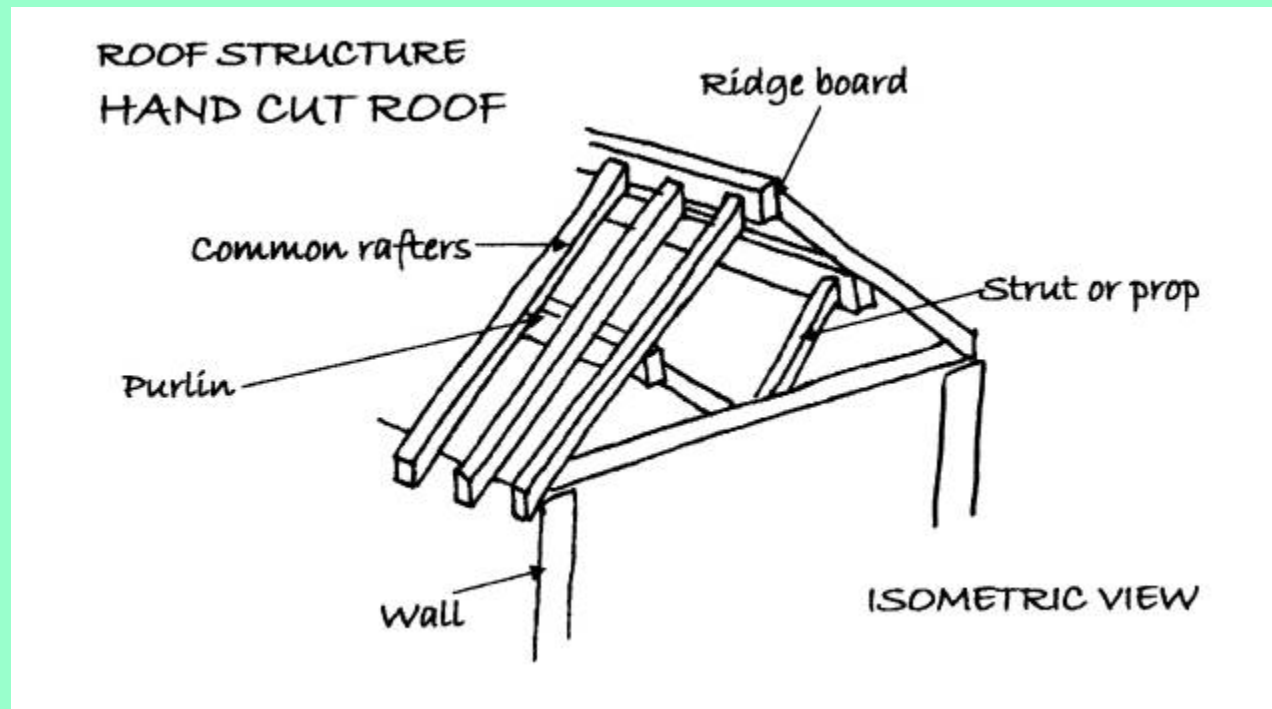
Building Research Establishment

Digest 251 Table 1

Category 0	Negligible	<0.1mm
Category 1	Very Slight	0.1 – 2mm
Category 2	Slight	>2 but <5mm
Category 3	Moderate	>5 but 15mm
Category 4	Severe	>15 but <25mm
Category 5	Very severe	>25mm

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# *Site Notes – use them (because they show understanding and get you marks)*



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# *Take 10 minutes to think*



- Write down what needs to be included in the site notes
- Think of typical sketches you would use on your building to identify defects better
- Sketch one defect

# *Site Notes – what they consist of*

- **The first two pages are an overview**
- **The rest of the pages are detail**
- **You may wish to fill in the overview first or the detail first, it really doesn't matter as long as it is filled in.**

# *Prioritise, The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*



**This is to give an overview in a very  
basic format of the  
MAIN issues.**

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# *What typically would we put in a 'Good' Section?*

- **Potential to extend**
- **Thermal insulations to current standards**

# *What typically would we put in a 'Bad' Section?*

These are things that normally can be negotiated on.

Examples would be wet rot and structural defects.

Where you draw the line will depend upon your client.

Discuss?



# *What typically would we put in a 'Ugly' Section?*

Things that would mean the client would be better spending their money elsewhere:

- Major structural problems
- Extensive dry rot
- Extensive asbestos
- Or a client focused issue, such as ?

# *Site Notes - Hot tip, fill it in*

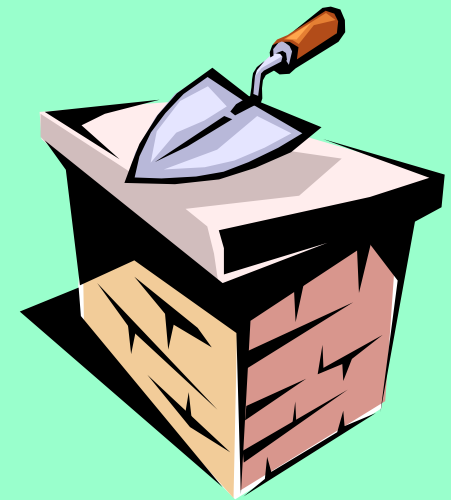
- **Cover sheet**
- **Sketches**
- **Good Bad and Ugly**



# *Site Notes – The Detail*

## *Pages 3 onwards*

- This gives an element by element from the top down, i.e. chimneys, look at the property.
- Remember to think broadly and look at the property as a whole and to not make assumptions?



# ?? Hour Task

1. In groups of two go and look at a nearby building and fill out the Executive Summary and key issues. Prepare sketches of potential problems; at least three.
2. Identify any materials that have been replaced from original; at least three. Name the original and the new materials.
3. Sketch a floor plan
4. Take photos on a mobile phone
5. Five groups will be randomly selected to present what they have found. Have fun

# ***Site Notes - Detailed information***

Keep asking yourself questions. Typically these are:

use  
what,  
when  
why,  
how  
questions

# Quality Questions

## Examples :

- Does the chimney run from the bottom of the property to the top?
- What condition is it in and what future deterioration may occur?
  - Why have the roof tiles been replaced and what potential problems could they cause?
  - How does the rainwater get from the top to the bottom?
    - Does it cause any damage on its way?

# Remember

The quality of your question is important



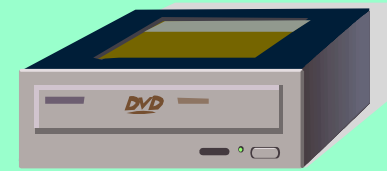
The better the question the better the answer!

Questions should relate to age, type and style of the property, for example:



1. Render and older properties and newer properties.
2. It should be appropriate for the location, for example in an exposed location you have to consider wind damage.
3. Detailing affecting performance, for example flat roofs that are flat.
4. The relationship of material; does it the performance, for example semi-detached house where one side has the original slate and the other side has a new inter-locking concrete tile – how do they join?  
It's a secret?

***A good standard survey  
becomes like reading a good  
book again, or watching a good  
DVD again***



**❖ You think you know and understand  
what's going on but you need to double  
check and triple check**



# *3D Puzzle*

**I think about surveys as a 3D puzzle; each element has to fit correctly.**

**And one last word: look out for hidden things.**

# *Have Fun*



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# *Look closer, some things are hidden*

Given the benefit of doubt things are hidden because the owner doesn't realise the problems i.e:



1. filling and painting over cracks
2. They hide them intentionally by putting computers and their associated tables in corners where there is dampness.
3. They can just be giving the property a spring clean. A property with a lot of graffiti which had been cleaned off was only spotted when looking at a Google street map.

# *Words*

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***Be careful what you say as your words may be taken out of context and taken in abstract***



**99% right is still 1% is wrong.  
Clients will only remember the  
1% that is wrong.**

# *Icing On The Cake*

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# ***Talk to the owner and talk to the neighbours. Why?***

**Take time to think about the sort of initial questions that you would ask to the owner of the property that is selling and questions that you would ask to the neighbours.**



**Remembering that this is the first look around the property.**

# *Talking to the client before and after the survey*

We feel this is essential but we know that many surveying practices don't do this. We are aware that a survey was carried out with doctors that were sued and they tend to be the ones that had only spoken to their clients for a short time that tended to be the ones that were sued, not the most competent. A sobering thought.





# *Hot Tip*



Look at the surrounding properties. See any differences in construction and repairs