

# RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

Marylebone,

London ,

W1U xxx



FOR

xxxxxxxxxxx

Prepared by:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



Marketing by:

[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)

0800 298 5424

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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

As you may recall 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.

As we mentioned previously we are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. Again 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).

As always we recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas that 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.

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# **REPORT FORMAT**

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

## **GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

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

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

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

## **A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS**



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow has been used to highlight a specific area. 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.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

### **SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION**

This is a five storey property with a lower ground floor and a roof extension. The property has been sub-divided into apartments. At the time of our inspection these apartments were occupied with the exception of Apartment Four and there were people present within the properties. We had a limited access and a limited time to view Apartment Two and were not allowed to view the master bedroom and associated rooms.

The current owner's agent advised that they have owned the investment property for three years and have not carried out any major alterations in that time. We are also advised that the property is in ownership by a Guernsey holding/trust company which is advantageous with regards to tax. You need to obtain your own advice with regards to this (from our experience it depends upon your situation and circumstances).

We believe that the property was built in the Georgian era. 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 happening around the time the property was built:*

1801	First Census in Great Britain shows the population as 10 million
1811	Jane Austen's publishes Sense and Sensibility, anonymously
1837	Victoria becomes Queen of Great Britain
1840	The first adhesive postage stamp the Penny Black is issued, worth much more than a penny today!
1851	More than 25,000 people attend opening day of first World Exhibition in London, a great day out!
1863	The Opening of the London Underground, mind the doors!
1870	British Red Cross established, saving thousands of lives.
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London, lighting the way.

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view – high level



Front view – low level



Roof and parapet wall - left



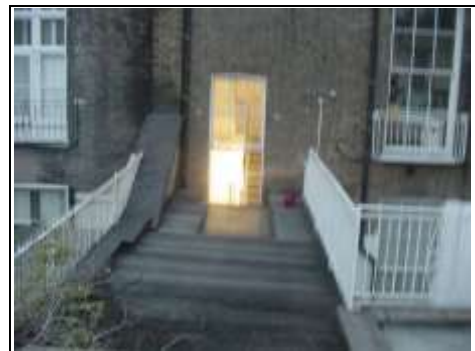
Main roof



Roof, parapet wall and chimney - right



Rear view



Rear view from the high level terrace

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## **Rear extensions and alterations**



Rear of Apartment Two



Courtyard of Apartment Two

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Lower ground floor  
courtyard area



Terrace area



Terrace – ground floor level

### **Lower ground floor (Apartment three)**



Steps to basement flat



Going down into basement flat



Only one drain for this  
apartment

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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

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

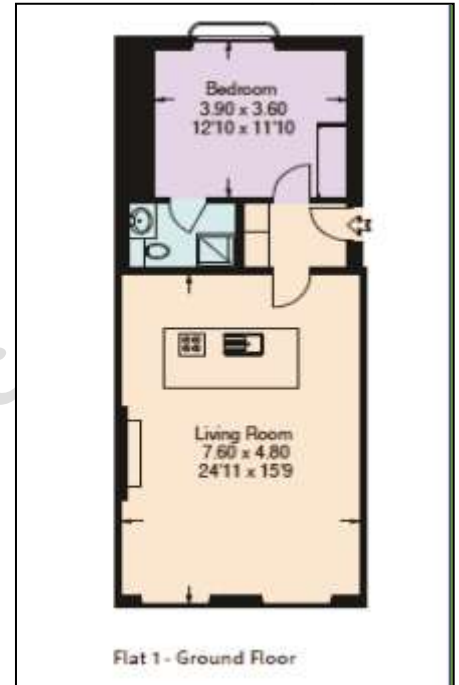
The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of). We have not taken photographs of each and every room.

### **Apartment One**

#### **Ground floor**

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Lobby entrance area
- 2) Living room/kitchen/dining area
- 3) Bedroom
- 4) Shower room



#### **Services**

The apartment has a Heatrae Sadia boiler.

#### **Photographs**

##### **Ground floor**



Kitchen



Kitchen

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Living room area



Living room area



Bedroom



Bathroom



View from window

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## Apartment Two

### Lower Ground

The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Master bedroom with en-suite and walk in closet (access not allowed)
- 2) Bedroom with en-suite (middle)
- 3) Bedroom with en-suite (rear)
- 4) Plant room/service cupboard
- 5) Stairs up to ground floor
- 6) Courtyard



Flat 2 - Lower Ground Floor

### Ground floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 7) Stairs and landing
- 8) Kitchen/lounge area
- 9) Utility room
- 10) W.C.
- 11) Study



Flat 2 - Ground Floor

### First floor/Mezzanine

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 12) Media Room



### Services

The electric fuse board is located at the entrance to the lounge.  
The boiler is manufactured by Worcester.

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## **Photographs**

Within Apartment Two to the rear of the property we were limited as to where we were allowed to take photos and also the time we were allowed in this apartment was limited. There were no photos taken of various areas such as the study. The sales brochure includes additional photos.

### **Lower ground floor**



Bedroom – front left



En-suite



Bedroom - middle

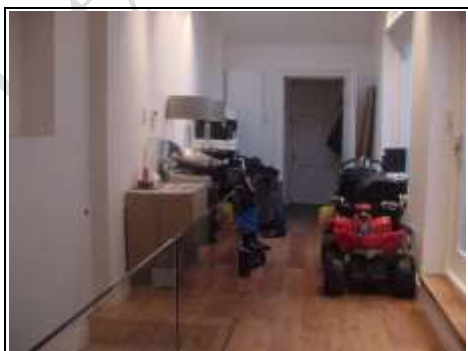


En-suite



Service cupboard

### **Ground floor**



Hallway



Utility Room

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Kitchen area



Lounge area



W.C

### First floor/Mezzanine



Roof windows in Mezzanine

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## **Apartment Three**

### **Lower Ground floor**

The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Stairs / hallway
- 2) Living room/kitchen/dining room (left)
- 3) Bedroom (right)
- 4) Bathroom ( rear right)
- 5) Lift
- 6) Courtyard
- 7) Own access



Flat 3 - Lower Ground Floor

### **Services**

The electric fuse board is located within a concealed area in the cupboard in the bedroom

The boiler is manufactured by Heatrae Sadia.

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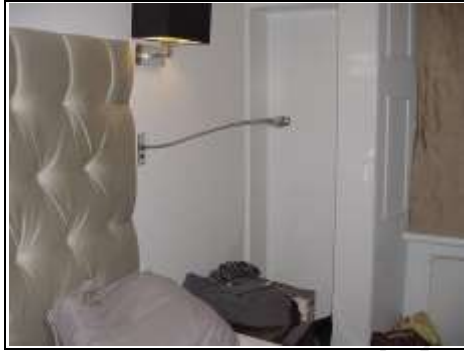


## Photographs

### Lower ground floor



Bedroom



Bedroom



Bathroom



Kitchen



Lounge

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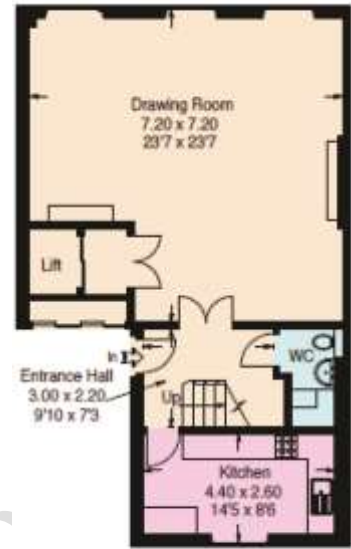


## **Apartment Four**

### **First floor**

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway
- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Drawing room
- 4) W.C.
- 5) Lift

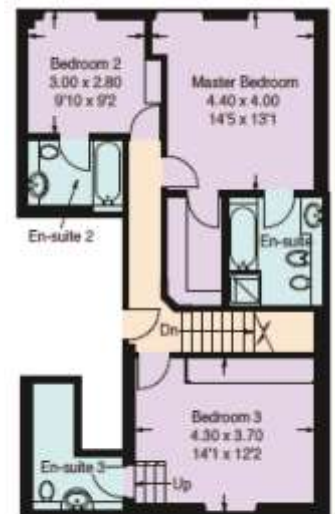


Flat 4 - First Floor

### **Second floor**

The second floor accommodation consists of:

- 6) Stairs leading down
- 7) Bedroom with en-suite – front
- 8) Bedroom with en-suite – rear left
- 9) Bedroom with en-suite - rear right



Flat 4 - Second Floor

### **Services**

The Vaillant boiler is located within the kitchen.

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## **Photographs**

### **First floor**



Entrance to Drawing Room



Drawing room



Drawing Room



Fireplace



Kitchen



Lift

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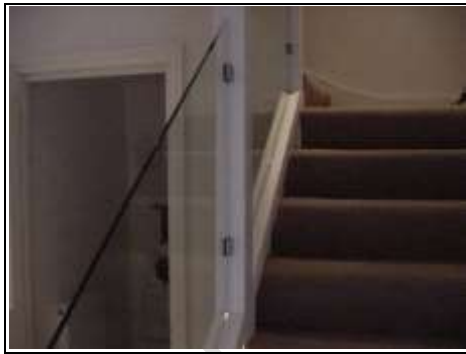


Looking out at the balcony



W.C.

## **Second floor**



Stairway with glazed hand rail



Music system with speakers in all rooms



Master bedroom



En suite

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## **Apartment Five**

### **Second floor**

The second floor accommodation consists of:

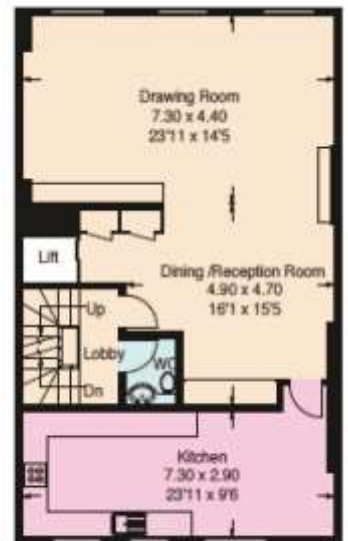
- 1) Stairs



### **Third floor**

The third floor accommodation consists of:

- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Dining/ reception room
- 4) Drawing room
- 5) W.C.
- 6) Lobby
- 7) Lift
- 8) Stairs

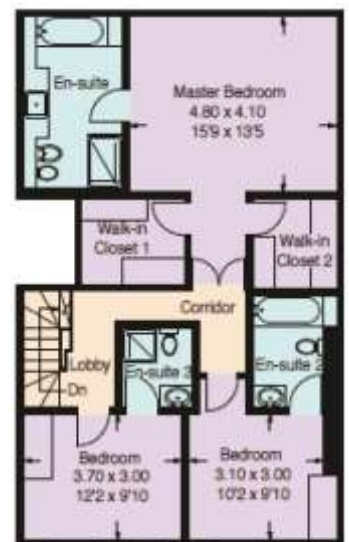


Flat 5 - Third Floor

### **Fourth Floor**

The Fourth floor accommodation consists of:

- 9) Bedroom with en-suite (front left)
- 10) Bedroom with en-suite (right)
- 11) Corridor/lobby
- 12) Master bedroom with en-suite (rear)
- 13) Walk in closets



Flat 5 - Fourth Floor

### **Services**

The electric fuse board is in the service cupboard near the lift.

The Vaillant boiler is in the kitchen

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## Photographs

### Third floor



W.C.



Kitchen



Kitchen  
Glass splash back

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## **Fourth floor**



Bedroom rear



Bedroom rear



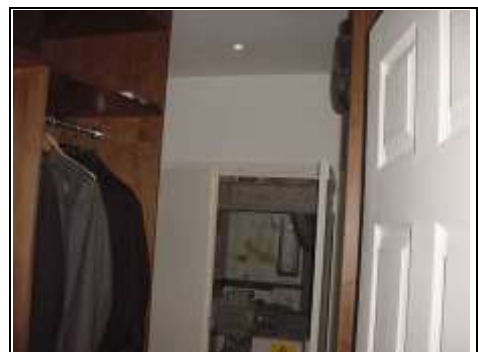
En suite



En suite



Walk in closet



Walk in closet

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## **Outside Areas**

There is a courtyard to the front of the property for the lower ground floor Apartment Three. To the rear are courtyards and terraced areas including the private terrace for Apartment Two and the shared terrace.



Shared terrace accessible from the stairs



Entrance hall for Apartments



Shared stairs

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

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## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **External**

Chimneys:	Large brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched asphalt roof with solar reflective paint Three dormer windows
Rear roofs:	Manmade slate and Asphalt with solar reflective paint. Some roofs have decking over them Rear terraces
Roof windows:	One to main roof Six windows to the rear pitched roof Four roof windows to terrace
Main Roof Structure:	Not visible
Gutters and Downpipes:	To the rear via plastic hopper heads and downpipes Rear single storey area via plastic gutters and valley gutters
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork Stucco render
Windows and Doors:	Predominantly timber single glazed sliding sash windows Secondary glazing Large fixed windows to Apartment Two (mezzanine area)

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## **Internal**

Ceilings:		Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:	Front and rear:	Generally dry lined/false wall (assumed)
	Sides	Generally dry lined / false wall With the possible exception of the top floor apartment
Floors:	Lower Ground,	Assumed concrete, assumed tanked
	Ground Floor to Fourth Floor	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed). With the possible exception of the top floor apartment

## **Services**

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The services have not been tested as we were advised by the managing agent that there are contracts and annual services in place. You need to check and confirm this. As far as we can see all apartments have individual boilers and individual electricity supplies.

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

We have viewed the [BritishListedBuildings.co.uk](http://BritishListedBuildings.co.uk) website and have identified the property as being listed. Please see the Listed Building reference in the appendices, this is a general listing for all properties mentioned.

Finally, your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have 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 500 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

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

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

### **The Good**

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

- 1.0) Older properties, particularly of this age, type and style have much larger rooms than can be found in later period properties or modern properties.
- 2.0) The property has good natural light due to the large windows that were common during the Georgian era.
- 3.0) The property also has many of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property.

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

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## **The Bad**

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

### **1.0) Chimneys**

This property has substantial chimneys. The chimney to the left hand side is damaged and deteriorating. It looks to have a modern cement mortar detail that is prone to cracking.



Left chimney requiring repairs

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It may well be that the best detail is a lead capping around the chimneys and also to the parapet walls, we will discuss this in the next section.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** For a cement repair this will cost a few hundred pounds. A lead repair would approximately double this cost; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Chimney Section of this report.

### **2.0) Parapet walls and coping stone**

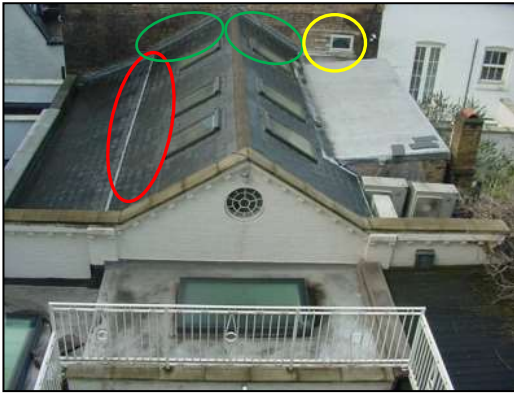
We can see that the courtyard to Apartment Two and the shared terrace to the rear of the property have a coping stone that looks to have leaked over the years. We can see that the joints of this have been tarred to the left hand side and the parapet wall has been completely tarred to the right hand side.



Rear right hand side parapet wall has been completely tarred

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Rear of Apartment Two  
Awkward valley gutter (red)  
Straight lead flashings instead of stepped (green)  
Gutter leaking onto property (yellow)



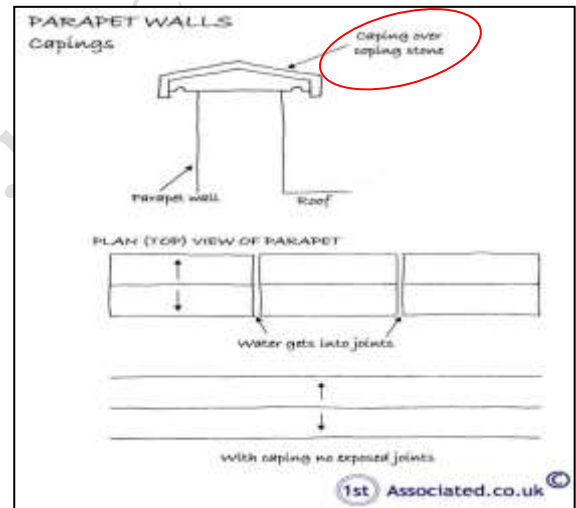
Left hand side of courtyard  
Repairs to the parapet wall



Courtyard to apartment two –  
repairs visible



Example of lead capping to a  
parapet wall on another  
property.



Parapet walls and cappings

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that lead cappings are added to the parapet walls including the one on the main roof.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Lead work can be expensive but does offer the best watertight solution in our opinion. We would expect costs in the region of £10,000 to £20,000 for a complete solution. For temporary tar repairs, as



Main roof parapet wall

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already carried out, would be hundreds of pounds and partial leading would be thousands of pounds dependent upon the amount of work; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Parapet Wall Section of this report

### 3.0) Main roof

The main roof has a shallow pitched Asphalt roof. Generally Asphalt roofs are considered to be the Rolls Royce of flat roofs and we would always recommend repairing them rather than replacing them, except for a fairly few exceptions where there are major problems and with no insulation present.

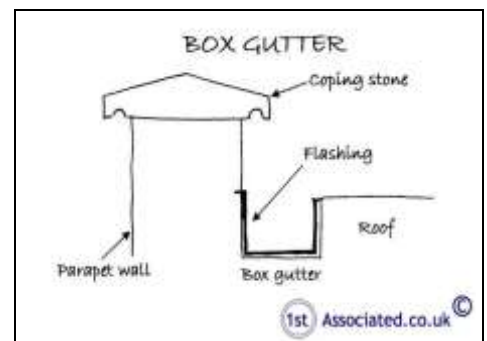


Main roof

To the front of this Asphalt roof is a box gutter detail where we think rainwater is getting in. The problem may be caused by the poor detailing to the box gutter around the dormer windows, see further on in this section.



Awkward box gutter



Box gutter

### 3.1) Dampness internally

Internally we can see that dampness is getting in.

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Damp staining at window

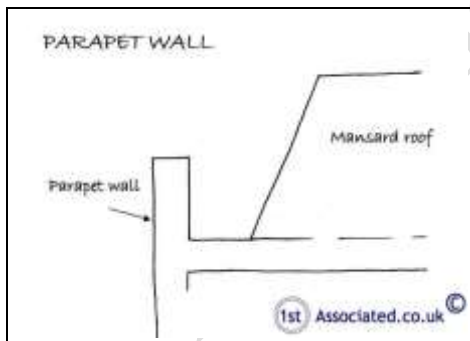


Damp staining relating to the main roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** There are various testing systems to use on Asphalt roofs to pinpoint the leak. The main problem with this type of roof is that where the leak is getting in is not necessarily where the staining is seen. However as said, this is the Rolls Royce of roofs and should be kept if at all possible. Adhoc repairs should be carried out and solar reflective paint added to the roof to prolong its life. In addition to this there may also be dampness coming in via the lead work. This is precarious to carry out repairs to and will require a cantilevered scaffolding to give access and to allow a full inspection.

### 3.2) Box Gutter

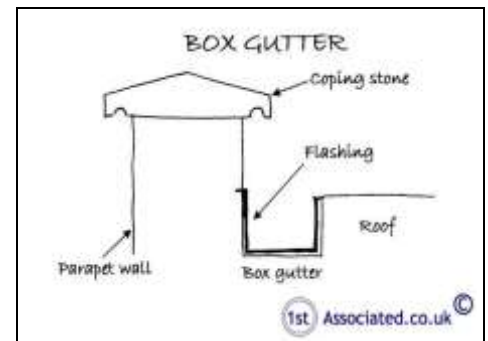
We simply could not see the box gutter well enough but these are renowned for problems.



Parapet wall



Box gutter



Box gutter

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would specifically ask if there has been any maintenance carried out on this area from basic clearing of the gutter to the renewing of the finish. We would always recommend that a

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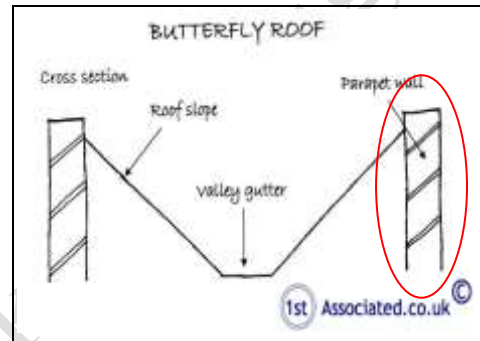
lead box gutter is added and that this is bedded in using a modern day mastic and that this is periodically inspected.

### 3.3) Neighbouring left hand butterfly roof

The adjoining property still has the original butterfly roof. There is cracking visible between the concrete fillet that has been used and the parapet wall of this property.



Cracking to concrete fillet



Butterfly roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ideally this should have a lead flashing as dampness can get into the top floor apartment from your neighbour's property. We recommend speaking to the neighbour to advise them of the problem. If they are not happy to carry out the work it may well be worth you carrying out the work.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

## 4.0) Rear Roofs

### 4.1) Pitched roof

The rear roofs which form mainly the roof of Apartment Two are divided into categories, the pitched roof area, the flat roof areas together with another flat roof area that is hidden by the terraces.



Rear pitched roof  
Awkward box gutter (red)

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As mentioned there is a pitched roof to the rear of Apartment Two which forms the cathedral ceiling within the apartment. This has been re-roofed at some point with a manmade slate, this would typically have been during the 1990's. We noted that some slates have already been displaced to the rear right hand side.



Slates displaced

**ACTION REQUIRED:** This needs general maintenance and should not take more than half a day to refit the slates. At the same time the roof windows would benefit from being cleaned.

To the left hand side there is an awkward gutter that we believe is leaking. Again as with the main roof, box gutters really can be problematic particularly in this case where any water that discharges from the gutter actually goes into the walls.

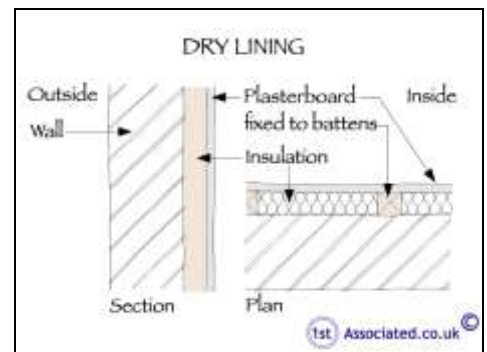


Awkward box gutter that we believe is leaking

We checked the wall for damp readings but our findings were limited by the fact that the walls are dry lined within this area.

#### Dry Lining Defined

This term comes from the fact that plasterboard is dry and used as an inner lining within the property. Prior to this a wet plaster was used and required drying out periods which slowed the construction process down. Therefore almost universally in modern properties dry lining is used both as a ceiling material and sometimes to internally line the walls.



Dry lining

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#### 4.1.1) Lead Flashing to pitched roof

We can see that the lead flashing has been put onto the pitch roof using a straight cut rather than a stepped cut. We tend to find that straight cut lead does not work as well as a stepped lead flashing which is simply a better quality of workmanship and the steps follow the line of the brickwork. The step lead flashing is a subtle difference but we believe it does indicate that the quality of workmanship is not particularly good with regards to this roof.



Example of step flashing highlighted in chimney sketch with red oval.



Straight line flashing to left of rear roof instead of the correct stepped flashing.



Straight line flashing to right of rear roof instead of the correct stepped flashing.

#### 4.2 Shallow pitched and flat roofs

There are various flat and shallow pitched Asphalt roofs to the rear and we could see that rucking and deterioration is starting to occur.



Flat roofs



Roof to the right hand side is starting to deteriorate and ruck

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Deterioration to roof



Deterioration and rucking

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Patch repairs will be required in the next few years. As mentioned Asphalt is the Rolls Royce of roofing materials as long as it maintained.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds if carried out before the roofs leak, thousands if left; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

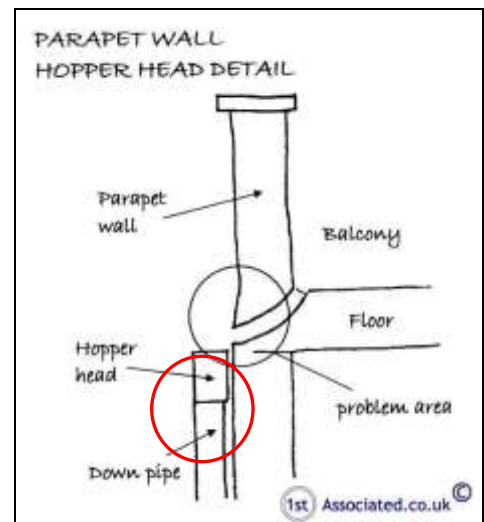
## 5.0) Hopper heads, gutters and downpipes

### 5.1) Hopper head

We could not see lead work behind the hopper head.



No lead behind hopper head



Parapet wall hopper head

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that lead is added to this area.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds. The difficulty is accessing the area; please obtain quotations.

#### 5.2) Neighbours gutter

To the rear of the property, above the single storey right hand side area of Apartment Two, we can see that the adjoining property has uncoupled guttering which is allowing water to discharge down their wall and also down yours.



Neighbours gutter leaking onto your wall

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Speak to the neighbours but we would recommend that you repair it if you do not get any response.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds, this will stop dampness getting into your building; please obtain quotations.



Guttering is broken

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this report.

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## 6.0) External joinery

The windows of the property fall into two categories.

### 6.1) Timber sash windows

The main building has predominantly timber single glazed sliding sash windows, many of which have secondary glazing indicating that they are draughty.



Predominantly sash windows

If you have never owned a property with sliding sash windows before then this can be a cause for concern with tenants. If the windows cannot be opened there is no natural ventilation and if they can be eased and adjusted so that they do open then concerns are about the draughts and rattling of the windows.

As the building is Grade II listed there is a limited amount of things you can do with regards to the windows and so we would recommend good quality secondary glazing.



18<sup>th</sup> Century sash window

You need to be aware that these windows can be a means of escape in a worst case of scenario in a fire.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Given the way that the windows sit in the wall, 100mm back from the fascia, indicates their date as being late 18<sup>th</sup> century, however they may have been replaced with a Victorian sliding sash window. Either way they need re-decorating in the summer of 2014 to stop damage and deterioration to the timber beneath.



Windows in need of redecoration – rear right

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The timber is likely to be good quality and we would only recommend repair in the areas susceptible to wet rot as shown in our sketch. We do find there is a pressure to replace such windows and often, with a window of a lesser quality over the long term.



Wet rot in sash windows

## 6.2) Windows to the rear extension - Apartment Two

There are large fixed/picture windows hidden by blinds at the time of the survey. These do not look to be of good quality or condition particularly as they have thin mullions (the vertical timbers on the windows). We also think that the detailing at roof level is poor and we recommend that an up-stand is added to this area to minimise any wind driven rain coming off this section.



Rear windows

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend redecoration in the summer of 2014 and would be looking to renewing the windows dependent upon what is found during the redecoration.

**ANTICIPATED COSTS:** The difficulty is accessing this area which is likely to require scaffolding and we would expect costs in the region of £2,000 to £4,000.



Poor detail requires a gutter, assuming it is not hanging over next doors property

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You could equally decide that rather than redecoration it would be worth replacing them, in which case as these are large picture windows we would replace them with large modern double glazed windows. However, the windows may have to be timber due to the listed building requirements.



Rusting to metal work on timber windows

Replacement costs are likely to be in the £7,000 to £15,000 market with the increase due to the scaffolding required and also because they will need to be custom made.

Please see the Windows and Doors Section of this Report.

#### **7.0) Timber lintels and bonding timbers**

As with any property of this age it will originally have had timber lintels, these give the support over the doors and the windows, and bonding timbers and also possibly timber supports in the balconies to the front.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that a sample rear window is opened up to check the condition of the timbers behind.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £250 to £500; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

#### **8.0) Dampness**

We believe there is dampness in the rooms to the lower ground floor apartment to the front and also to apartment two. There is simply no easy

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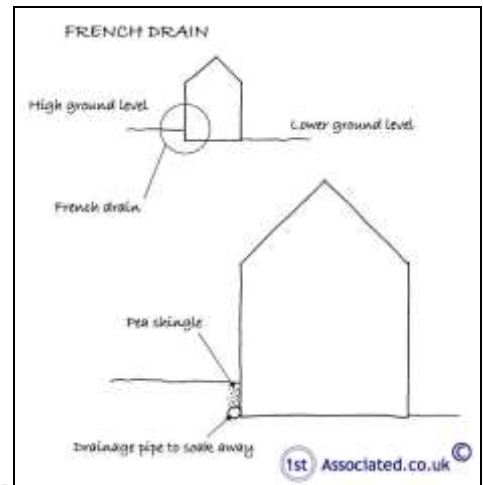


way for the rainwater to run away and we would much prefer to see a running gully or French Drain detail around the base of the property which feeds into the main drains.

We would also like to see some method of stopping capillary action to the render when the rainwater lands and drawing the dampness into the building.

#### French Drain defined

A French Drain is a trench dug around the property with a perforated pipe fitted underneath a layer of pea shingle that then feeds into the drainage system taking away any rainwater close to the property.



French Drain

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

### **9.0) Cracking around the lift area and stairs**

There has been some movement in the structure which is difficult to see due to the dry lining that has been used which effectively adds a false wall around the property. However, we can see hair line cracking and raking cracks around the lift shaft and the staircase area. We believe this is due to a combination of reasons.



Cracking around the lift area in Apartment Four

1. There can often be movement where there is a staircase and this could be due to the timbers being embedded into the wall and deteriorating over time.
2. The lift has been added at some point in time which will have involved structural work and adds a more solid element to buildings that were designed very differently and this can result in cracking such as this. We have inspected the property externally

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from ground floor level as best as we can and cannot see any obvious visual cracks.

Please see the Internal Ceilings and Walls Sections of this Report.

## 10.0) Services

### 10.1) Electrics

From what we could see each apartment has separate fuse boards which looked reasonably new (past thirty years) although regulations are changing all the time.

Our concern is that from speaking to the property agent/manager they are not aware of any electrical certificates having taken place. We believe these are essential to good property management.

For example, we would draw your attention to one new piece of electrical legislation which is the requirement to have a fire resistant ceiling light where there are habitable rooms above.

There are lots of instances of this where this would apply within the property and we have personally come across situations where fires have been started due to ceiling lights like these.



Fuse Board in Apartment Five



Ceiling lights

**ACTION REQUIRED:** A full Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent. The ceiling lights should be checked and also anything else that the NICEIC electrical contractor believes is necessary.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £3,000 to £5,000; please obtain quotations.

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## 10.2) Comfort Cooling

There is comfort cooling in the property which was not on during the course of our inspection. From what we understand this is comfort cooling as opposed to air conditioning where you can control heat, cooling and relative humidity. This has not been inspected.



Comfort cooling units on chimney



Comfort cooling units on chimney

## 10.3) Lifts

Lifts can be very expensive and it's important that you have full lift records and that you speak to the servicing company before you commit to purchase the property as a new lift will be a major expenditure and is essential for this type of market.

## 10.4) Manholes

There are various manholes throughout the property. The ones we found require specialist lifting equipment and so we were unable to open them.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.



Manhole cover not lifted at entrance to the apartments

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

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## **11.0) Listed Building**

As this is a Grade II Listed building, and this is more a statement of fact, you do need to ensure that any work that is carried out has the appropriate approval of the local conservation officer.

### **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 section providing you are happy with the characteristics and associated costs of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report and are happy to carry out the repairs in a timely fashion.

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Maintenance**

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

In this case we believe reactive maintenance has been carried out i.e. maintenance is carried out only after the tenant has called/ notified the managing agent about the problem. There has been no planned maintenance from what we understand from talking to the agent and there is not a planned maintenance schedule for the property.

## **Services**

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services. We also need to advise you of the following:

## **Electrics**

We are advised there is not an electrical report. It is essential that you have one.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The Institute of Electrical Engineers standards (IEE) recommend a test and report whenever a property changes occupancy. This should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

## **Heating**

The property has been rented out and as such should have had servicing every year and should have boiler certificates every year. This is of course carried out to different levels by different heating engineers.

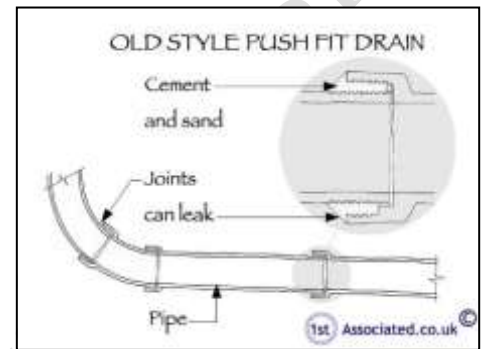
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**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that you obtain information on the existing heating engineers and discuss with them whether they recommend a general overhaul of the system. From what we can see the boilers in the upper apartments were relatively new Vaillant and Worcester boilers and the lower flats had older boilers.

### **Drainage**

In older properties, such as this, drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together which means that they may leak over the years. Whilst we ran the taps for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.



Push fit drain

### **Water Supply**

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

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

### **DIY/Handyman Type Work**

We would always recommend redecorating the communal areas as we feel this makes a big impact on renting the properties.

### **Purchase Price**

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

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We would recommend that you confirm that the rents are Open Market Rents and are achievable in the current market and sustainable.

### **Every Business Transaction has a Risk**

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

### **Estimates of Building Costs**

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

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

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## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**



The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are 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:

1. Roof work needs to be carried out in the next year or so and also work to the windows. Please do not underestimate this work particularly as some of it will require high level scaffolding which can be expensive.
2. The minor movement in the property is worth advising your insurers about. This type of movement is usually monitored for a year as recommended by the BRE (Building Research Establishment).
3. We would say there has been a general lack of maintenance in recent years. This can be costly particularly at high level as scaffolding, a cherry picker or other access device is required.

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

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

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

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## **MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT**

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

### **TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)**

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

### **ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?**

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

### **SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

### **TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS**

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

### **OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION**

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

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

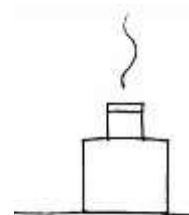


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## **EXTERNAL**

### **CHIMNEY STACKS AND PARAPET WALLS**



#### **Chimney Stacks**

(all directions given as you face the property).

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

There are two large chimneys to this property that are located one to the left hand side and one to the right hand side and which also form part of the parapet walls and the party walls. The chimneys have been subdivided over the years and areas have been capped but effectively they are two chimneys one to the left and one to the right.

#### **Chimney One – located to the left side**

This chimney is brick built finished with a lead flashing and several chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style due to the condition of the flaunching



Chimney-left



Flaunching



Left hand chimney needs repairs

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

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### **Chimney Two – located to the right side**

This is a substantial chimney and again we have identified them as one chimney as this is how they originally would have been. The brickwork and the chimney pots look to be in average condition although we have not been able to see the flaunching properly.



Chimney - right

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Carry out period inspections.

### **Flues**

*Flues offer ventilation to things like boilers and soil and vent pipes and usually come through the roof covering, which can often also be a weak area.*

The property has a number of flues to both the left and right side. These are, we believe, the flues to the boilers and the soil and vent pipes and are plastic where we can see them at roof level.



Flues



Flues

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## Parapet Walls

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

In this case there are parapet walls running in the form of the chimneys to the left and right hand side with various further parapet walls to the rear of the property.

### Main roof parapet walls



Rear parapet wall with paviour slabs to the top



General view of rear parapet wall

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We are recommending that any parapet walls with coping stones should be capped using lead as this stops any dampness getting in through the joints and through the brickwork.

### Rear pitched roof – single storey extension



Parapet to rear pitched roof



Lead flashing is lifting



It almost looks as if someone has tried to remove/steal it

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** The lead work needs to be re-bedded.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds.

**Courtyard to Apartment Two and various other parapet walls**



Parapet wall to courtyard has been tarred over the joints



Parapet walls over study area



Damage to parapet wall

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We are recommending that all walls have lead cappings added. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately forty percent of the parapet walls, therefore we have made our best assumptions based upon what we could see. A closer inspection may reveal more.

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## **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.*

There are dormer windows to the front of the property which may have leaks due to the poor detailing to the box gutter. The dormer windows are lead covered. There does appear to be a leak internally.



Dormer window

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Finally, Dormer windows have been viewed from ground level and literally from the dormer windows themselves.

## **Roof Windows**

The property has one roof window to the main roof, four to the rear flat roofs and six to the rear pitched roof. These all generally look to be in average condition. These are all relatively new with no obvious staining around them.



Roof window to main roof

However we do tend to find that roof windows leak sooner or later and we can already see that some slates have been displaced around the rear pitched roof area.



Mould on roof window above Apartment two



Roof windows to rear pitched roof



Roof windows in Mezzanine

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## **Ground floor level**



Roof window above entrance area



Roof window above entrance area



Roof window over study area

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## **Party Walls**

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

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

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

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

Specifically we would comment that nearly any work that you carry out in a property such as this will need Party Wall approval with adjoining properties.

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

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

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## **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.*

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

We will consider the roofs in three areas: -

1. The main roof
2. The rear pitched roof
3. The rear flat roofs

### **Main Roof**

The main roof is Asphalt and is in slightly below average condition considering the roofs age type and style. From the staining visible beneath, it looks as if water has come in and patch repairs have been carried out. We believe further repairs are likely to be required either here or to other areas as detailed within the Executive Summary.

The access area to the roof is clad in slates and looks to be in acceptable condition.



Main roof



Main roof

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Problems with roof detail please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the box gutter



Access to main roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary and carry out periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.

### **Neighbours roof**

The neighbour's roof beds onto this property. Where a cement mortar has been used instead of a lead flashing hairline cracking is visible.



Neighbours roof beds onto this property. Cement mortar has been used rather than lead flashing



Hairline cracking.

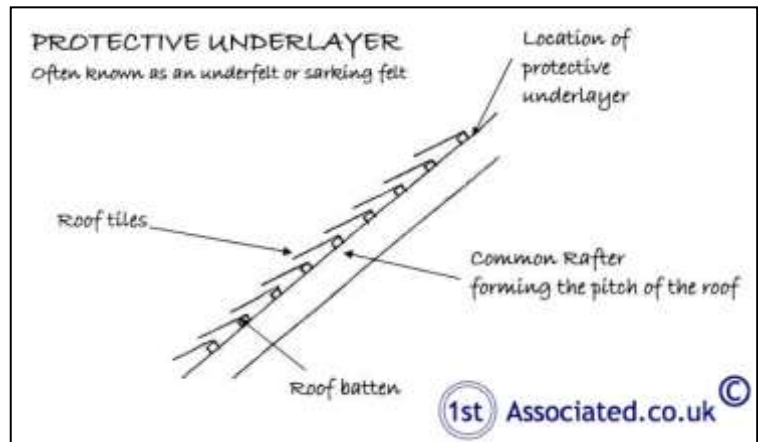
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the executive Summary.

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

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



Protective Underlayer

There will not be a protective underlayer to the main roof but there may be one to the rear pitched roof. Unfortunately as this has vaulted ceilings, also known as cathedral ceilings, we cannot gain access to this area without opening up the structure. We could see no obvious signs of problems such as staining.

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## **Rear Pitched Roof – Apartment Two**

The rear roof is clad in manmade slates and is in average condition with some displaced slates.



Vertical lead



Rear pitched roof over  
Apartment Two

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the executive Summary.

## **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 can 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.*

## **Rear flat roof over Apartment Two**

There is a shallow pitched roof to the rear right hand side and flat roofs to the front of Apartment Two and to the terraced areas. These are Asphalt roofs.

We have suggested within the Executive Summary that the main roof is tested to pin point the leak. This is an electric testing system where the roof is covered in a liquid and a charge passed over it via a metal detector type device to see if there is any water getting in. We feel that this will be beneficial here as although there are no obvious signs of water getting in, it is best to be on the safe side.

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Rucking to the flat roof over  
Apartment Two



Solar reflective paint is  
wearing away



Flat roof over study area



Small flat roof

### **Further information on flat roofs**

#### **Insulation**

We have not opened up the flat roofs so we do not know if there is insulation in them. With Asphalt roofs we generally find there is no insulation present. If you do need to re-roof this type of roof you will need to obtain Building Regulation approval which in turn will mean you need to add insulation.

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs and main roof have been inspected from the roofs themselves.

Finally, we were able to see most of the main roof with the exception of the box gutter to the front of the property. Our view of the low level roofs was limited by the decking on the terrace. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects. For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

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## **ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT**

### **(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)**

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

#### **Main Roof**

#### **Roof Access**

There is no roof access as far as we could see.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Specifically write to the owners Solicitor asking them to advise if there is any access to any of the roofs and if so we will be more than happy to revisit and view the roofs. Equally if you so wish we will be more than happy to open up the roofs and examine them.

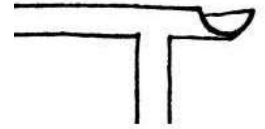
#### **Roof Structure**

We would take an educated guess that the roof structure is timber. Our concern is that the timber is unvented and that over the years dampness and wet rot, dry rot or wood worm could have built up within the roof.

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## GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

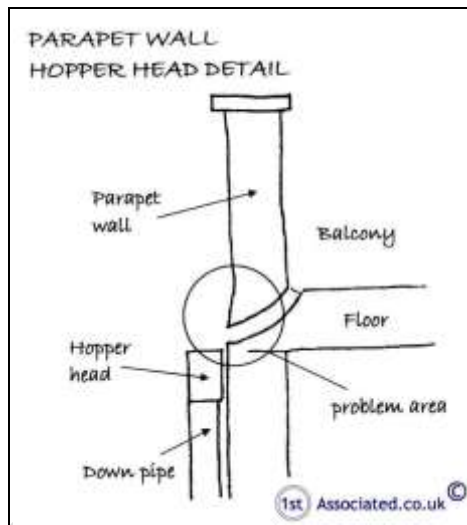
*Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.*

### Hopper Heads, Box Gutters, Downpipes and Guttering

The property has plastic hopper heads and plastic gutters and downpipes.



Hopper head left hand side wall of Apartment Two



Hopper head



Hopper head taking water off the roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary referencing the hopper heads and the hopper head detailing.

We have recommending that lead is added around the hopper heads but also we would recommend these are checked next time it rains heavily to see if they are overflowing as it may simply be that they need to be a larger size. The original cast iron hopper heads



Plastic gutter

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tended to be larger than the modern plastic ones and also had an overflow on them that worked very well should they become blocked.

As with any roof regular maintenance is needed. Request from the managing agents how frequently they carry out cleaning of the roof gutters or is this on a reactive only basis i.e. when a tenant contacts them about a problem.

### **Soil and Vent Pipe**

The property has plastic soil and vent pipes which have replaced the original cast iron.

As a general comment if there is any cast iron remaining to the hopper heads, gutters, downpipes or soil and vent pipes then this will need regular maintenance.



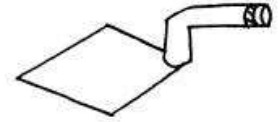
Plastic soil and vent pipe

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.

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# WALLS



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

The walls are constructed of brickwork and Stucco render.

## Brickwork

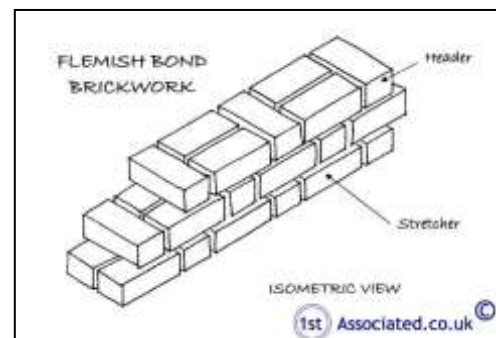
The property is built in a Yellow London Stock brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork. The neighbouring properties as you can see in the photo have had the brickwork altered over the years and this will usually have been due to dampness getting in.



Flemish bond brickwork

## Flemish bond brickwork

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



Flemish bond brickwork

## Timber lintels and bonding timbers

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

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### Penetrating dampness

This was in line with what we would expect to find. Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition; they looked in reasonable condition as viewed from ground level. Some of the brickwork would benefit from repointing.

### Stucco render

The external walls at lower level are finished in a Stucco render. This looks to be a replacement cement based render which is harder and can suffer from what we term as a hardboiled egg situation where the outer skin does not move in the same way that the inner skin does.



Stucco render

This generally seemed to be in average condition but would benefit from redecoration. We would recommend that this is carried out with the redecoration of the windows (please see further on in the report) in the summer of 2014.

### Cracking

We would add that any hairline cracks that appear need to be sealed as soon as possible to stop dampness and water getting in and causing blisters and hollow areas in the render.



Hairline cracking to render on the reveals of the windows

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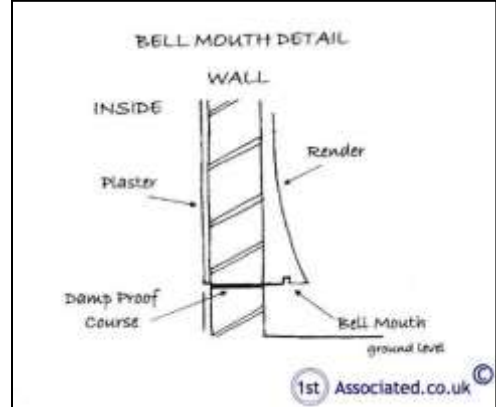


## **Render Detailing**

We would much prefer to see a bell mouth type detail to the base of the render. However in this case it is not really applicable as this is a style that outweighs the practicalities.



Poor render detail- this is why there is dampness in the property



Bell mouth detail



Damp coming from the stairs into the wall. Asphalt tends to be the only way to resolve this

## **Painted render/painted walls**

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property.

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 / render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete

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lintels, rubbed brick lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

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

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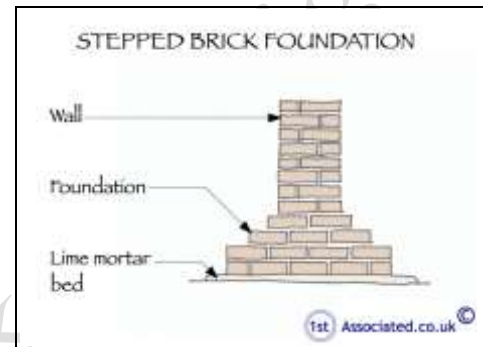


## **FOUNDATIONS**

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

### **Foundations**

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



Stepped brick foundation

### **London Clay**

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

### **Building Insurance Policy**

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

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

### **Cracks within the property**

In this case please note our comments within the Executive Summary regarding the cracks around the centre of the building.

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

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

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

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

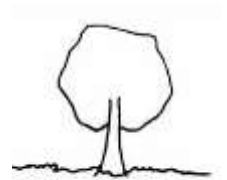
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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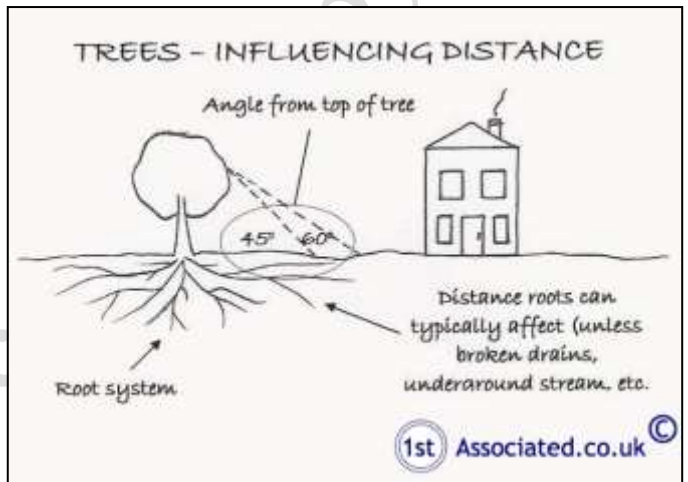
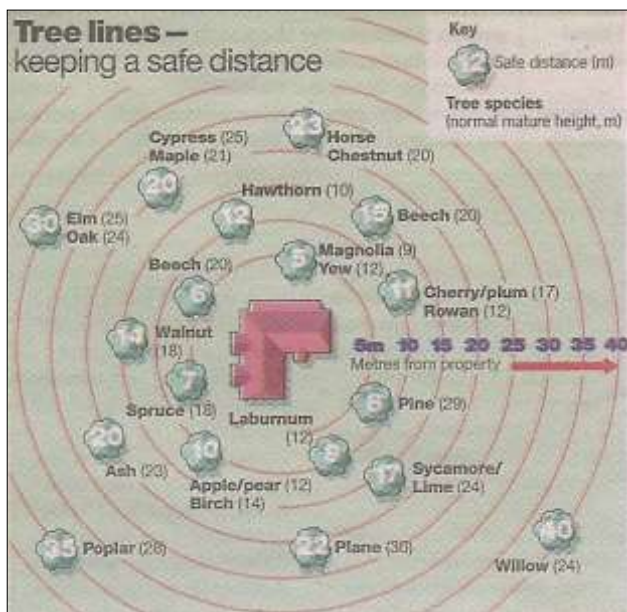
# TREES

FOUNDATIONS



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

There are no trees within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.



Influencing distance of trees to a property

## Influencing Distance Defined

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

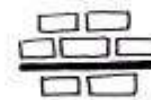
Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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## **DAMP PROOF COURSE**

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

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this era of property it is unlikely to have a damp proof course as it was built before Damp Proof Courses were commonly used.

### **Tanking**

We do however feel that the lower ground floor has been tanked and then dry lined with a false wall.

### **Types of Tanking**

#### **Tanked Protection Type A**

This is where a waterproof membrane is added to keep water out, for example within a Victorian property basement.

#### **Integral Waterproofing Type B**

This is where waterproof concrete is used, for example when building a bridge that needs to sit in water.

#### **Drained Cavity Protection Type C**

This is a dry wall system with a drain behind it and is said to be the best type.

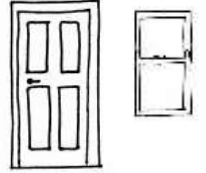
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Advisor to check if there is any guarantee with regards to the tanking of the building.

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

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

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## WINDOWS AND DOORS

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

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

### Windows and Doors

The property has predominantly single glazed timber sliding sash windows.



Sash windows to the rear of the property look in reasonable condition



Rusting to the metal work on the timber windows to the right hand side of Apartment Two



Timber windows need redecorating



Windows to Apartment Two



Poor detailing

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. The windows need redecoration and the sooner the better. Please also note our comments with regards to secondary glazing and the glazing to Apartment Two.

### **Knife Test**

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

### **General Information on Sliding Sash Windows**

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case. Horizontal Sliding Sash Windows (sometimes known as York Windows).

### **Secondary glazing**

The idea of secondary glazing is to reduce noise but also to reduce thermal loss.



Secondary glazing in  
Apartment Five



Secondary glazing in  
Apartment four

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

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## **EXTERNAL 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.*

There is an element of external redecoration with this property. We would suggest that it is all carried out in the summer of 2014 as we feel it will be very beneficial in marketing the property.

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

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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## INTERNAL



## CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

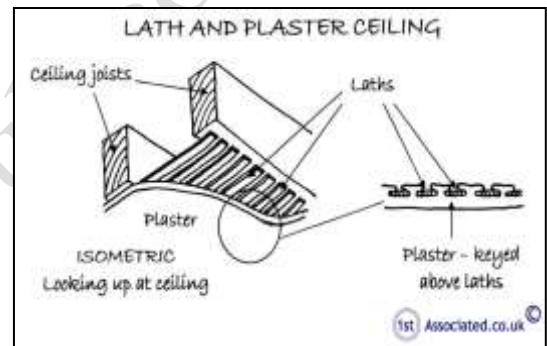
*In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.*

### Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be a mixture of lath and plaster to the older areas and plasterboard to the newer areas.

#### Lath and Plaster Defined

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



Lath and plaster ceiling

#### 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.



A leak has been painted over in the drawing room in Apartment Five



Dampness coming into the ensuite from the kitchen above in Apartment Two

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## **Cracking in Apartment Four**



Cracking around the lift area in  
Apartment Four

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## **Internal Walls and Partitions**

Over the years many of the walls would have been moved and amended giving a mixture of solid and studwork walls. It is very difficult to determine how the structure works without opening it up but we can see internally that there is more cracking than we would expect, this is around the lift and stairs area where there can often be movement.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



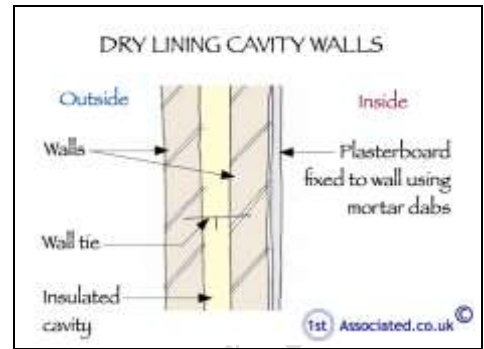
Cracking around entrance  
door to drawing room,  
Apartment Four

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## **Perimeter Walls**

Most of the perimeter walls are dry lined and we could not inspect them. The ones that were not dry lined, to the upper floors, were in reasonable condition.



Dry lining

There is hairline cracking in various Apartments particularly around the staircase / lift area.

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



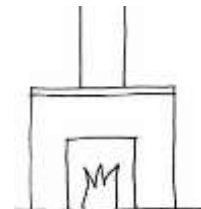
Cracking on stairs in Apartment Two leading down to bedrooms

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

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

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## **CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES**

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

The chimney breasts are located throughout the property.

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. We did note that some chimneys at roof level have been capped which means you cannot use them unless they are opened up and the chimneys are cleaned and lined.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that all chimneys are swept or establish a date when this work was carried out, then seal as necessary and as required within each apartment.

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

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

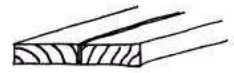
It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

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

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# **FLOORS**



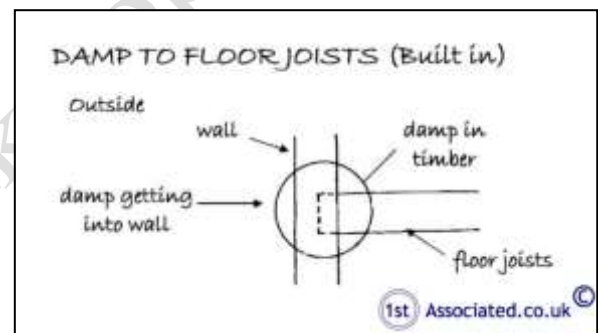
*Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.*

## **Lower ground floor**

The floors felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete. Please note our comments with regards to not being able to lift the manholes in these areas.

## **Upper ground, first, second, third and fourth floors**

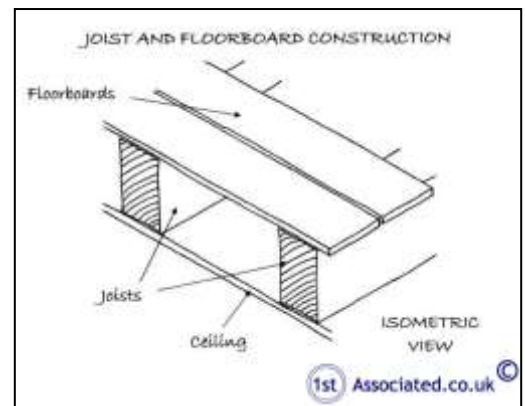
We have assumed that the construction is joist and floorboards with embedded timbers, as this is typical in this age of property. We noticed no undue deflection, given the properties age, type and style.



Embedded timbers

### 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.



Joist and floorboards

Finally, we have not been able to view structural floor itself due to it 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.

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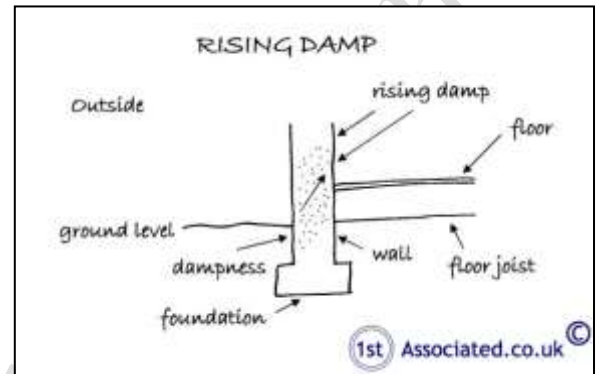


## **DAMPNESS**

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

### **Rising Damp**

*Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.*



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found minor dampness to the lower ground floor. Looking at the detail externally we think that levels are higher but they are effectively hidden by the dry lining



Testing for dampness but the walls are dry lined

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary regarding changing the detailing to the front of the property.



Testing for dampness in Apartment Three - slightly higher readings



Dry lined walls

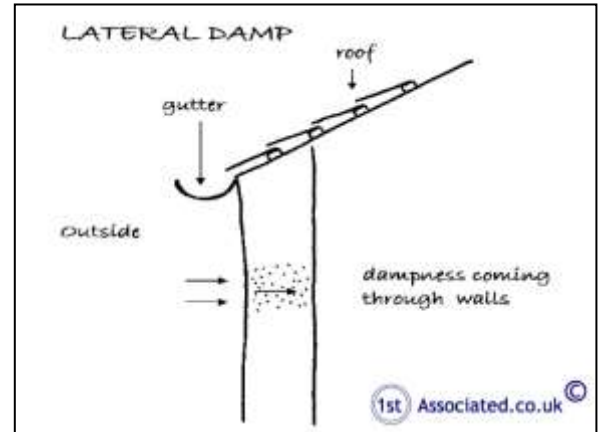
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## **Lateral or Penetrating Dampness**

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

We used a resistance meter on the external walls. We have found dampness in line with what we typically see for this age, type and style of property.



## **Condensation**

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

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation, although we would add that some of the apartments did feel to have high humidity.



Condensation in bathroom  
Apartment Three

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, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

## **Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas**

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



Extract fan in apartment Five

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would

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recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas.

We would add that all property management is about people and it very much depends upon how you choose the right tenants and how you manage them when they are in the property as to whether condensation will be caused. High humidity in one property can cause damage to another.

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

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## **INTERNAL JOINERY**



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

### **Doors**

The property has painted panel doors throughout.

### **Fire doors**

There should be fire doors to all doors that lead onto the staircases and this is to compartmentalise the building and to stop fire spreading from one floor to the next.

### **Staircase**

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

### **Kitchen**

We found the kitchens in all of the apartments to be in average to good condition. We would particularly draw your attention to the kitchen in Apartment One on the ground floor which we were advised has won a design award and, we would say, was certainly the feature of the apartment.

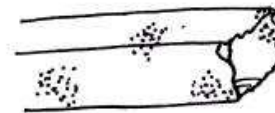
We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

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## **TIMBER DEFECTS**



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

### **Dry Rot**

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

We have not visually seen any significant dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors or the roofs. There is an outside chance of this.

### **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.*

We have not visually seen any signs of significant wet rot during the course of our inspection. However we feel it may be present around the front of the roof around the box gutter and where there are visible signs of dampness etc.

There may also be some wet rot in the decking beneath the Asphalt dependent upon how badly the roofs are leaking, but we are not expecting them to be leaking very much.

With regards to the windows, we believe there will be some wet rot in the windows and the longer they are left the worse this will be.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors or the roofs.

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## **Woodworm**



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

The roof structure was not visible so we have based this on the small amount of wood flooring that we could see which would equate to about one per cent of the building. Within this area we found no obvious visual signs of significant woodworm activity or indeed past signs of significant woodworm activity. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active.

**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 and open up the roof and the floors.

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

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

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## **INTERNAL DECORATIONS**



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

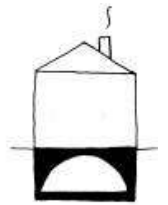
Internal decorations are in average condition but could generally benefit from redecoration. We feel that tenants are always pleased with an internal redecoration providing it is managed correctly.

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

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## VAULTS

*Cellars and vaults tend to be found in older properties and offer a useful space, although usually they are damp, unless some treatment has taken place such as the tanking of the walls, which is a lining process, or an external damp proofing membrane of some type has been added, or if internally the walls have been lined, therefore hiding the damp. Cellars are often susceptible to flooding from excessive rain, rising water table levels or even blocked drains.*

There are vaults to the property that go under the road. These are damp and have been used for various items of service equipment.



Various services in the vaults under the pathways



Water pumps in left hand vault



Vent for deep sewerage drainage



Bin storage in right hand vault

Finally, we have made a visual inspection of the cellar/vault only and have no way of knowing what the construction is without opening up the structure.

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# **THERMAL EFFICIENCY**



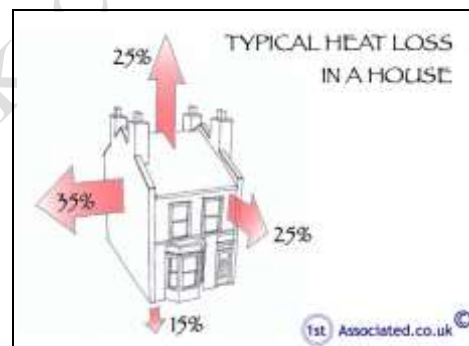
*Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation.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

## **HIPs**

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

## **Roofs**

We cannot access the roofs but we suspect there is no insulation at all in the roofs.



Heat loss from a house

There is a significant difference in the lower level and high level temperatures in some of the apartments. We believe that whilst these walls were originally solid they have now been dry lined with insulation etc. Also the upper flats are effectively insulated by the flats above them and warmed by the flats below them.



Taking surface temperature in Apartment Four



Five degrees warmer at the top of the room than the bottom of the room

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## Windows

The windows are single glazed and therefore will have poor thermal properties.

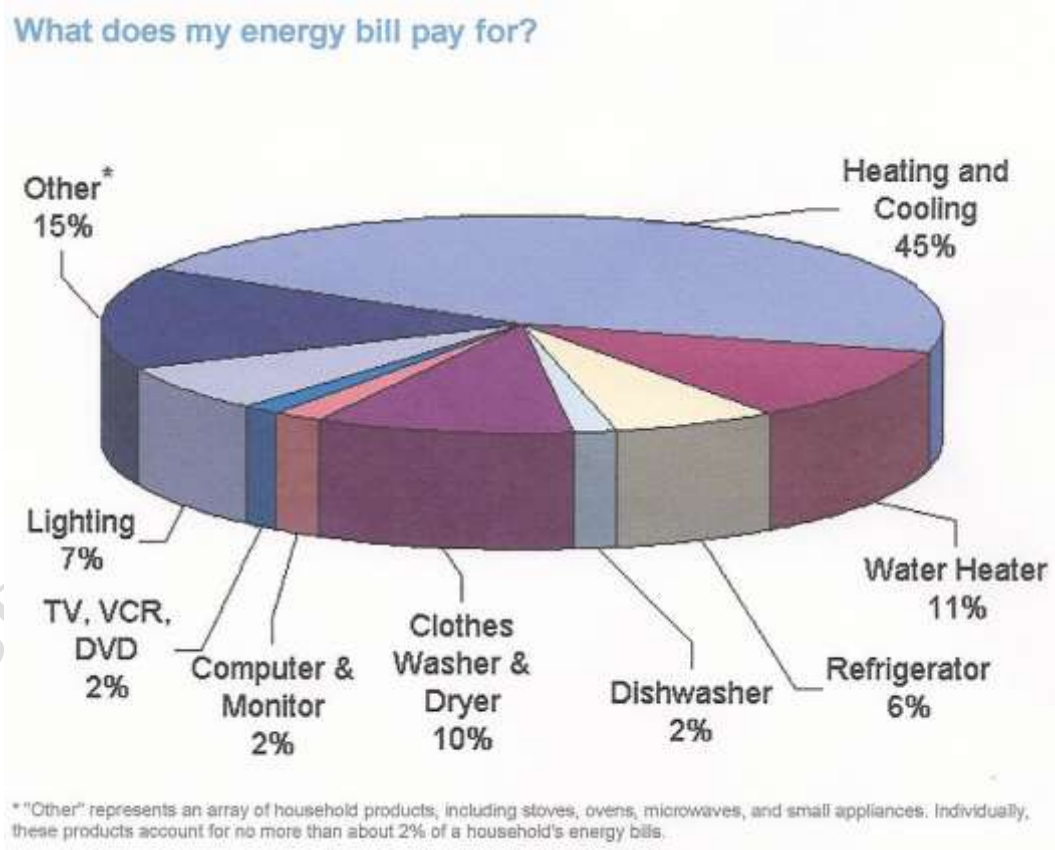
## Services

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 below average compared with what we typically see.

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



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## **OTHER MATTERS**



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

### **Security**

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.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer.



Security alarm in  
Apartment two

### **Fire / Smoke Alarms**

Hardwired smoke alarms were noted. Current Building Regulations now require that they are wired into the main power supply. We much prefer to see these as of course they literally cannot run out of batteries and we feel they are much safer particularly when renting a property out.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** These need to be tested and checked confirming they are working.

### **Insurance**

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

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

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## **Asbestos**

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have not noted asbestos.

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

Our insurance company requires us to advise that 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.

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## **SERVICES**

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

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

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## ELECTRICITY



*It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 Boards

From what we could see each apartment has separate fuse boards which looked reasonably new (past thirty years) although regulations are changing all the time.

The fuse boards also feed the comfort cooling systems.



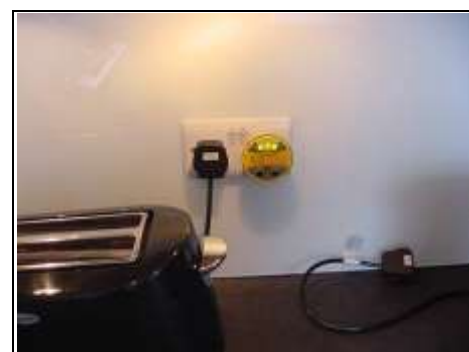
Fuse Board in Apartment Five

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regards to the electrics and ceiling lights.

### Earth Test

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area of apartments, one, three and four, to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle, in each case this proved satisfactory.

We would reiterate our concerns with regards to not having a current up to date IEE



Earth test

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certificate. it could be argued that most Insurance companies only require this every five years however we feel as a good management policy these properties should be checked every year as there is no knowing what one tenant/client may do that will affect another.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers test and report (IEE) should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

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 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

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

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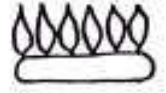
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## GAS



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

We believe that there is mains gas throughout the property and this feeds the boilers at all levels. We were advised by the letting agent/manager that there were up to date Gas Safe certificates for all the apartments.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Y our Legal Advisor to confirm this.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of Gas Safe; works to gas appliances etc., by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

**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.

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## **PLUMBING AND HEATING**

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

### **Water Supply**

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to contact the existing management company to establish where all the stopcocks are.

We would comment that we like to add isolating valves to various areas, i.e. the shower room, bathroom and kitchen. These areas can then be worked on without turning the water off to the entire apartment. This is what we would recommend throughout but we did not see any during the course of our survey.

### **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!).

### **Plumbing**

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper piping, although we are finding particularly in a multi occupied buildings such as this that more plastic is being used. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in ducts and floors.

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## Heating

Throughout the property there are a variety of boilers, Apartment One and Three have Heatrae Sadia boilers, Apartment Two has a Worcester boiler and Apartment Four and Five have Vaillant boilers.

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



Worcester boiler in Apartment two



Vaillant boiler in Apartment Four



Thin radiator in Apartment Four, very efficient



Floor mounted boiler next to bathroom in Flat Three



Vaillant boiler in Apartment Five

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### **Ten Minute Heating Test**

We did not carry out the heating test although the heating was on throughout the property with the exception of the empty apartment.

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

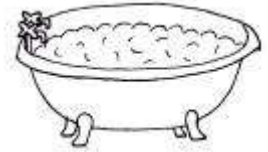
We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

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## **BATHROOMS**

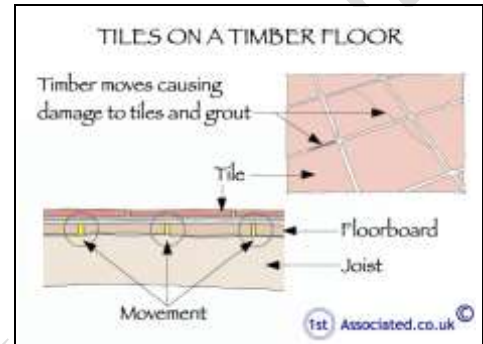


*In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.*

### **Bathrooms, En-suite bathrooms and En-suite shower rooms**

In all properties such as this bathrooms and shower rooms have been added over the years. We find generally there will be some leaks which seem almost a hazard of having so many bathrooms. The repairing of leaks, etc is almost ongoing and never ending.

We do come across instance where bathrooms have been upgraded where there is a tiled floor onto timber where the tiles or the joints of the tiles crack.



Tiles on a timber floor

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 on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.



Extract fan is inadequate in bathroom of Flat Three

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## **MAIN DRAINS**

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

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

We assume that the drainage is working satisfactorily as the property is occupied.

### **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.*

### **Inspection Chambers / Manholes**

We identified two manholes one to the front of the property and one within the lower ground floor.

We have not opened either of these as they require specialist keys.



Lower ground floor

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

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## **Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage**

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

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

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

In this 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.

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## **OUTSIDE AREAS**

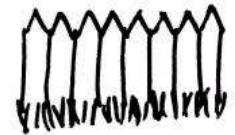
### **PARKING**



Parking is at the roadside with a permit system in operation in the area generally.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Speak to the Local Authority with regards to the details of this.

### **EXTERNAL AREAS**



There is a small courtyard at the front of Apartment Three on the lower ground floor in front of the vaults. To the rear are other courtyards and terraced areas including the private terrace and courtyard for Apartment Two.

**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.

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## **Neighbours**

We have not been able to contact neighbours to the left or the right hand side.



Rendered building - left



Rendered building - right

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## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

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

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ii) Rising damp treatments.
  - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
  - iv) Central heating installation.
  - v) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals for extensions and alterations.
  - vi) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
  - vii) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
  - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property such as details relating to the specification of the roof terrace.
- 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

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### 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](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

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

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

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

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

**This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxxxxx**

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## **REFERENCES**

The repair and maintenance of houses  
*Published by Estates Gazette Limited*

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

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

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

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## **LIMITATIONS**

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

## **CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated xxxxxxxxxxxxxx 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.

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## **WEATHER**

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

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

## **NOT LOCAL**

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

## **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 limited as:

- 1) We were given a guided tour by the owners' agent who literally did not let us out of his sight.
- 2) In Apartment two we not only had the owners' agent but we also had an agent from Apartment Two who advised we were not able to photograph in certain areas and certain rooms. We were also given a time limit on how long we could be in the property.
- 3) We did not open up any roofs. It would have been ideal to open them up as then we could establish any problems.

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- 4) We didn't open up any of the floors as this would damage the area and goes beyond the scope of the report. It would have been ideal to open them up as then we could establish any problems.
- 5) We didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property to talk about your specific concerns.
- 6) The managing agent that we met had only been working in the business for six months.
- 7) We have had a limited time to carry out this report

## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

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

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

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

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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

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## APPENDICES

1. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. Listed Building Reference

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## **THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Here is our quick guide to the Regulations, but please take further advice from a qualified and experienced electrician.

From 1st January 2005, people carrying out electrical work in homes and gardens in England and Wales must follow new rules in the building regulations. All significant electrical work carried out in the home will have to be undertaken by a registered installer or be approved and certified by the local authority's building control department. Failure to do so will be a legal offence and could result in a fine. Non-certified work could also put your household insurance policy at risk.

If you can't provide evidence that any electrical installation work complies with the new regulations, you could have problems when it comes to selling the property.

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - NICEIC Electrical Contractor or equivalent trades body.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

Homeowners will still be able to do some minor electrical jobs themselves. To help you, we've put together this brief list of dos and don'ts.

### **Work You Cannot do Yourself**

1. Complete new or rewiring jobs.
2. Fuse box changes.
3. Adding lighting points to an existing circuit in a 'special location' like the kitchen, bathroom or garden.
4. Installing electrical earth connections to pipework and metalwork.
5. Adding a new circuit.

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## INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

[www.landreg.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.halifax.co.uk) and [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://www.nationwide.co.uk)

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

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[www.hometrack.co.uk](http://www.hometrack.co.uk)

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

[www.motleyfool.co.uk](http://www.motleyfool.co.uk)

We also like the Motley Fool website which is a general financial site and although it is selling financial services and other services they do tend to give a very readable view of the housing market.

[www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

[www.zoopla.co.uk](http://www.zoopla.co.uk)

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

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