

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

XXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXXXXXXXX,
XXXXXXXXXXXX,
Essex,
CB10 xxx



FOR

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:

XXXXXXXXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of xxxxxxxxx; we have now undertaken an independent Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on xxxxxxxxx

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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:

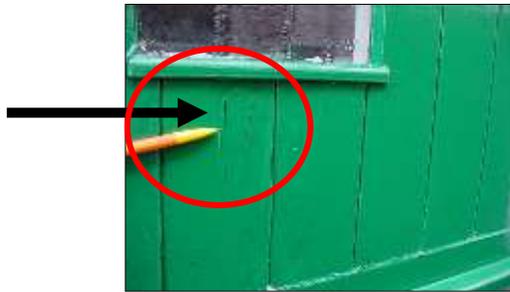
GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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 detached two storey timber frame property with modern alterations and amendments and includes single storey conservatory extension.

There is a large outbuilding with garaging for two cars, an open plan area/workshop and wood store. There is also land surrounding the property including a driveway access and a pond to the rear with many mature trees sitting on a sloping site.

The property is believed to date back to the 16/17th Century. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds. We are advised the property is Grade II listed, as found in BritishListedBuildings.co.uk, reference: 121978 (Please see further information within the Appendices).

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1564	William Shakespeare born
1587	Mary Queen of Scots beheaded
1603	Elizabeth I dies in Richmond palace
1605	Gunpowder plot discovered
1625	Charles I becomes King
1642	English Civil War begins
1653	Oliver Cromwell becomes Lord Protector of England
1660	Charles II brings back monarchy
1665	Plague sweeps through England
1666	The Great Fire of London
1681	Oil powered street lights are put up in London
1694	Bank of England founded
1718	British convicts transported overseas
1750	The start of the Industrial Revolution

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EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Rear left view



Rear right view



Conservatory added to rear left side



Front left view



Right view



Front left grounds



Pond to rear



Orchard to right

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Office front right
- 2) Kitchen rear right
- 3) Dining room middle front
- 4) Shower room middle rear
- 5) Utility room middle rear
- 6) Lounge left with central fireplace
- 7) Conservatory



First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Master bedroom right
- 2) Office front right
- 3) Bathroom middle front
- 4) Shower room rear middle
- 5) Single bedroom left
- 6) Double bedroom far left
- 7) Bedroom/store room rear left
- 8) Landing

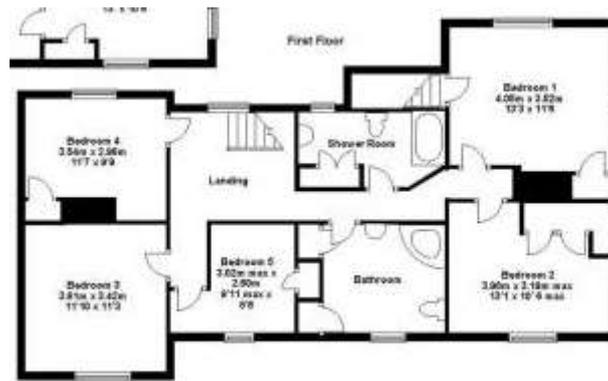
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- 9) Two staircases, one to master bedroom, one to landing



Outside Areas

There is a large outbuilding with garaging for two cars, an open plan area/workshop and wood store.

There is also land surrounding the property including a driveway access and a pond to the rear with many mature trees sitting on a sloping site.

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

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INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of).

Ground Floor



Lounge front



Lounge rear



Lounge



Conservatory



Dining room



Dining room

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Kitchen rear right



Office right



Corridor from utility to main house



Shower room/cloakroom



Utility area

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First Floor



Master bedroom



Master bedroom



Office front right



Corridor to bathroom



Bathroom front middle



Shower room middle left

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Landing and stairs on left side



Stairs to master bedroom



Second staircase



Single bedroom front



Bedroom front left



Bedroom rear left used as a store

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Two brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Hipped roof clad with concrete
Main Roof Structure:	Close coupled roof with timber peg fixings
Single storey roofs:	Conservatory: Glass roof Rear entrance utility area: Shallow pitched concrete tile roof
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron, plastic and asbestos
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Wall Structure:	Old and not so old timber frame (assumed)
Wall Finish:	Painted cement render
Bargeboards, Fascias, Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Single and double glazed timber windows, secondary glazed internally

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Internal

Ceilings:		Lath and plaster (assumed)
Walls:		Lath and plaster (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor:	Concrete with parquet floor covering in some areas (assumed)
	First Floor:	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage and electricity (all assumed).

Heating:	There is an oil fired Boulter boiler located in the ground floor front office. There is a plastic oil tank in the garden on the right hand side.
Electrics:	The electrics are 1960's and are located in the ground floor front office.
Drainage:	Septic tank located in the front garden

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

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have 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 typically have more space than newer properties.
- 2.0 The property also has many of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property.
- 3.0 We like the un-square layout of the property which is of course personal preference.

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

Both brick chimneys to the property have deteriorated over the years and unfortunately have been wrongly repaired with cement mortar which has caused further deterioration. In addition to this, the flashing is a tile on edge bedded into cement which opens up over time as you can see in the photograph.



Repairs with cement and tile on edge flashing



Cement repairs

ACTION REQUIRED: General repair to the chimney recommend. Replace existing tile on edge flashing with lead flashing.

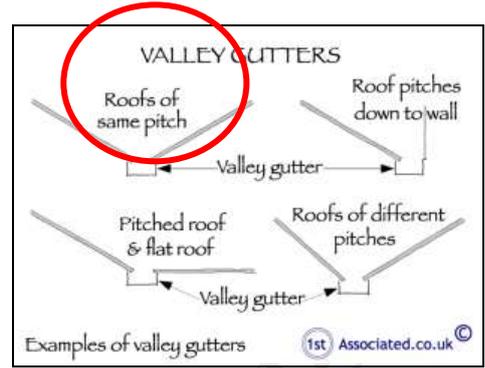
Please see the Chimney Stacks Section of this Report.

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2.0) Valley gutters and box gutter

During our question and answer session with the owners they advised that there had been problems with the valley gutters and also parts of the roof leaking which had ultimately led to the replacement of the original concrete tile valley gutter with a lead valley gutter.



Valley gutter



Original concrete tile valley gutter still present in some parts of the property



Lead valley gutter added. Note: Tiles have been repaired



Lead valley gutter. Will it overflow the guttering?

Box gutter

There is an awkward box gutter to the rear of the property which is catching a lot of leaves which will need constant cleaning.



Leaves in hidden box gutter to rear

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Battle with leaves

Also, you must remember with trees surrounding the property like this you will have a battle keeping the gutters free of leaves.

ACTION REQUIRED: We believe that ultimately all the valley gutters should be in lead.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £750 - £1,500 per valley gutter as it is difficult to carry this work out, it is best to carry it out in the summer; quotations required.

3.0) Roof problems

From the pitch of the roof we thought the roof would be thatched. Later on during our question and answer session we asked to see some old photographs. One of the photographs they showed us was an old photo they had been given of the property with a thatched roof.

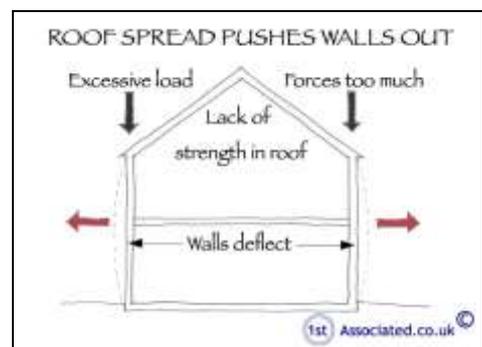


Old photo of property with thatched roof

The property now has a concrete tile roof which is a much heavier roof. Typically roofs were replaced in the 1960's and 1970's with a heavier concrete tile roof. We believe this has caused stress and strain on the property as a whole and has had an impact on the roof and the walls causing roof spread.



Concrete tile roof

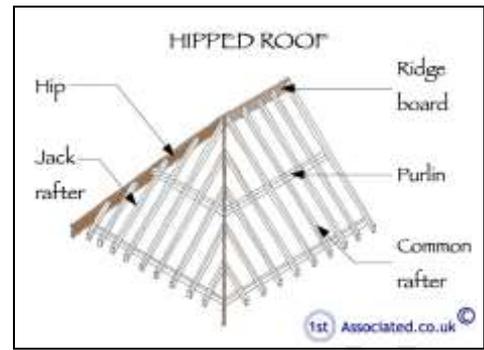


Roof spread

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We would also add that this is a hipped roof so they are integrally unstable and we can see, probably one hundred years or so before the roof was re-roofed with a concrete tile, that it had been strengthened with metal brackets to the corners of the property.



Hipped roof

We can also see that replacement repairs and timbers have been added. Our concern is the general weakening of the structural frame particularly when you consider woodworm as well.



Bracing



Central bracing



Bracing to corner

4.0) Woodworm

Whilst we would expect most old properties to have some woodworm (in fact we would be concerned if they didn't), the property still does look to have woodworm and we noted frass which means that it is likely to be active although the best time of year to identify whether it is active is in the spring breeding season.

Frass defined

The chewed up sawdust that the beetle leaves behind. A light coloured dust and a light coloured hole indicates this is relatively recent. Obviously if it is a darker coloured frass, or darker coloured hole, it means it is older and the woodworm may have gone.

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Woodworm



Knife could go far into roof

Limited inspection of the roof

In the limited areas we could see it was affecting about thirty percent of the timbers. Whilst repairs can be carried out you do need to allow for these as part of your negotiation. We would expect costs to be incurred will be in the region of £15,000 - £30,000 as this is likely to be expensive as this is a listed building and you will have to do the work to a set way. An alternative that would be worth considering would be to lighten the load of the roof by having it thatched. We passed a local thatcher on our journey to the property:



Woodworm within garage/workshop

Richard Mann, Master thatcher in straw and reed 01787 461787

We would be more than happy to discuss such roof alterations if you wish us to.

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5.0) Timber frame structure and rot

This property is held together with a timber frame structure very much like a skeleton of a human being. It works together as a whole, an essential element of it is the sole plate which is at the base of the property and forms part of the structure from which vertical wall timbers/posts are built from. It is particularly important in this instance that they are in good condition due to the roof issues mentioned.



Render meets ground

There are two key areas where there seems to be problems which is to the front left hand corner and to the left hand side. In addition to this the rear right hand gable and the right hand side we could not investigate this area (kitchen and office area). However where we have been able to investigate in the lounge, where we lifted part of the carpet, the wood parquet flooring underneath it, we were able to see what we believe to be the sole plate. Within the sole plate we found rot which we believe is partly due to the high ground level but also the concrete floor within the property that effectively acts like blotting paper.



Sole plate



Knife going into sole plate



Plinth may be hiding original sole plate

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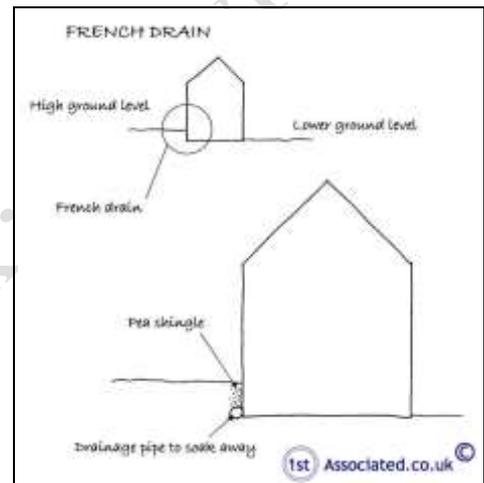


Unfortunately the extent of the problem is very difficult to confirm. We recommend the following actions:

ACTION REQUIRED: This is a two stage process:

1) You need to check and confirm the sole plate to the entirety of the property by opening up and exposing it so you understand the full extent of the problem. This will mean removing render externally to the front left hand side, the left hand side and the rear of the property (old sections) and carry out any necessary repairs.

2) Reducing the ground level around the property and adding French drains where necessary to get the water away from the property and giving any rainwater a definite path from the top of the hill to the bottom.



French drain

We would remind you that we have already mentioned how the joints have been given additional strength by metal tie bars, braces and the addition of timbers.

Further information about timber frame structures

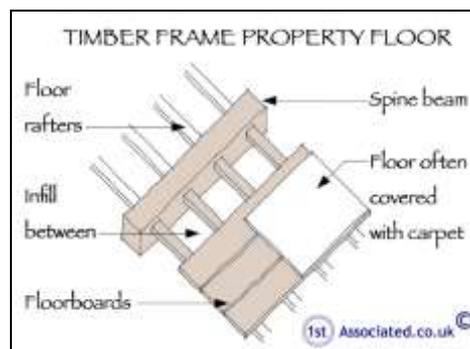
Traditional timber frame buildings were the way we built for many centuries, although few survive from before 1500. We continued to build in timber to the 18th century, mainly using Oak and Elm, but as timber supplies reduced other timbers were used and we moved to non-local materials, particularly as the sea, canal and rail systems developed.

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Traditional timber frame buildings work as whole units forming both the walls and roof and built in bays with infill timbers and panels with wattle and daub, replaced later with other materials.

These buildings are typically listed and require care and regular maintenance.



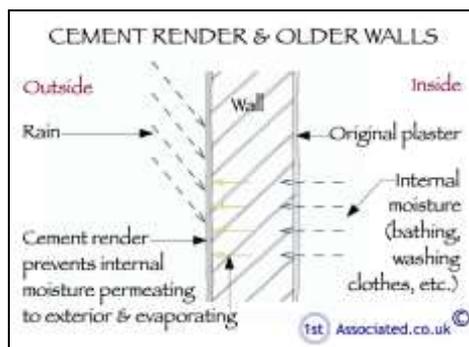
Timber frame

6.0) Cement render and timber frame structures

The outside of the property has cement render which effectively will be causing accelerated deterioration to the timber structure behind it. It is not that uncommon to have a cement render but you do need to consider the accelerated deterioration it causes to the structural frame together with the other issues in this report.



Render changes with alterations that have happened over the years



Cement render

ACTION REQUIRED: Many people would be put off purchasing from this point alone. If you do decide to purchase then we would recommend you remove all the render to one gable end during the summer and warmer months of 2015 and examine the timber frame. We would be more than happy to help and advise further when the render has been removed.

ANTICIPATED COST: This unfortunately is an unknown. It is likely to be in excess of £5,000; please obtain quotations.

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6.1) Maintenance of render

We would also add that as with any rendered property there is a constant need to maintain the property to seal any cracks and repair any blown areas.

For example we can see hairline cracks to the front of the property which should be sealed during the warmer months. We would expect to be redecorating this property every three to six years.



Hairline cracking

ACTION REQUIRED: Seal cracks and repair any blown areas.

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

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

7.0) Modern materials versus old materials

As with many older properties often it is the modern materials that are causing problems and it is effectively a battle going on between the original construction and any modern materials that have been used.

We spoke about various issues here. Unfortunately you have more of them than would be typically found on a property:

1) The concrete tile/cement flashings around the chimney – we would recommend these are replaced in lead.



Tile on edge flashing

2) Concrete tiles on the roof

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3) The valley gutters, some of which are formed in concrete – we would recommend these are replaced in lead.



Replacement valley gutter to front left side which current owner carried out

4) The awkward box gutter to the rear of the property which is catching a lot of leaves which will need constant cleaning.



Leaves in hidden valley gutter to rear

5) Modern paints

6) Double glazed windows

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8.0) Gutters and downpipes - asbestos

There looks to be some asbestos and cast iron gutters and downpipes – we suggest you need to replace the asbestos. Wherever possible we would suggest you keep the cast iron as it lasts far longer than plastic and it could be argued it is more appropriate for older buildings, although of course originally when this was a thatched roof it would not have had gutters.



Asbestos downpipe



Downpipes are not fixed properly or have not been checked



Downpipe discharging onto ground against building

Our insurance company requires us to advise we are not asbestos surveyors and advises us to recommend asbestos surveyors are instructed and that you have your own asbestos survey carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend any asbestos is removed from a property as it can not only be dangerous, it can affect the value of the property. The only way to be a hundred per cent certain with regards to Asbestos in a property is to have an Asbestos report carried out.

ANTICIPATED COST: Asbestos costs can vary considerably; we are forever surprised at the variety in quotes. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

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9.0) Extraction from humidity generating areas

We would be very keen to extract any moist air away from the building as quickly as possible to stop the possibility of black mould and cold bridging.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas.

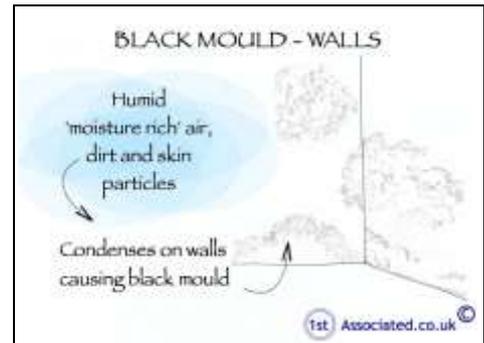


Extract in light within ground floor shower room

ANTICIPATED COST: We would anticipate costs of between £150 and £250 per extract fan, depending upon the wiring required; quotations required.

9.1) Black mould/cold bridging

This is a phenomenon where warm moist air meets colder surfaces and can lead to black mould being caused. Particularly in this property we would expect it to be, if you are not careful, within cupboards as there is a lack of airflow in these areas so they can be colder than the rest of the room if you recall, as we demonstrated within the bathroom area.



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Cold Bridging Defined

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure much quicker when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element.



Cold bridging/thermal bridging

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

10.0) Rising damp

We generally found rising damp throughout the property. This partly relates to the relatively high ground water table in the area which is why you have a pond so close. Also, the lack of a defined path for the water which we have mentioned elsewhere within this report.



Rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out work to reduce the ground level, add French drains as necessary to give any rainwater a path to go from the top of the ground to the bottom without going through the house.



ANTICIPATED COST: You do need to stand outside the property the next time it is raining hard and check but we would expect costs to be in the region of £2,500 - £5,000; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

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Services

11.0) Electrics

There is an old 1960's fuse board and several old fixings throughout the property. The owner did not have any wire fuse with them therefore we decided it was better not to carry out our basic electric test as it could have left them without lights or power.



Old electric fitting

ACTION REQUIRED: Institution of Engineering and Technology standards (IET) test and report and any recommendations to be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £500 for a test and work in the region of £1,000 - £2,000; please obtain quotations.

12.0) Heating

We would comment that whilst these buildings have character and a great feel about them we would remind you that they have high ceilings in some areas for example on the first floor level in the bedrooms and relatively large areas to heat such as the lounge which in itself also has a relatively large area of external wall.

This could mean an expensive heating bill particularly on a day such as the day of the survey when there was a wind blowing which also adds a wind chill factor. Interestingly when speaking to the owners they did say that they try to get away on holiday every few years. We spoke to them about the heating when they are away and they said they left it on at about fifteen degrees. Unfortunately in a Grade II listed building it is very difficult to add any worthwhile insulation.

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13.0) Hot Water Cylinder

The hot water cylinder is located in the office on the first floor. It has an insulation jacket rather than factory lagged which indicates that it is relatively old. This cylinder will therefore not have the same thermal properties as a modern factory insulated cylinder. The problem with these is that they can leak at any time.



Older style hot water cylinder

ACTION REQUIRED: Replace.

ANTICIPATED COST: We have just had a replacement hot water cylinder carried out which cost £750; quotations required.

The Ugly

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

We have found more than the average number of things that we would classify as bad even taking into consideration the age, type and style of this property. We would specifically comment upon:

- 1) The roof structure
- 2) The cement render
- 3) The possible condition of the sole plate
- 4) The unknown costs in relation to some of these items.

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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 character defects are normally considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report. The Report is looking at structural issues which we consider may be a problem.

This type of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair and a budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration. In this case we believe there has been average maintenance to the property.

Getting to know more about older properties - SPAB course

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

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

The Institution of Engineering and Technology standards (IET) 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.

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Heating

We would 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.

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 tap 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 – SERVICES: 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

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

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Purchase Price

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

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

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

Estimates of 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 writing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

We would refer you to our earlier comments. We would ask that you telephone us with regards to this property once you have read the report as a whole and re-read the Executive Summary.

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

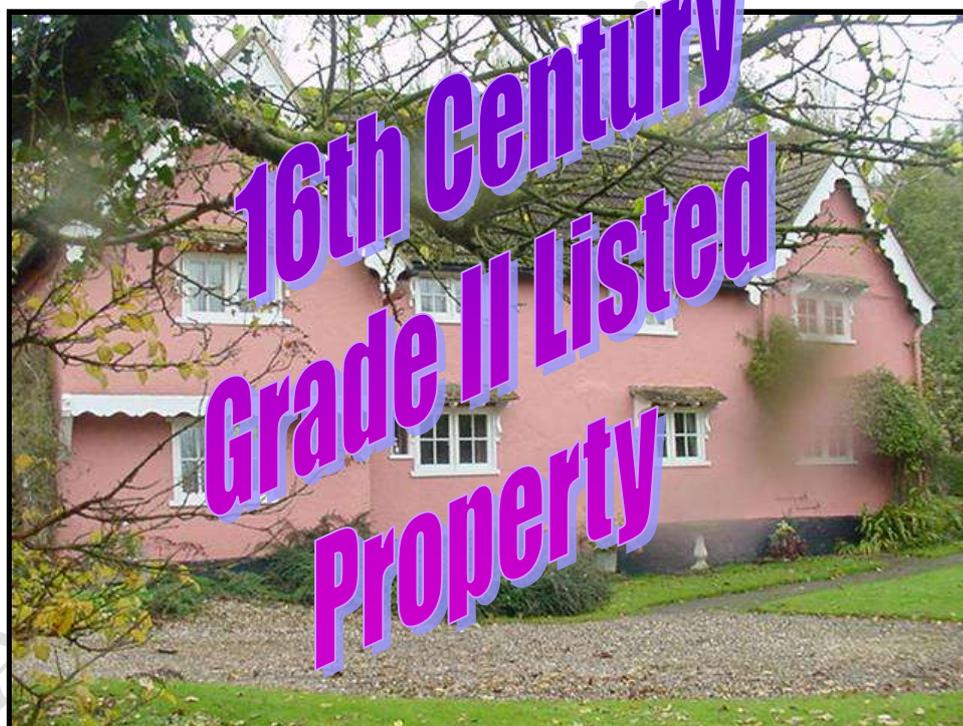
Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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

From our investigations the property is Grade II Listed and/or falls within a Conservation Area (your Legal Advisor should confirm this and make their own enquiries) and as such it will require various permissions to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials for the age, type and style of property.

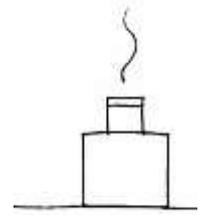


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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



Chimney Stacks

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

There are two chimneys to this property they are located to the left and right hand side (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One – located to the left

This chimney is brick finished with cement repairs and a tile on edge flashing which are not ideal and two chimney pots. From what we could see from ground level it looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style.



Left chimney

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



Flaunchings

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Chimney Two – located to the right hand side

This chimney is also built in a similar manner to the first chimney, though we would comment that it is deteriorating and has had more repairs in cement and is weathered.



Chimney two



Repairs in cement and weathered

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend repair work is carried out to the chimneys before 2017. We also recommend replacing the tile on edge with a lead flashing. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Flashings Defined

Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

Flaunchings Defined

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

Cement Fillets/Cement Flashings Defined

This is where cement has been used to cover up or fill the junctions between two areas, for example between a roof and a wall to help prevent dampness. Cement is a brittle material and prone to cracking which in turn allows dampness into the structure. We would always recommend the use of lead flashings.

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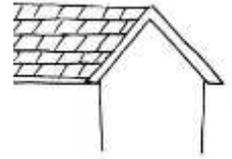
Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks from the parts we could see above roof level. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection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

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

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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 a protective underlayer may or may not be present, please read on:

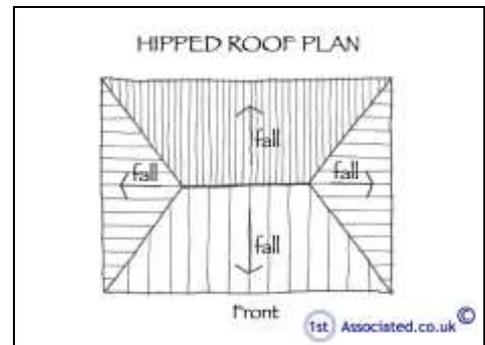
We will consider the roofs in three areas, the main roof, the conservatory roof and the rear entrance roof.

Main Roof

The roof is hipped and clad with a concrete tile and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roofs age type and style. The roof has some moss.



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



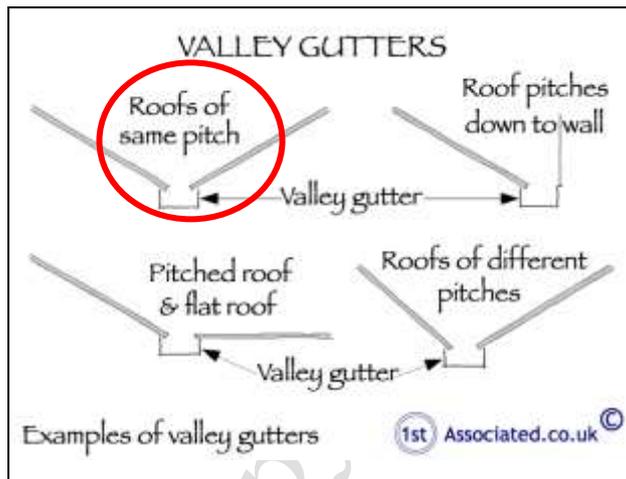
Hipped roof

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Valley gutter

This property has valley gutters. Valley gutters are formed where two roofs meet and these are generally problematic.



Replacement valley gutter to front left side which current owner carried out



Leaves in hidden valley gutter to rear

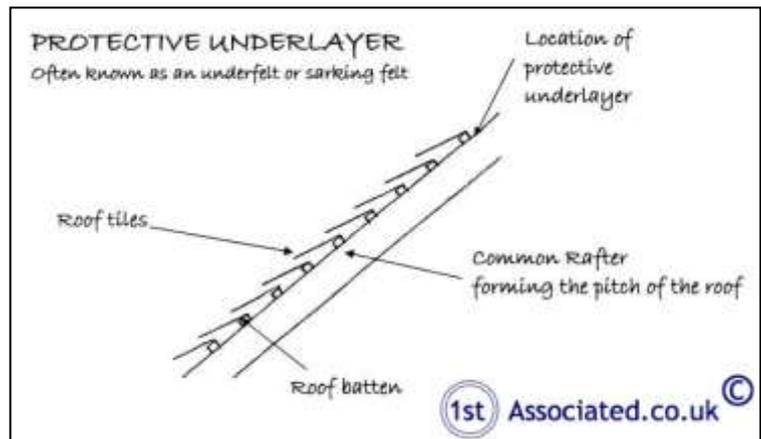
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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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

When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, with damage in some areas which is what we typically find. We could also see the peg fixing to the coupled roof.



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

Rear single storey pitched roof

The roof is hipped and clad with concrete tiles as the main roof. We would comment that this is a very shallow pitched roof and sometimes wind driven rain can get into it. Also, as you can see the water does not discharge off it that quickly and you get a more than average build up of moss.



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Conservatory roof

The conservatory roof is glass and has a slight layer of moss which would benefit from being cleaned. However the worst bit about the conservatory roof is the awkward detail it makes with the rear of the property and has an awkward box gutter detail.



Conservatory roof



Conservatory roof starting to moss over

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

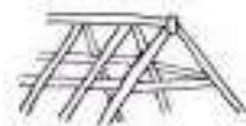
All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera.

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

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

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ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

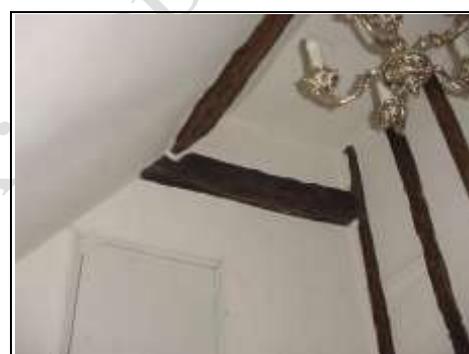
(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

The main roof is accessed via the access hatch located on the landing. There is an electric light and some secured floorboards. We recommend that more electric light and more floorboards are added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.



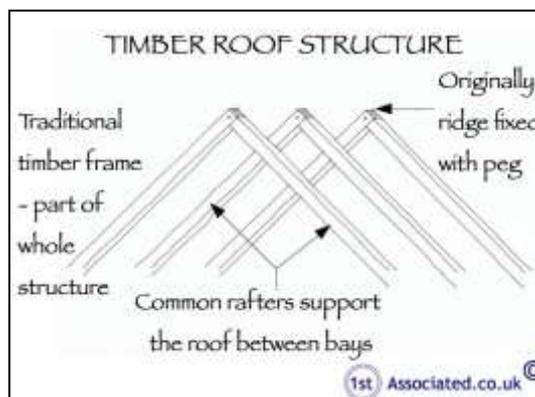
Access hatch to roof

The majority of the loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly.

Roof Structure

This property has a timber frame which also forms part of the roof structure.

The roof will have been hand cut and purpose made as will the whole of the building which would have been prefabricated usually on the ground floor before being lifted into place and locked in place by joints and peg fixings between the roof trusses, as you can see in the sketch, common rafters were used.



Timber frame roof

It is amazing to think that this was built before the use of nails. Having said that, we can also see lots of modern alterations and additions to the roof which probably took place when it had the heavier concrete tile roof put in place. In years gone by there was not as much thought and consideration we have today

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for older properties or the understanding of how they were constructed. We can also see purlins running both sides of the property (horizontally) giving support to the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof).



Main roof coupled with peg fixing



Left side purlin

Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

1. Serious active woodworm
2. Structurally significant defects to the timbers
3. Structurally significant dry rot
4. Structurally significant wet rot



Woodworm with our knife going into the timber over an inch in depth

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items. What we could see was generally found to be in poor condition with we believe active woodworm. It is, however, feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be 100 per cent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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Replacement and Back to Backing of Timbers

We would add it is quite common in older properties to have replacement timbers. Many of these have been re-used in other constructions. Or, the adding of additional timbers in what is known as back to backing, where timbers are strengthened by timbers being added back to back.

Ventilation

There is no ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case there was insufficient quantity of wiring to comment.

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

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

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GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



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

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

Gutters and Downpipes

The property when thatched would not originally have had any gutters and downpipes. These have been added over the years and now look to be a mixture of asbestos and plastic. There may also be some old cast iron pipework remaining or it may have been replaced when the property was re-roofed in the 1960's/1970's. They are in below average condition for their age, type and style.



Asbestos downpipe



Downpipes are not fixed properly or have not been checked



Downpipe discharging onto ground against building

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

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend someone is employed specifically to look at the gutters and downpipes for one or two days and make good and also replace any asbestos and any damaged tiles. With regard to the asbestos gutters and downpipes please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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

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

Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipes are plastic.



Soil and vent pipe



Air inlet valve (trade name of Durgo valve)

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

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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 using a traditional timber frame structure with a cement render covering.

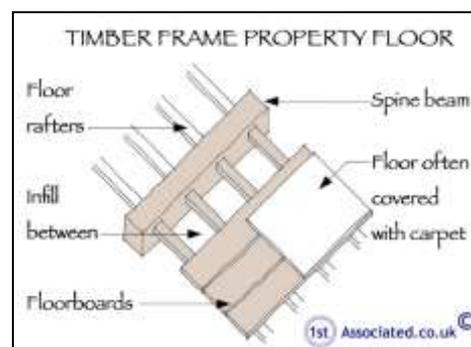
Timber Frame history

Traditional timber frame buildings were the way we built for many centuries, although few survive from before 1500. We continued to build in timber to the 1800 century, mainly using Oak and Elm, but as timber supplies reduced other timbers were used and we moved to non-local materials, particularly as the sea, canal and rail systems developed.

Main Timber Frame Walls

Traditional timber frame buildings work as whole units forming both the walls and roof and built in bays with infill timbers and panels with wattle and daub, replaced later with other materials.

These buildings are typically listed and require care and regular maintenance. In this particular case it is Grade II listed.



Timber frame

We would comment with regard to the timber frame structure that we have concerns with regards to the sole plate which is the very base of the timber structure and also the hipped roof construction which has had support in the form of metal bracing in years gone by and has had extra stress added to it by the weight of the thatch being replaced by a concrete tiled roof.

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Render

The external walls are finished in a cement roughcast render. Unfortunately cement rendering is one of the worst things you can do to a timber frame structure as it stops it from breathing.



ACTION REQUIRED: You need to open up a section to check its condition.

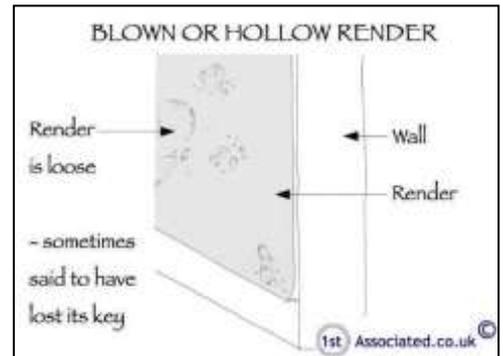
Render changes with alterations that have happened over the years

Tap test

We have carried out a tap test (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer). There were hollow areas which can be good or bad with cement render. You do need to open it up.



Tap test



Blown or hollow render

Render Detailing

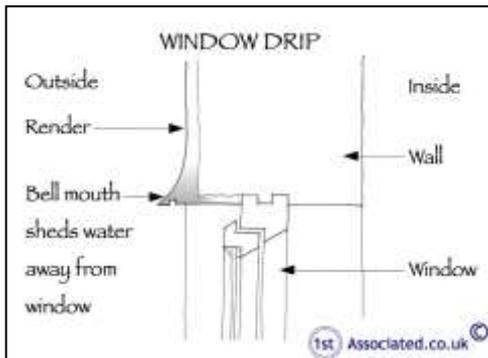
You can normally tell whether the render is good or not by the drip detail over the window and the bell mouth to the base of the property.

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Window drip detail

In this case we found a timber drip detail to the windows.



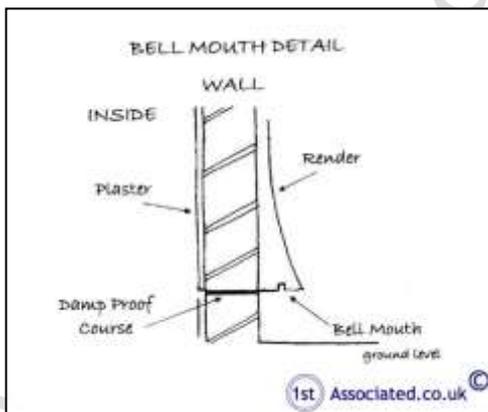
Window drip



Timber drip detail

Bell mouth to base of property

To the base of the render there was a ledge which means the water will sit onto it.



Bell mouth detail



Ledge may be hiding original sole plate

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Jetty

There are no stress marks around the jetty to indicate isolated problems.



Jetty to front left

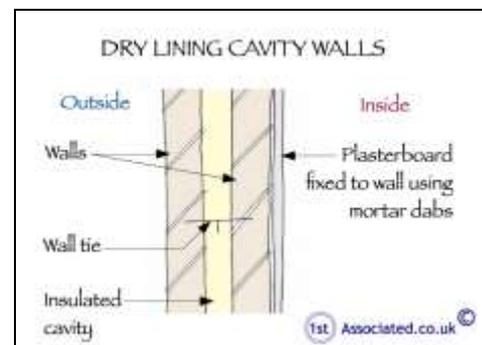
Painted render/painted walls

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive. It may be possible to carry it out from a tower scaffolding.



Modern extensions

There have been modern extensions to the property to the rear to form the utility room and the shower. We would expect the construction behind the render to be a cavity wall with insulation and we noted internally the walls have been dry lined.



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 traditional timber frame / cement render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. Buildings of this age are likely to have timber lintels possibly replaced with metal lintels. Timber lintels can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

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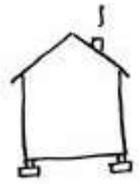


Our comments have been based upon how the traditional timber frame / cement render / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the traditional timber frame / cement render / plasterwork would be if it were opened up for this age, style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

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FOUNDATIONS

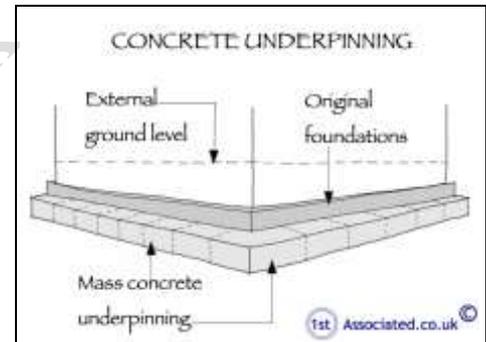
The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre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

Foundations

In a property such as this it is likely to have a mixture of foundations, due to the property being extended and/or altered over the years. It is very difficult to confirm, it could be embedded timber or a brick/stone foundation. There is no way to confirm without excavating around the property.

Underpinning

We spoke briefly about underpinning. We would not initially consider this in this type of construction due to the extra weight that can be added.



Underpinning

Underpinning defined

This is where a foundation is put under the original foundation to help support the building.

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.

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Cracks

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

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

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.

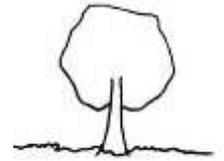
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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TREES

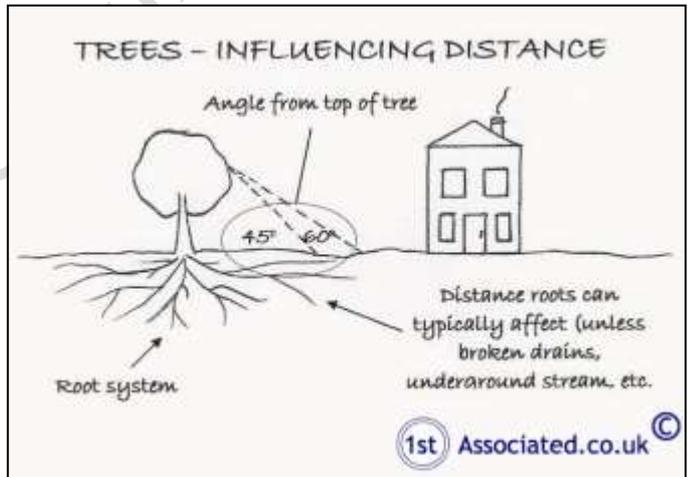
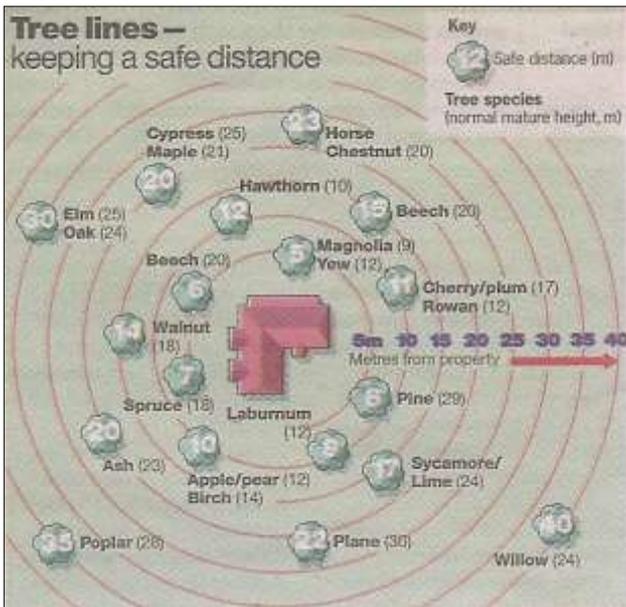
Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There are trees within what we would term as influencing distance but you do need to speak to your insurance company as they may have a different interpretation for insurance reasons.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend an arboriculturalist (not a tree surgeon) is asked to view the property and give a ten year plan for maintenance.



Trees



Influencing distance of trees to a property

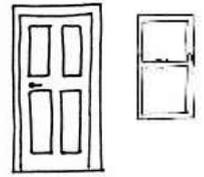
Influencing Distance Defined

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.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND 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.

Fascias, Soffits and Bargeboards

The fascias, soffits and decorative bargeboards are timber. They are painted and we would comment they are in average condition for their age, type and style.

ACTION REQUIRED: Make sure gutters and downpipes are watertight and asbestos pipework is replaced before carrying out any work on fascias and soffits.



Decorative bargeboards

Windows and Doors

The property has single and double glazed timber windows, some of which have secondary glazing internally.



Double glazing which you should not have without permission on a listed building



Secondary glazing to many of the windows

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Permission required for double glazing on listed buildings

We would specifically comment that listed buildings should have permission to have double glazing. If it does not have permission then you will become liable for any of the current and previous owner's misdemeanours with regard to Listed Building infringement/when the local authority become aware of it.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal Advisor needs to check and confirm.

Knife Test

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



Knife test satisfactory

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.

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive. Typically we would expect this type of render to require redecoration every three to four years due to the surrounding trees and reduced air movement.

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.

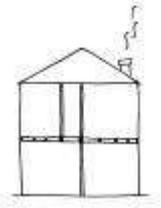
Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

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

Ceiling Construction

The ceilings have exposed timber beams, the main larger beams are known as the spine beams, with the inter-connecting ceiling / floor rafters.

Often these timbers are re-used timbers. What is unusual when compared with today's construction is that the timbers are used sideways as it was more practical at the time but this leads to higher levels of deflection than usual in more modern properties.



Ceiling

The cladding to the ceiling is usually older lime plaster or modern gypsum plaster leaving the timber beams visible.

Triangulation

In some of the rooms, as mentioned, there has been additional support in the form of metal bracing but also in the form of triangulation of timbers which has happened over the years.



Triangulation of timbers

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Perimeter Walls

Typically this age of building was built in timber bays. These bays have structural elements within the property that form what we would term as primary and secondary timbers.

Primary timbers

There is very little that can be seen of the primary timbers. What we could see exposed it to the floor to the front left side we believe there to be rot and defects.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regards to the sole plate within the Executive Summary.

Sole plates

Often the most important part of these is the sole plate which is at the base of a wall which can be affected by dampness, causing wet rot and dry rot and general deterioration. As this ground floor sole plate effectively forms the base of the timber frame.

Secondary timbers

Unfortunately these were not visible. We did tap test them and there was a mixture of hollow and solid areas indicating that some of the original wattle and daub style infill panels may have been replaced with brickwork or a similar solid material.

Internal Walls and Partitions

Internal walls are made of what we would term as traditional timber studwork. The studwork is semi-structural so you do need to get professional advice if you intend to move or alter any of the walls.



Modern studwork internally

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Exposed timbers

We would also add that where we could see exposed timbers we knife or nail tested them; they were very hard indeed. We spoke to the owner during our question and answer session and he advised that when they came to the property some of the timbers had been painted black which they have removed over the years.

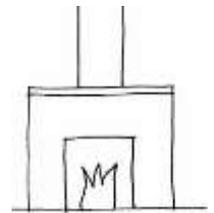
Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

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

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CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES

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

The chimney breasts are located to the left and right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). To the left hand side there is a small inglenook style fireplace which had a modern burner added.



Central fireplace in lounge

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

Finally, 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.

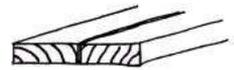
Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. 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.

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FLOORS



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

Ground Floor

As with most older properties, the ground floor is not level and true for example the rear of the lounge.

We have assumed that originally the ground floor construction is tiles on earth or trampled earth. Over the years this has been replaced with various different floors. In this case the floors were carpeted or had parquet flooring in some areas.

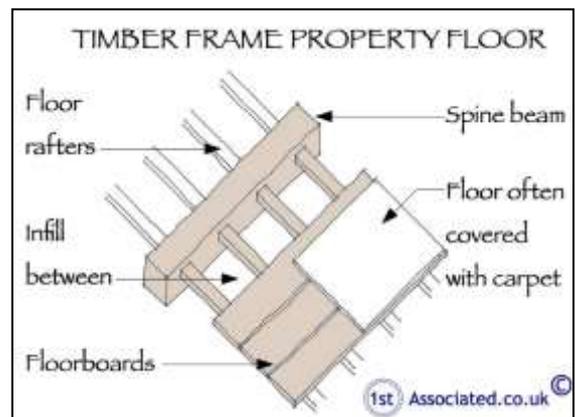


Parquet floor on dining room and lounge

The floor felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete.

First Floor

The first floor construction is exposed timber beams, with the main spine beam and inter-connecting floor joists making the structural frame. This then is covered by floor boards. Originally these floor boards were wider than we typically have today.



Traditional timber frame floor

Deflection

There can be more deflection to this type of floor than in a modern floor due to the use of timber on the side in the floor construction as it was a more practical way to build.

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Uneven

As with most older properties the floors are uneven and you may need to pack underneath the furniture. This is caused by general settlement and movement within the property over the years.

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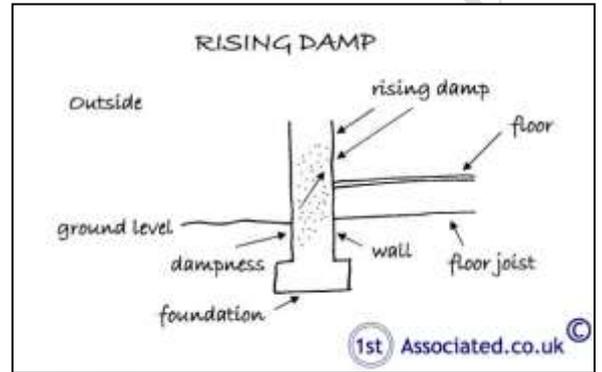


DAMPNESS

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 visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found what we would term as significant rising damp generally around the property with the exception of the newer extensions and conservatory.



Testing for rising damp

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see the Executive Summary.

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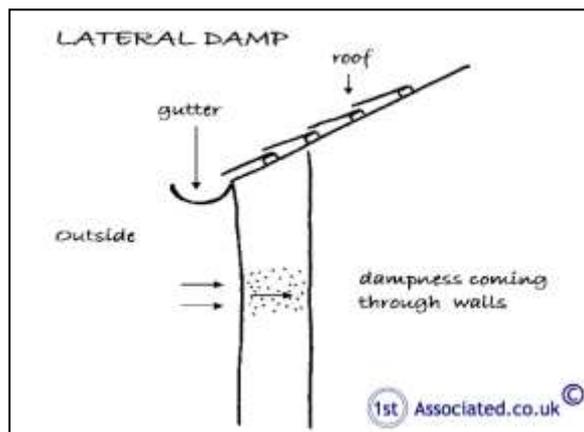
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Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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 not found significant lateral dampness.



Testing for lateral dampness

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 however it does depend 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.

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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 the original plank style doors/ledge and brace doors. The doors are low and in most cases you have to duck through them.



Plank door

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 kitchen in average condition, subject to some wear and tear as one would expect. It comes complete with an Aga which we are advised do take some getting used to if you have not used one before. 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.

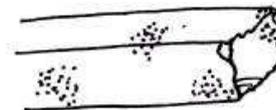
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TIMBER DEFECTS



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 however the roof does have potential for dry rot. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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 the roof has potential for wet rot particularly to the valley gutters and around the chimneys. Please see our comments on the chimneys.

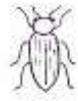
Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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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 /floor are the main area that we look for woodworm as well as the actual traditional timber structural frame. Within the roof we found visual signs of significant woodworm activity.



Woodworm

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

We would comment in this instance that our main concern is the depth in which our knife went into the timbers which was 1-2 inches or 25-50mm.



Historic woodworm in lounge as opposed to active woodworm

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. Our access has been limited by insulation and the stored items. We would be happy to return if all the stored items and the insulation in the roof are removed so we can have full access.

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.

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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. You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

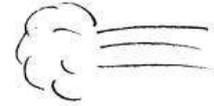
Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY

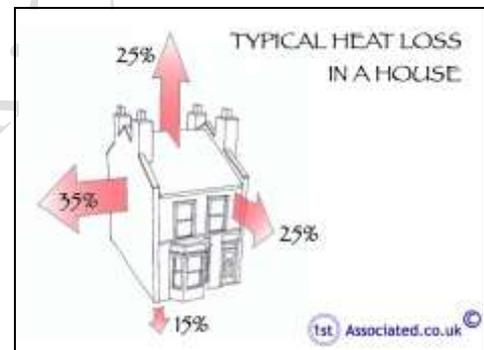


This property was built a long time before modern methods of insulation were considered. We have only given real thought and consideration to the insulation of properties since the fuel crisis of the 1970's. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically 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, particularly with older properties, that they 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, particularly of this age, as it can lead to timber deterioration and other problems.

Roofs

Although current regulations recommend a lot of insulation in the roofs (currently 300mm) this is not necessarily the best thing for a timber frame building as it can promote condensation and an ideal environment for woodworm. You should ensure that the roofs remain well ventilated; the more insulation the better they need to be ventilated.



Typical heat loss

We believe that this roof may be over-insulated and causing condensation.



Insulation

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Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have however they do have a cavity of sorts if they are rendered on the outside and rendered on the inside with rubble infill. When we did a tap test we found some hollow areas where there may be air gaps but we also found a predominant amount of solid areas which tend to indicate brick infill. Also they are unlikely to have any substantial insulation, however, unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property.

Windows

The windows are predominantly single with some double glazed and also secondary glazing and therefore will have reasonable thermal properties

Services

The boiler is located in the kitchen. 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 / average compared with what we typically see.

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

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

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk (Centre for Alternative Technology)

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
[HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html](http://www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html) to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

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

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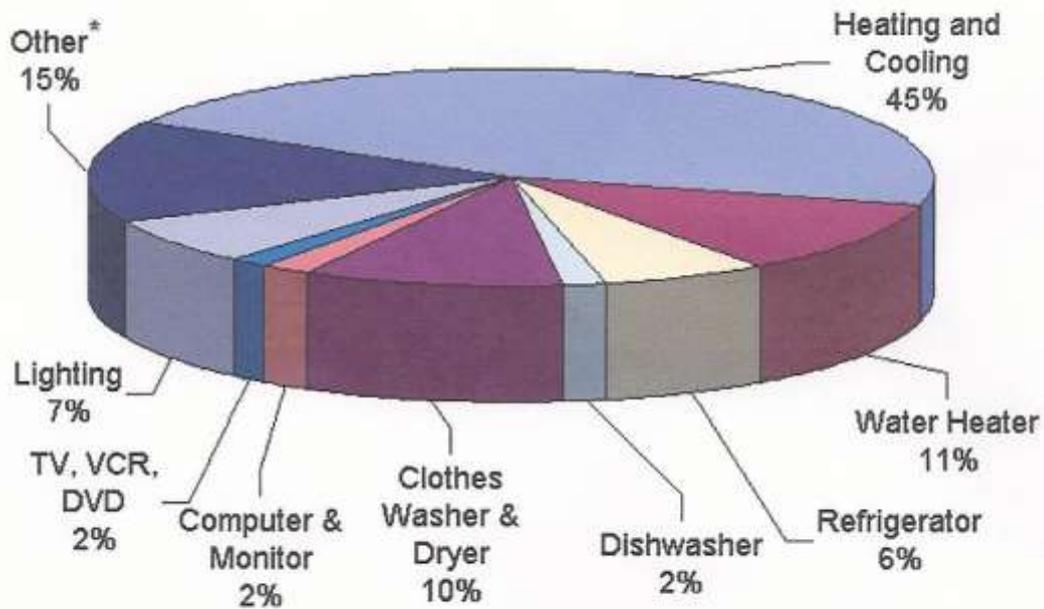
SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings are researching how best to insulate older properties and it is worth checking their website for the latest information at www.SPAB.org

HIPs

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

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

What does my energy bill pay for?



*"Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

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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.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

With older properties it is particularly important to have a good fire / smoke alarm system, as often they are built from many burnable elements.

Some smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

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

Insurance

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

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

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Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. We believe we have found asbestos to the gutters and downpipes. Please see our sketch for typical areas where asbestos could be found.

In years gone by asbestos was commonly used as wood and can be found in all sorts of places. Asbestos was used post war until it was banned only in the UK 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.

We are Building Surveyors and not Asbestos Surveyors and as such the only way to be a hundred per cent certain with regards to Asbestos in a property is to have an Asbestos report carried out.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Asbestos externally

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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 19th century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

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

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the ground floor front office. The fuse board looked 1960's and better are now available. In an older property a defective fuse board can be particularly dangerous.

ACTION REQUIRED: New fuse board required. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Earth Test

We usually carry out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle. In this case we did not carry out an earth test as the owner did not have any wire in case the fuse blew; it was an old fuse board.

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an Institution of Engineering and Technology standards (IET) test and report is required, carried out by an 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

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after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

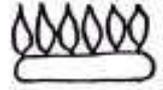
For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

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OIL



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.

All appliances, pipework and flues should be subject to an annual service by a competent OFTEC registered engineer. 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.

Oil Tanks

We were pleased to see that the oil tanks are plastic. These usually replace the older metal tanks that can rust and they typically have a double lining, meaning that if they leak they leak into the outer lining.



Plastic oil tank

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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

The owner confirmed that the water was from a mains. We believe the controlling stopcock was in the kitchen.

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

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners or Estate Agent to show you where it is, although we would not expect most Estate Agents to know where it is.

Water Pressure

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

Cold Water Cistern

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

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Hot Water Cylinder

The hot water cylinder is located in the office on the first floor. It has an insulation jacket rather than factory lagged which indicates that it is relatively old. This cylinder will therefore not have the same thermal properties as a modern factory insulated cylinder. The problem with these is that they can leak at any time.



Older style hot water cylinder

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

Plumbing

We are using this term to refer to supply pipes, wash hand basins, sinks, etc. Where visible it comprises of copper piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

Heating

The boiler was located in the ground floor front office, it is manufactured by Boulter.

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.



Boulter boiler

Ten Minute Heating Test

The owner at our request turned on the heating for approximately ten minutes. We checked the radiators and these were warm however if you recall we demonstrated and let you feel how cold the walls were within the cupboard.

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There was a wind on the day of the survey and a wind chill factor we believe was reducing the warmth of the property.

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

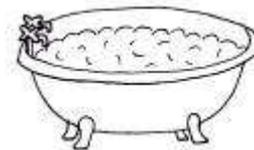
We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

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BATHROOM



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

Ground floor shower room

On the ground floor there is a shower room comprising of a shower, W.C and wash hand basin which is in as new condition. Please see our comments in the executive summary with regards to extraction.

First floor bathroom

The first floor bathroom comprises a corner bath, W.C. and wash hand basin and is in dated condition.

First floor shower room

This comprises a shower, W.C. and wash hand basin and is in average to above average condition and looked relatively new.

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

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MAIN DRAINS

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

It is assumed that the foul drains from the property discharge into its own septic tank; 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.

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

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

We have identified four inspection chambers / manholes.

Manholes Defined

Access areas which usually fit a man (or woman) into them and are put in where the drains change direction.

Inspection Chamber / Manhole One located to the front middle

We duly lifted the cover and found it to be free flowing at the time of our inspection.

From what we could see it is concrete built.



Shallow drain close to front of property

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Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two located to the front right

We were unable to lift this manhole therefore are unable to comment.



Manhole to front right corner

#Inspection Chamber / Manhole Three located to the rear right

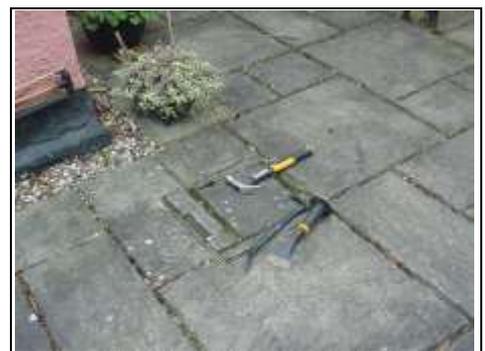
We were unable to lift this manhole therefore are unable to comment.



Manhole rear right corner

Inspection Chamber Four located to the rear middle

We were unable to lift this inspection chamber therefore are unable to comment.



Manhole to rear that we could not lift

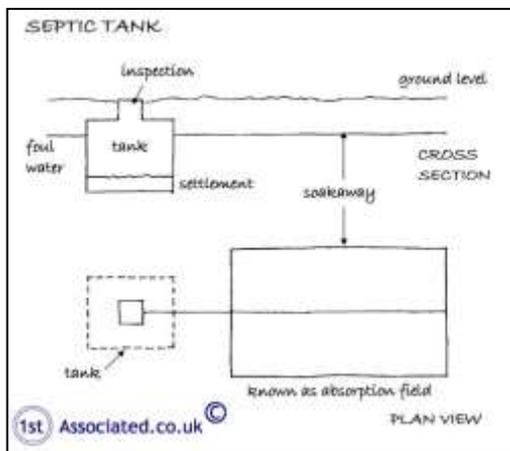
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Septic tank

Septic tanks can be of brick, concrete or modern GRP construction but should all operate on the principle of solids being broken down by bacteria, the partly treated foul water then being disposed of by discharge into adjacent ground by a system of soak aways, land drains or perforated pipes.

In this case the septic tank is concrete. We were advised it had been emptied only a few days before the survey which was good for us as rarely can we see into them. However there was a lot of water in the tank so it does look like it was filled up with ground water which is common with older septic tanks such as brick and concrete whereas the GRP plastic tanks are sealed. There were minor roots visible.



Septic tank



Minor roots visible in septic tank

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.

In this instance the rainwater pipes discharge on to the ground close to the property. The rainwater pipes need to be moved away from the property to stop dampness.

ACTION REQUIRED: A way to do this is to literally take the downpipes half a meter or so away from the building and also utilise water butts to get the water away from the building.

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

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. We have taken a cursory inspection of the outbuilding and would be happy to return and carry out a survey of so required.

OUTBUILDINGS/ PARKING/GARAGES



There is a garage with two single car areas and open parking space, workshop area and wood store. This is a wood structure, some of it we noted to be quite old and we found woodworm within the older parts of the structure. It really depends upon what this is going to be used for and how frequently to how much you spend on repairing it.



Garage



Inside garage

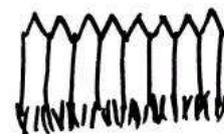


Woodworm within garage/workshop

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend the removal of any active woodworm. Generally we believe this could wait until it is reviewed during the spring months when it is easiest to see any active woodworm. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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EXTERNAL AREAS

Gardens

There is land surrounding the property including a driveway access and a pond to the rear with many mature trees sitting on a sloping site. The pond means there is a high water level.



Front left grounds



Pond



Orchard to right

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

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

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

Neighbours

In this case the neighbours were quite a distance away so we have not actually checked on them, however it is well worth visiting them to see if there are any niggling problems.

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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) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
 - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
 - v) Roof and similar renewals.
 - vi) Central heating installation.
 - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - viii) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - ix) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - x) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
 - xi) Removal of walls and chimneys and supporting documentation
- 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.

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- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

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

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

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

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

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

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

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

For and on Behalf of
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Independent Chartered Surveyors
x

This Report is dated xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

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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 6th November 2014 and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

ENGLISH LAW

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

SOLE USE

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

APPROVALS/GUARANTEES

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

ONLY HUMAN!

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

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

LAYOUT PLAN

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

WEATHER

It was a chilly winter 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.

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JAPANESE KNOTWEED

We have not inspected for Japanese Knotweed. We would advise that we are finding that some mortgage valuation surveyors are setting valuations at zero on any property with Japanese Knotweed and are reluctant to lend where it is present.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to carry out your own investigations on this matter before you commit to purchase the property and be aware that it could be in neighbouring properties which you do not have direct control over.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited as:

- 1) We did not have full access to the roof.
- 2) We did not open up the ground floor or the first floor as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.
- 3) The amount of stored items limited our view.



Stored items limited view

We thank you for taking the time to meet us during the survey.

BUILDING INSURANCE

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

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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. Listing Information
2. The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
3. Information on the Property Market
4. French Drain Article
5. Condensation and Cold Bridging Article

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THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

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

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

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

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

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

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

Work You Cannot do Yourself

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

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INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

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

www.landreg.org.uk

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

www.rics.org.uk

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

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

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

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www.hometrack.co.uk

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

www.motleyfool.co.uk

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

www.rightmove.co.uk

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

www.zoopla.co.uk

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

www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

This is a good website for establishing if the property is Listed and general information on British Listed buildings.

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French Drain

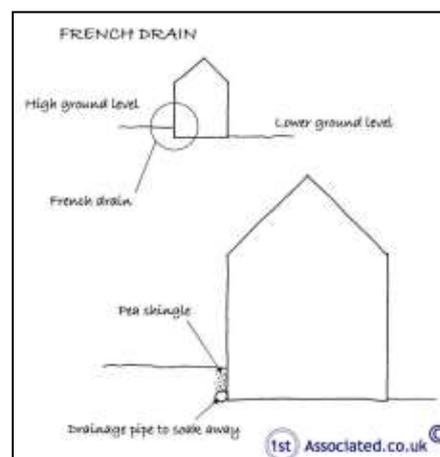
Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio area. This then discharges any rainwater against the building. Quite often the solution is to add a French drain.

Whilst French drains are quite simple and are basically nothing more than trenches filled with gravel, although there is a bit more to them, as we will explain, they are almost a D.I.Y. job for most people and they are relatively easy to install and are low cost. However, you do need some care and attention, otherwise you can install what we have heard referred to, as the French pond.

What use is a French drain?

A French drain is a trench, the width of approximately six inches or 300 millimetres wide, or the width of your spade, and is approximately twice the depth, i.e. 12 inches or 300 millimetres. In most cases this will suffice, however, where there is a great deal of ground water you may wish to make the trench wider and deeper.



The French drain acts as an area where water soaks away quickly. We often recommend them close to building, but not next to the building, as this helps reduce the ground level and/or take any water that is directed at that area away. For example, where a patio has been put in place which aims any rainwater at part of the wall. As mentioned, whilst a French drain is a D.I.Y. job, it does need some understanding of how it works.

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French drains must be on a slope

The piping that goes at the base of a French drain should be perforated or, as we did years ago for land drains, there should be gaps between each pipe. It should be set onto a bed of firm ground and the pipes should be on a fall to the drain. Whilst you should be able to ensure there is enough fall by sight, we also like the idea of rolling a marble from one end to the other.

You will then need to put the pipes down, fill the trench with half an inch, to an inch, of good sized gravel. You can leave it at that, or in addition you can cover with sand and then turf over. This is how a basic French drain is carried out.

The French drain system that we would recommend

This would be as described, although we would add to the base an inch or two of gravel on to which the perforated drainage pipe will rest. It will then wrap around that drainage pipe filter fabric. This is to stop the holes in the perforated pipe from blocking up. By the way, the drainage pipe should be four to six inches/100 millimetres to 250 millimetres. We would then fill with gravel. In addition to this, we would add a silt trap and this is added in the run of the pipe and is very similar to a road gully (not that's of much use if you don't understand how a road gully works). The silt trap is a rectangular box with a pipe opening at each end. The drained water passes onto this and any particles sink to the bottom of the box and then the water travels on to the other side of the box, enabling you to feed into a drain.

These are usually made of glass reinforced polyester and have been available in this form since the mid-1980's. They are normally reinforced with a steel frame for additional strength and re-bedded in concrete.

The French pond!

French drains will, over time, clog up, which is why we recommend using a filter fabric. However, even with this they will eventually clog up. Unfortunately, there is no dyno-rod equivalent, as it is normally fine sand, organic matter or clay that has clogged up the French drain. So, it is a case of digging it up and cleaning the pipework (or it may be quicker to just replace it), adding a filter fabric and re-filling the gravel.

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Condensation and other issues are much more likely and are hard to resolve

What is cold bridging and how does it work?

Cold bridging is a term and a problem we believe will become more common in years to come. We are finding more and more examples of Cold Bridging. This happens in certain types of property and to some extent it could be argued that it is a characteristic of that type of property and quite a complex issue to resolve. Unfortunately it means condensation is more likely.

Cold Bridging

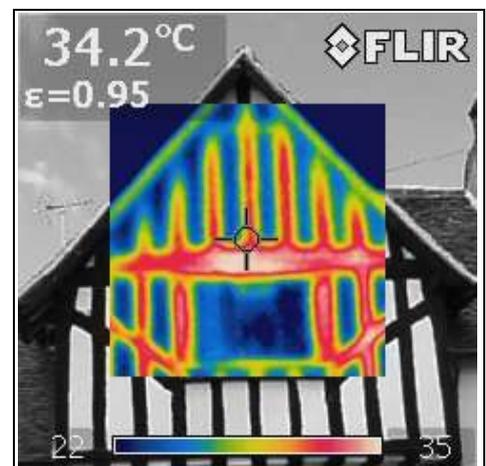
Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure or fabric of the building allowing coldness to pass through. When warm moist air is present in the property and it passes through the colder elements of the structure we have what is known as Cold Bridging. This is often caused by a combination of issues. It can occur from things such as having a shower or a bath, cooking or clothes washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators.

Commercial properties and cold bridging

We appreciate it is unlikely that you will find many commercial properties that are constructed in the Tudor era. It could, in commercial properties, be a large gathering of people breathing (this can cause a lot of humidity) in a building that has stood cold and empty for some time such as a church, village hall,



Timber framed Public House
Thermal image showing heat loss



Thermal image showing heat loss
around window of timber frame pub

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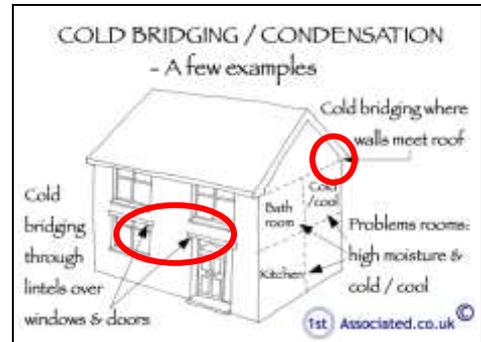


sports centre or a crèche. These human atmospheres create a climate, which can result in condensation on the cold elements of the structure and fabric if the room is not ventilated properly.

Condensation and Cold Bridging the problems explained

The adjacent sketch is a sketch we have drawn to try to summarise the issues of cold bridging to help identify some of the problems relating to cold bridging and condensation.

This is a good indication of the typical things that cause Cold Bridging in a house and how extraction from humidity generating areas such as the kitchen and the bathroom can reduce problems. You do need to look at how you live in the house.



Cold bridging/condensation

Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors

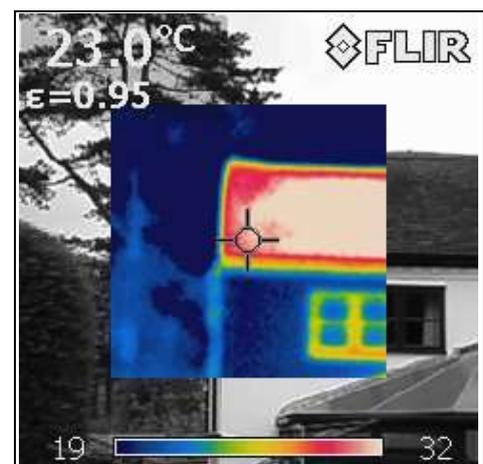
Cold Bridging isn't just about condensation on mirrors. Not only can it be an original characteristic of the building it can be encouraged by all types of extension and alterations.

Cold bridging is far worse than condensation as it is caused by an element in the structure, which you can do very little to change without great expense.

When is Cold Bridging Likely?

In our experience we have seen cold bridging occurring in:

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



Cottage thermal image showing no roof insulation

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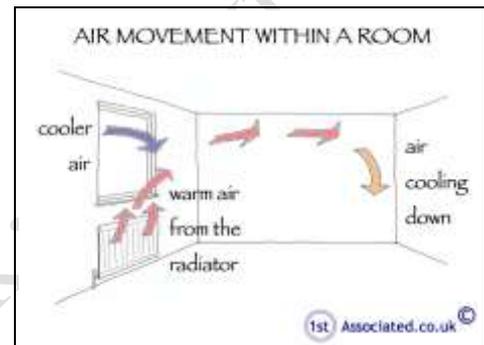


or spare bedrooms most of the time. Also sometimes rooms can warm up due to large areas of glass and thermal heat gain, which is very true in some conservatories also.

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

Can Cold Bridging be solved?

In some ways it is very simple and in some ways it is very difficult to resolve cold bridging. Normally, where condensation is involved, if you get the balance of warm and coolness of the air, ventilation and movement you can reduce considerably the chances of condensation.



Air movement within a room

Airing rooms just like in the good olde days

Airing the room by opening the windows, which seems to have gone out of fashion, can help considerably.



Old style diamond panel lead light in cast iron window opened to air room

Is your lifestyle a factor in Cold Bridging?

This is often a contentious and difficult question, particularly where the occupier is a tenant and there is a disagreement between the landlord and the occupier as to why there is mould in the property. In our experience the major factor is the size of the

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family living in a property. This is especially the case with large families with young children and where in turn there is a lot of washing of clothes being done.

Airing clothes in winter months

This is particularly the case in the winter months, with the wet washed clothes being dried on radiators. Also general hygiene washing and not to mention cooking to feed everyone all lead toward a more humid atmosphere.



Drying washing on radiators can cause condensation

This is generally known as the lifestyle of occupants and can be a major factor particularly where there are legal cases as to the problems within a property.

Is Cold Bridging and Condensation a design problem or a lifestyle problem?

This really is a difficult question to answer. We have been involved in a number of cases as expert witnesses or advocates and the answer can vary. We would comment that there are factors that can be changed and factors that can't be changed. For example, the occupiers' lifestyle can in most cases be amended. This may involve the occupier having an understanding of the problems they are causing. For example, drying lots of washing on a radiator inside may be causing excessive moisture in the atmosphere. Equally not opening the windows and closing or sealing up vents can be a problem.

Design of the Building

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



Tudor timber frame property

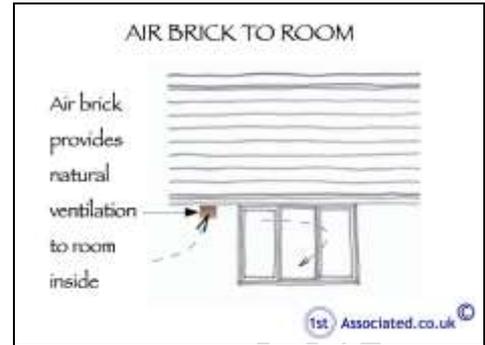
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Things to remember about an air brick

If you are thinking about adding an air brick then you need to be aware that airbricks don't actually allow that much air through. Although externally a nine by three air brick has a lot of gaps, as these gaps taper, it is generally considered that only about one inch square of air regularly passes through the grills.

Apologies our sketches are depicting a modern property rather than a Tudor timber frame property.



Air brick may not ventilate room enough

In the winter we have condensation problems but in the summer we don't

The different seasons mean that the building reacts differently. Anyone who has lived in an old property will know that windows and doors particularly sliding sash windows will swell during the winter months.

The photograph to the right shows a Tudor pub in snowy weather conditions, the property has been extended and altered over the years, which means that there is different heat loss in different areas of the property.



Tudor pub

Seasonal changes

There can be similar issues with a property where, regardless of your lifestyle, during some of the different seasons, for example the winter or a wet spring, taking a shower can relate in condensation even with extract fans running (although this is far less likely).

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It also depends on what the humidity level is outside as this can be greater than inside. The moisture/humidity will then seek out colder rooms such as spare bedrooms and the corners of cupboards. When you open these at a later date you will be surprised to find black mould.

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