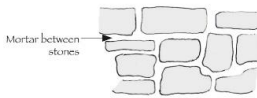


# Stone Built Example Residential Building Survey



Call us for a Quote on Freephone 0800 298 5424

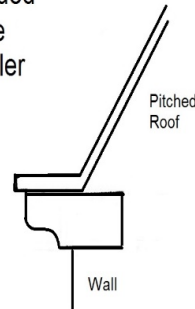
IRREGULAR STONEWORK



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Moulded  
Stone  
Kneeler

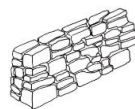


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COURSED STONE WALL

ISOMETRIC



SIDE VIEW

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

This Building Survey is confidential and not to be shared with the vendor (seller) or estate agent or parties working on their behalf without written consent from the surveyor that has produced the Building Survey. During the course of discussions/negotiations with the vendor/estate agent/parties working on their behalf if they wish to see the Report we suggest you ask them which specific section and send them this section via a photograph or a scan. The Report remains our copyright and should not be reproduced without written consent from the surveyor.

### THANK YOU

*We thank you for using our building surveying services and thank you XXXX for taking the time to meet us during the building survey.*

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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**

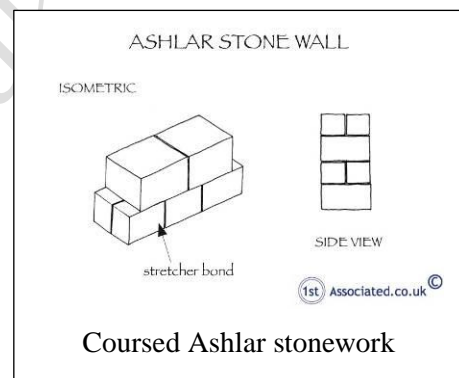
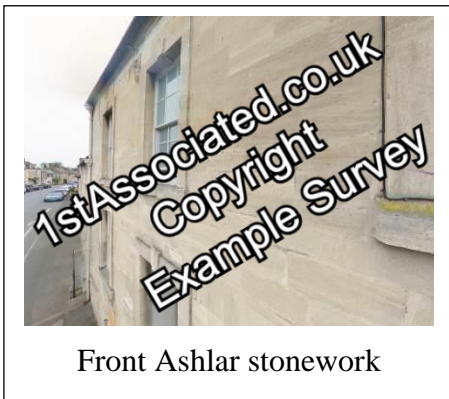
*This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.*

## **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. We also use sketches to give guidance and clarity on various issues in the property and we use them to help you understand the issues, scenarios and situations better.



## **ORIENTATION**

For the purposes of the report, we have taken XXX Street as the front. 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 two storey mid-terraced property, with a rear cellar, room in the roof and rear kitchen/dining room extension. The owners advised the rear extension was carried out in XXX, which included excavation of the previously filled in cellar (XXX Ltd). They also advised that XXX was when the new first floor bathroom was put in place (XXX Ltd). They advised they have lived in the property since XXX.

The owner advised this was once two cottages and this is in line with what we can see on the road and also what we have seen when looking at sales literature from the various property portals that are useful for our investigation work to establish property patterns.

The front of the property sits directly onto the pavement. To the rear is a paved area and a landscaped garden, on a sloping site, with sitting out area. There are some sheds and there is also a Radon vent.

Parking is on the roadside on a first come first serve basis. The property also has access to a single garage, with a small drive, within a garage block a short walk away.

The estate agent was not present during the course of the survey.

The property sits in an historic area, with many listed buildings.

This style of property is typical of those built in the Georgian Era/18<sup>th</sup> Century, although it is likely to originally be an older timber frame building, we would take an educated guess similar to some further along the street. The listing gives reference to it being rebuilt in the “context of the humble vernacular”.

The owner advised in their vendor questionnaire they believed the property was built in 1720. It would be interesting to know where this date has come from.

### Vernacular Defined

This normally refers to buildings of lesser status that use local material and local architectural style.

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## **Listed Building**

The property is Grade II Listed and therefore protected by law, as found in HistoricEngland.org.uk reference XXXX.

## **Conservation Area**

The vendor advised in their vendor questionnaire that the property is in the XXX Conservation Area. It is important that your legal advisor checks and confirms this, as it would also have implications on what you can do to the property and how you should maintain it.

If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your legal advisor needs to check and confirm all of the above.

Your legal advisor should specifically ask for a list of alterations and repairs carried out by the current owner during their occupancy of this property and also any unauthorised alterations that have been carried out prior to them occupying the property.

This list needs to be in writing to your solicitor, with a copy to us to further comment upon if you so wish.

## **Putting Life into Perspective!**

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

- 1709 Candle and Beeswax Tax - stated you could not make candles in your house without a licence/tax which lead to Rush Reed lighting, dipped in animal fat on both ends, leading to the saying "burning the candle at both ends".
- 1710 Playing Card Tax. Due to the addiction of gambling this tax was in place right up to 1960.
- 1712-1836 Wallpaper Tax. For printed wallpaper, the result was that people used plain paper and did their own designed.
- 1714 Fahrenheit invented first mercury thermometer to gauge temperature.



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- 1740-1837 Georgian Era, with Regency Era included within this era between 1811-1820. The Georgian style of architecture carried on for many decades afterwards and there have also been revivals of the style over the years.
- 1745 Glass Tax (the type you drink out of, not look through) was brought in for the weight of the glass. Glasses traditionally had a thick stem and after this tax was introduced the stems were thinned down to save weight. Glassmaking became popular in Ireland where it was not taxed.
- 1750 Start of Industrial Revolution; the first iron bridge was built in 1779 using the new material of cast iron
- 1791 Birth of Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps, with first set of maps being published later in 1870
- 1801 First Census in Great Britain showed the population as 10 million.

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# LOCATION PLANS



Note; The photographs identify the building and are not necessarily where the boundaries, etc, are.

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# EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear view



Rear extensions



Sitting out area adjacent to house



Rear sitting out area and sloping garden



Garage, short walk away



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# ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

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

## Cellar

The cellar consists of:

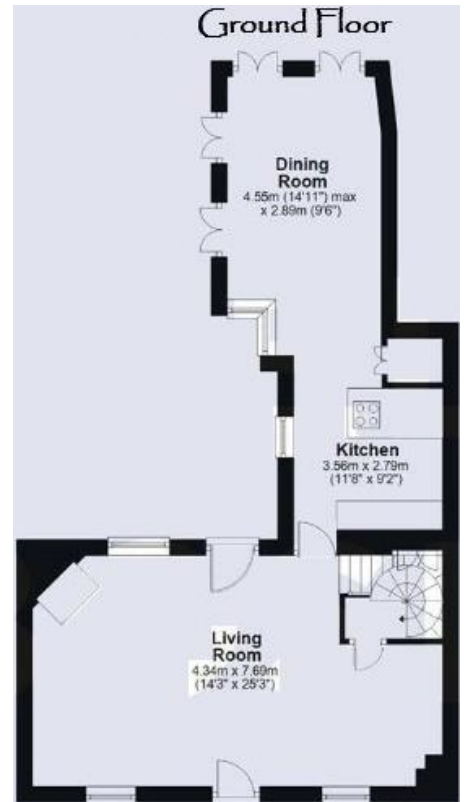
- 1) Spiral staircase
- 2) Below ground level cellar



## Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Front Living Room
- 2) Spiral Staircase
- 3) Middle Right Kitchen
- 4) Rear Right Dining Room



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## First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

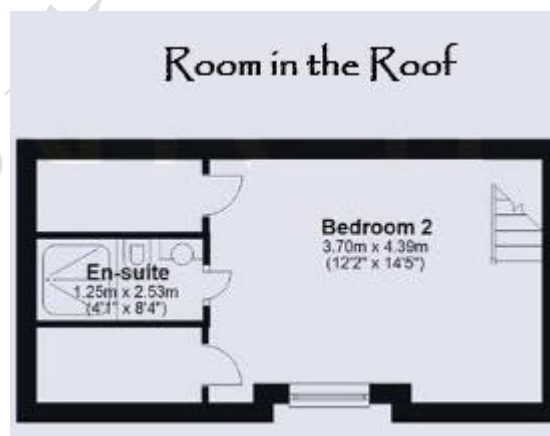
- 1) Landing
- 2) Left Bedroom One
- 2) Middle Bathroom
- 3) Right Bedroom Three



## Room in the Roof

The room in the roof accommodation consists of:

- 1) Bedroom Two
- 2) En-suite Shower Room



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. We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

## Ground Floor



Front entrance and lounge



Front lounge and left side fireplace



Rear middle right Kitchen



Rear dining room extension



Rear dining room window view

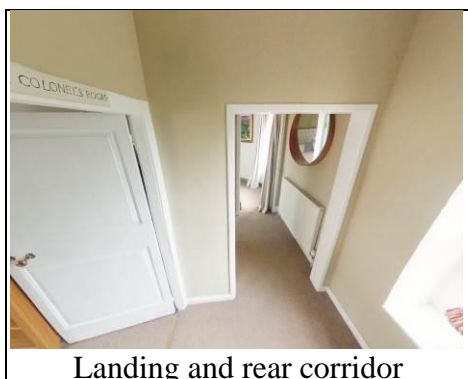


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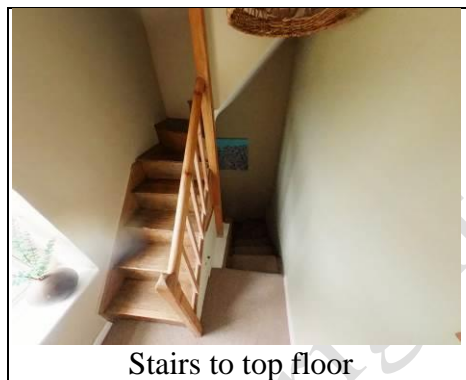
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## First Floor



Landing and rear corridor



Stairs to top floor



Middle Bathroom



Left Bedroom



Right Bedroom

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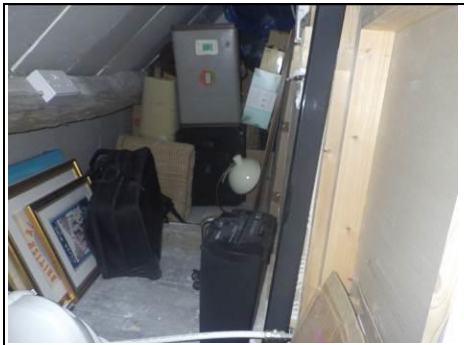
## Top Floor/Rooms in the Roof



Room in roof from top of stairs



En-suite shower room



Front store



Rear store

## Cellar

Below ground



Spiral staircase down to cellar



Cellar under kitchen floor

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# SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

## External

Chimneys	Chimney One left side: stone and brick chimney Chimney Two right side, lowered chimney stub
Main Roof	Pitched, clad with small concrete tiles
Dormer Roof	Pitched, clad with small concrete tiles with render sides
Main Roof Structure	Cut timber roof, partly exposed. Limited view (about 5%)
Protective Underlayer	Not seen due to rooms formed in roof
Low Level Roof, Dining Room Extension	Pyramid roof, clad with limestone slate,
Low Level Rear Roof, Over Kitchen & Corridor	Part pitched, part flat covered with lead. One roof window and parapet wall rear right
Gutters and Downpipes	Cast iron
Soil and Vent Pipe	Cast iron, to rear
Main Walls	Front coursed Ashlar limestone stonework/Cotswold stone Rear rough cut squared stone, possibly rubble wall. Note, bedded originally in lime, partly repointed in cement mortar
Wall Structure	Part timber frame, part rubble walling, possibly some original timber frame remaining (assumed)
Extension Walls	Coursed limestone/Cotswold stone, probably with an inner thermal block (assumed).
Fascias and Soffits	Decorated timber
Windows and Doors	Predominantly timber sliding sash, single glazed windows Metal double glazed windows to rear dining room

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## Internal

Ceilings	Vaulted ceiling in kitchen and part vaulted in dining room Exposed timbers Originally lath and plaster, now replaced with modern plasterboard and/or proprietary boarding.
Perimeter Walls	Originally a lime plaster/wet plaster, now looks to be a modern gypsum plaster (ass assumed) Dry lining to rear extension (assumed)
Internal Walls	Mixture of solid and hollow Walls removed as property has been developed, including for the most recent extension
Cellar	Stone slab
Ground Floor	Front: originally likely to be a timber floor, may now have been replaced (assumed) Kitchen and Corridor: modern beam and block floor over rear cellar area Rear extension floor: likely to be concrete, possibly with insulation (assumed)
First Floor	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers/timbers forming part of the timber frame (assumed)
Rooms in Roof	Part of original roof frame (assumed) Very limited view.

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## Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas.

Drainage	The three manholes are located to the back of the property, all had stone slab inserts to match rear patio
Gas	Vendor advised the consumer unit was located in the living room
Electrics	The electric fuse board is XXX and is located in the living room near the front door to right side
Heating	There is a wall mounted Worcester boiler located in a cupboard in the kitchen, the owner advised the boiler was installed in XXX and last serviced in XXX

All 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 focused 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 150 photographs (including 360 degree/aerial photos) 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.



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# **INTRODUCTION TO STONE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE IN A POLITE STYLE**

Before we start to discuss this property in detail, we would like to discuss more generally about how this era of property is constructed.

This is a 18<sup>th</sup> Century building which were traditionally built using local materials, often using local designs by local workers, known as vernacular architecture

In areas where stone is plentiful, we usually find stone vernacular buildings built between 1500's to mid-1800's, sometimes later. In this area, from what we understand, timber frame buildings were also popular, however this was replaced by stone over the years as this lasted longer.

In this case of this property, it has been replaced by what is known as 'polite' architecture, which follows a particular style of building, often interpretations of Roman, Greek or Egyptian architecture.

Old buildings have generally been developed over the years and extended and altered as required. It should be remembered that these type of buildings are often pre-drainage, which was added at a later date, and also heating would have been via fireplaces and local fuel, with radiators being a relatively modern invention. Everything would have been purpose made from the hand cut stonework and roof to the windows.

Unfortunately, many historic buildings have been unsympathetically modernised and the people carrying out the work often do not fully understand how older properties work and can therefore inadvertently cause problems, such as replacing the lime mortar typically with a cement mortar and trying to add chemical damp proof courses to a building that is meant to 'breathe'/dissipate dampness.



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## **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) The property has much of the original character remaining which is why it is a Grade II listed building and protected by law.
- 2.0) Older properties typically have more space and the organic development of the property than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms.
- 3.0) The property has good natural light for an older property, due to the large Georgian style windows.
- 4.0) The property has been extended to form a dining room, with a view. Planning and Building Regulations need to be checked by your solicitor.

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) Listed buildings**

It should be noted that this is a Grade II listed building, which are considered to be of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them, as such there will be a level of responsibility over and above what you normally have when you have an ownership of a building which will mean that you will need to get to know and understand listed building regulations and requirements to some extent (as well as getting to know someone who knows them in detail) and build a good relationship with the Conservation Officer. Having said that, owning a listed building with features and character obviously has benefits as well as being a part of history that you are looking after for future generations.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that you go on a SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings) 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](http://www.SPAB.org)

## **2.0) Chimney One – water trap**

The rear left chimney has a water trap behind it and it also has a cement flashing to the sides, which generally crack and can allow water in and we much prefer to see a lead flashing. This could be allowing dampness into the roof; please see our later comments with regard to wood destroying insects.

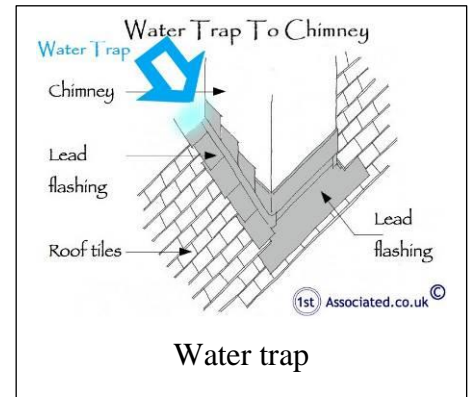
We noted there looks to be vegetation growing from the water trap area.

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Clear the vegetation and check the cement flashing, ideally replacing it with a lead flashing, as in our opinion it is a better and more appropriate material for older properties.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £500 to £1,000, however this is high level work and accessing it, particularly if scaffolding is needed, this cost could double if not treble. Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

### 3.0) Main pitched roof

Originally this roof is likely to have been a limestone slate/Cotswold stone, which has now been replaced with a small concrete tile, which typically took place from 1960's onwards, for a number of reasons including deterioration of the roof, as limestone slate/Cotswold stone is heavy and did not originally have a secondary protective underlayer.

### 3.1) Dormer roof

There is a dormer window to the front of the main roof. We noted a crack in the render, which has been partially repaired, therefore this is a known about problem.



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Front main roof  
with dormer window



Crack to render on dormer



Small concrete tiles to  
main roof

#### Dormer Window Defined

This is a window on a roof that projects out from the pitch of the roof.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair the render on the dormer and make watertight.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £500 to £1,000, assuming the work can be carried out without scaffolding. Again if scaffolding is needed this would increase the cost considerably.

Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.



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#### 4.0) Low level roofs

##### 4.1) Rear kitchen roof

This is a pitched roof over the kitchen, with one roof window. We noticed that the ridge tiles have weathered over time and now need re-bedding. We also noticed there is a straight flashing where the kitchen roof meets the wall, we prefer a stepped flashing as it is bedded into the joint and straight flashings like these tend to come away. This would need monitoring.

We would also add there is a flat roof running beside this roof, which is your neighbour's roof. This could lead to water and dampness getting into the area.



Rear pitched roof, giving extra head height in kitchen



Ridge needs re-bedding



Straight flashing where it meets the wall; prefer a stepped flashing

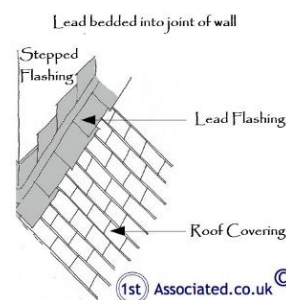
Flashings Defined

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.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair ridge of roof. Bed lead flashings with a plumber's mastic, ideally replacing with a stepped lead flashing.

Double check that where the flat roof meets the pitched kitchen roof is watertight.

#### STEPPED FLASHING



We prefer a stepped flashing to a straight flashing



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#### 4.2) Link corridor roof

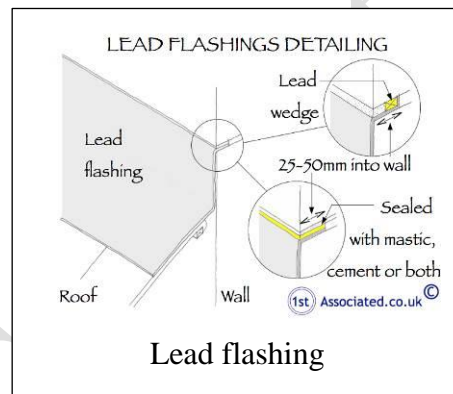
We have referred to the lead flat roof covered area as the link corridor roof, however that corridor also carries under the pitched kitchen roof which we have spoken about earlier. Some of the lead detailing, particularly the flashing, looks like it could be leaking, although there are no obvious signs internally.



Link corridor roof



Close up

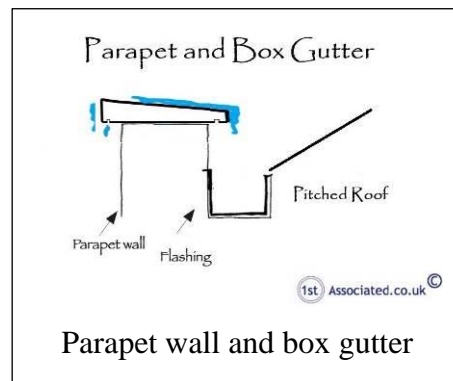


Lead flashing

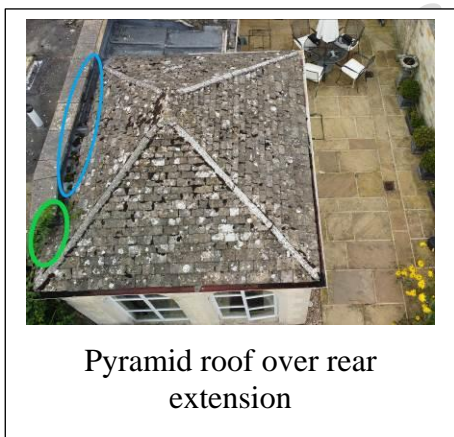
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Monitor.

#### 4.3) Rear pyramid dining room roof

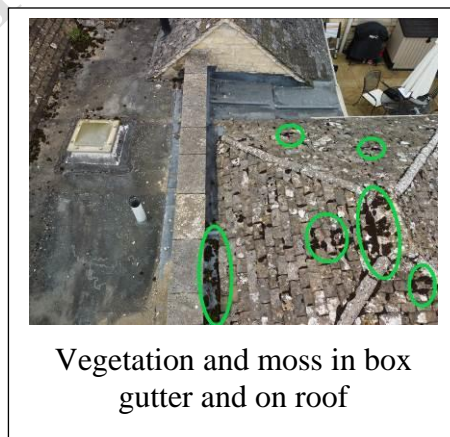
This is a pyramid roof, clad with limestone slate. We noted cracking to some of the slates. There is a parapet wall/box gutter where it meets next door. The leadwork runs all the way along a parapet wall detail, which needs checking.



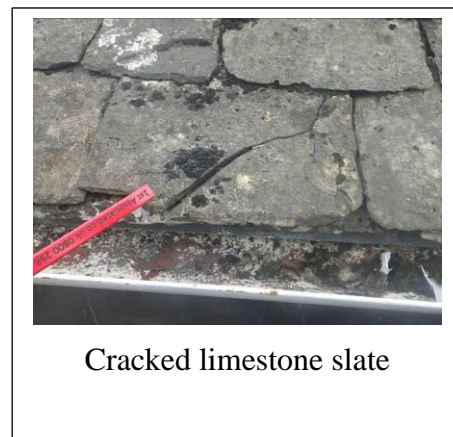
Parapet wall and box gutter



Pyramid roof over rear extension



Vegetation and moss in box gutter and on roof



Cracked limestone slate



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Key for above photo	Example of problems
Blue oval	Parapet wall and box gutter
Green oval	Vegetation growth

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Generally overhaul roof, replacing damaged tiles/slates and repair flashing details;

*For example: where the flat corridor roof meets the pitched roof and the lead, and in the parapet wall/box gutter area.*

Bed the parapet wall coping stones and also clear out vegetation from the box gutter.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £2,500 to £5,000 for work to all low level roofs; please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

### 5.0) Gutters and downpipes

The property has cast iron gutters and downpipes. It does look like they have been painted over in the past and the rust is coming through in a number of places.



Rusting cast iron gutter



Close up of rusting gutter and fixings



Rusting gutter fixing brackets to rear extension

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair, prepare and redecorate or replace cast iron and, as previously mentioned, clear the moss from the box gutter.



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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.

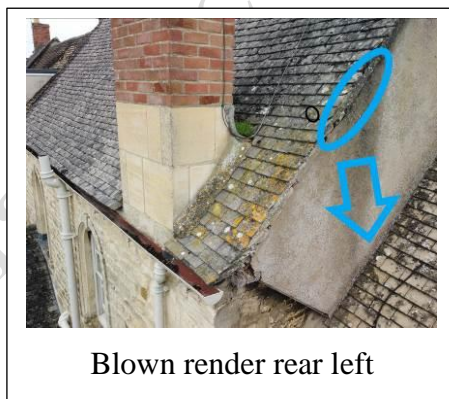
**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £1,000 to £2,000 if redecoration and repair is sufficient. If replacement is required we would expect double or treble that cost. Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

### 6.0) Left gable render damp and deteriorating

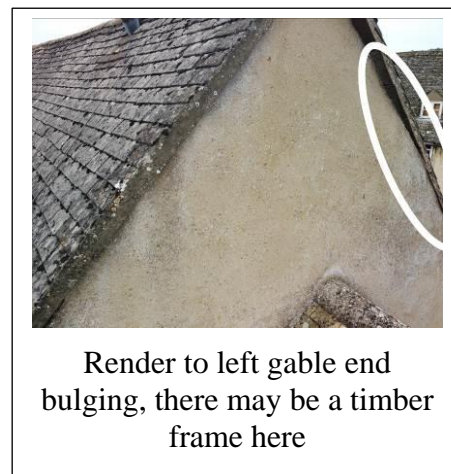
The render to the left gable (all directions given as you face the property) is deteriorating (coming away) near the chimney (see blue oval and blue arrow below). Gaps can still be seen and water damage is occurring in this area. We can also see there may be bulging/movement in this area (white oval), indicating there may be problems with the structure beneath, which could be a timber frame or deteriorating stonework.



Left gable end render



Blown render rear left



Render to left gable end bulging, there may be a timber frame here

Key for above photos	Example of problems
White	Render to left gable end
White oval	Bulging/movement to left gable end
Blue oval	Blown render rear left
Blue arrow	Direction of water
Black circle	Cracked roof tile



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## 6.1) Problems to left gable

We think the render moving is probably the effect of deterioration to the structure below; although it is difficult to be certain without opening up the structure.

The bulge in the render and also the water damage, we think on the balance of probability will mean it is highly likely there are some problems in this area.

Please see our comments in the Ugly Section of this Report.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Remove all the render and check the condition of the gable end and carry out repairs, and see if it is a timber frame, although it may also be a rubble stone wall.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £10,000 to £20,000, as scaffolding will be required. It really is difficult to estimate as we do not know what we going to find.

Best case scenario is that it would be included as part of an insurance claim, worst case scenario is the insurance company would consider there has been a lack of maintenance and this has caused the problem and therefore would not be an insurance claim.

See our later comments regarding movement in the Ugly Section of this report.

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## 7.0) Timber frame building

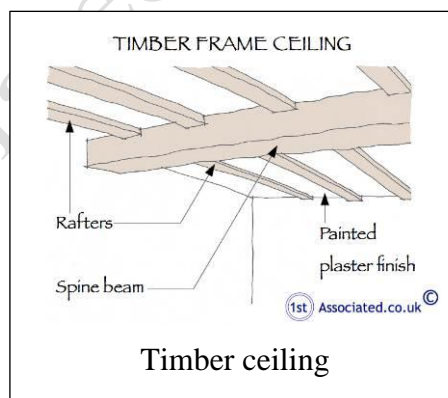
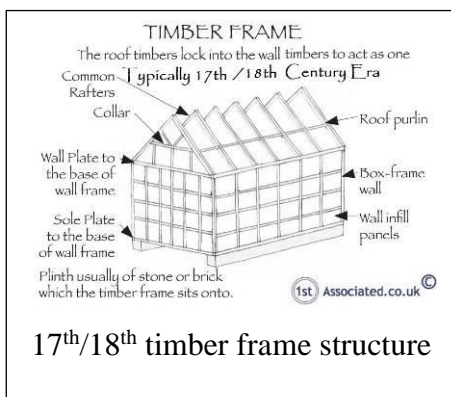
We start this section by explaining that this building is likely to originally have come from a timber frame building and this is the way most properties were built from about 14<sup>th</sup> Century onwards, although only 15<sup>th</sup> Century buildings really survived, depending upon the availability of timber or other materials that were perhaps in more plentiful, such as Cotswold stone/limestone in this area.

From its timber frame origins this property has been rebuilt, as the Grade II Listing advises the property appears to have been “slightly more grand rebuilding in context of the humble adjacent vernacular”, meaning the property was rebuilt in stone in a far grander style than a timber frame building but still using timber, although of a far better quality, nevertheless timber is still present.

Timber can be seen in the form of the spine beams to the ceilings and we believe some may be hidden within the construction of the building;

*For example:*

1. *Timber frame to the gable end.*
2. *Timber bearers within the walls.*
3. *Timber lintels.*
4. *Timber beams; some visible and exposed and some hidden from sight.*



This has left us with a few questions as to whether the building is performing adequately. We cover these in more detail within the Ugly Section of this report.

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## 7.1) The development of this property

### Humble beginnings

As explained, we believe that there were once two timber frame properties here. You can see from the purple and yellow lines we have added to the plan below that they did not simply take away the central wall, although this is one of the things they did, but they also rebuilt the property using the finest materials with cut coursed Cotswold limestone to the front and good quality coursed stone to the rear. In both cases they may have re-used stonework from the nearby Abbey (a lot of stone was available after the Dissolution of the Monasteries 1536-1541) and they would also have re-used timber, as well as bringing in new timbers. This would have been larger and grander than the old poor fitting of a prestigious building that was being built.

### Right hand side

These are still present to the right side of the building, which not only enjoyed strengthening these but also from the kitchen to the rear.

### Left hand side

In contrast, the left side of the property is very different, with no exposed beam, although there does look to be a beam where the purple line is on the plan below, and no associated ceiling joists, although there must be some there hidden behind the plasterwork. Something very different has occurred to the left side of the building for whatever reason. In addition to this, there is a large chimney on the left side.

Unfortunately, this difference in how the building is constructed from one side to the other also affects how well the structure performs. Remember, it is these timber beams and joists that are tying the front and back walls in position.

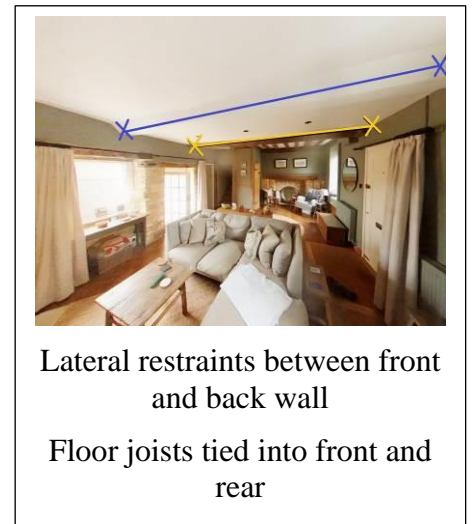
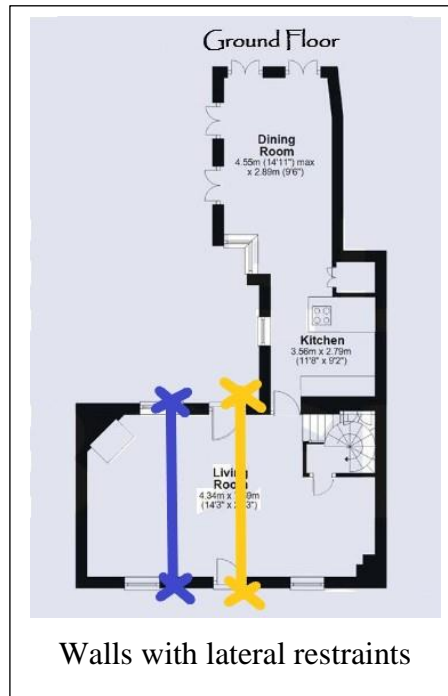
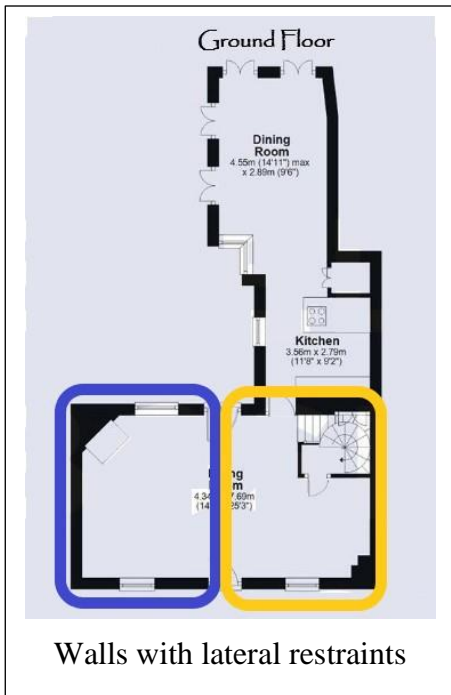
We have already mentioned earlier that the left hand gable appears to be deteriorating and that we have found a crack in the left bedroom at first floor level, indicating to us there could be movement in this area.

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Further investigation is needed. We recommend the structure is opened up to the ceilings and also to the left gable end (see Section 5.0 of this report) to understand the construction and make suitable repairs.

We discuss this further in the Ugly Section of this report, along with the left gable deterioration and it is important you read the Ugly Section.

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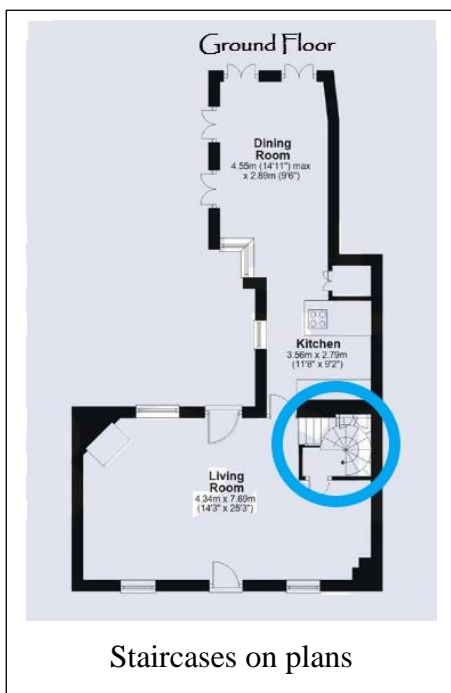
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## 8.0) Staircases

There is a spiral stone staircase leading down to the cellar and a timber staircase leading to the first floor and then into the room in the roof.

As you are no doubt aware, the cellar is very damp. We think over the years this has affected the stairs and it has been partially rebuilt. We could see to the back of the timber stairs, visible from the cellar stone steps that there was some timber propping up the stairs and also timber that was deteriorating and had signs of wet rot and wood destroying insects.



This is something you just need to keep an eye on, as the dampness from the cellar may make problems with some of the areas of the staircase worse.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend a Carpenter opens up the staircase and checks how it is supported and replace any deteriorating timbers.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Very difficult to comment on without opening up the stairs; we would budget for £500 to £1,000. Please obtain quotations before you legally commit to purchase.



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## 9.0) Keeping the property warm in the winter months

Depending on what sort of property you are coming from, this property may feel cold to you during the winter months. This is due to several factors:

1. The large lounge area, both the size and the height of the roof which makes it hard to heat well, together with the vaulted ceilings in the kitchen and dining room.
2. There are large single Georgian sliding sash windows and both the front and back doors open directly into the property without any porches to protect you from the elements in the winter months, allowing warm air to go out and cold air to come in whenever the doors are being used.



Vaulted ceiling in kitchen



Partly vaulted ceiling in dining area



Single glazed timber sliding sash window

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We suggest you ask the current owners for copies of the bills throughout the year and also ask if they take any specific measures during the winter months, such as secondary glazing to the sliding sash windows.

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## 10.0) Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

Listed buildings are generally exempt from EPC requirements, as to carry out the work would mean you are likely to be breaking the law with regard to the building being listed.

The EPC for this property is dated 25<sup>th</sup> April XXX. EPC's are usually valid for 10 years. This EPC is rated D, with a potential to be a B. The ratings are between A, which is best and G, which is lowest. Therefore, this rating of D is at the poorer end of the market.

The EPC states:

### Good and Very Good

The roof and the walls have assumed to be insulated.

Heating, controller and hot water.

Energy lighting.

### Poor and Very Poor

Solid limestone walls, having no insulation, with no realistic/cheap way of them being insulated on a listed building.

No insulation in pitched roofs.

Partial double glazing. This is to the newer part of the property, you are probably aware you would generally not be able to have double glazing to the entirety of this property due to it being listed and double glazing would generally not be considered as acceptable on a listed building.



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## **Improvements recommended with the EPC**

Flat roof – sloping ceilings to be insulated. This is possible. It has a relatively high capital cost and we have been advised would have a yearly saving of £50.

The same applies for the room in the roof and the Internal and External Wall Insulation and floor insulation. All will have relatively high capital costs with relatively poor returns.

The draught proofing suggestion is the best return that is recommended.

## **Solar recommendations**

Solar water heating and solar/photo-voltaic panels are difficult to do on listed buildings without breaking the law.

We appreciate that saving energy is more than just about the costs and the environmental impact also needs to be considered.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We are more than happy to talk further about this if you so wish.

## **SERVICES**

### **11.0) Dated electrics**

The electrics are located in the living room to the front right side by the entrance door. They are 1990's-2015 and are dated.

We also believe there is a lack of double socket points, as we noted the use of extension leads.

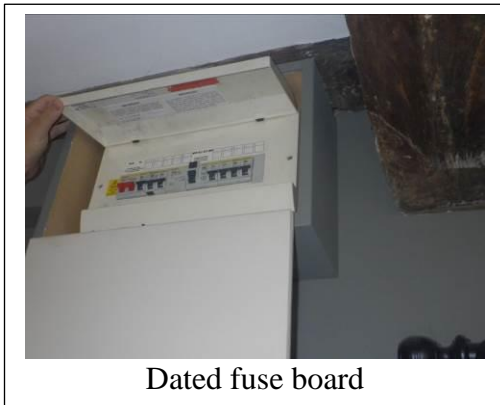
The owners advised in their vendor questionnaire they do not know when the electrics were last tested.

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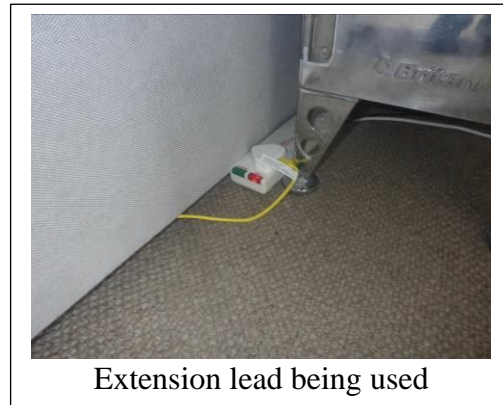
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Dated fuse board



Extension lead being used

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend a new fuse board with a metal casing; modern standards require half hour to one hour fire resistant casing around a fuse board.

We recommend a test and report and as the property is changing occupancy an Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) test and report and any recommendations should be carried out by a NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.

We also recommend you ask the existing owners for copies of electrical bills for the time they have lived in the property.

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

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

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We expect costs in the region of:-

- 1) £250 - £500 for a test and report
- 2) £250 - £500 for a new fuse board
- 3) £500 - £1,000 for additional double socket points and updating
- 4) Plus any further work recommended

Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.



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# THE UGLY

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

## 12.0) Signs of movement to rear wall and associated areas

Within the Bad Section we have discussed movement to the render to the left gable end (see 5.0 of this report), and we discussed the timber frame development of the property and how the front and rear walls may not be supported particularly well on the left side of the building (item 6.0 of this report) (all directions given as you face the property).

In addition to this, we can see a crack at first floor level. The owners advised they had redecorated in 2022, therefore we would advise there could be other hidden areas and latent defects.

We do think there are potential future problems to the left side of the property and it does look to us as if work as been carried out in the past. We did indirectly ask the owners about any major repairs they have carried out during the course of the survey and they advised us that at the time of the survey, and also mentioned in our vendor questionnaire, that they have not carried out any major work. Therefore, it may be something that was carried out a long time ago, or it may not.

### External



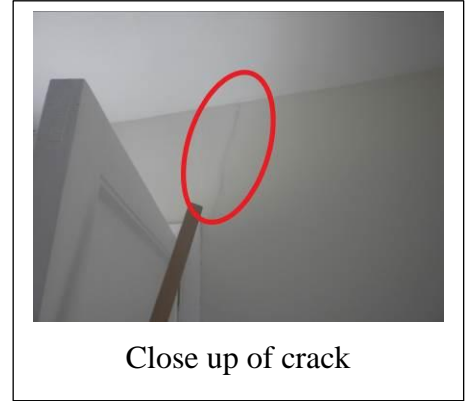
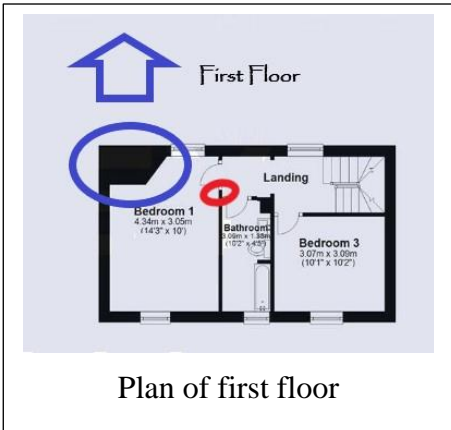
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**Internal**



Key for above photos	Example of problems
Black	Rear left walls and rainwater goods
Blue	Left gable problems
Red	Crack
Purple	Chimney

We believe this to be an historic defect, which has come about due to the amendments, alterations and changes to the property. For some reason the left side of the building does not seem as stable as the right side. We can make some guesses in relation to this:

*For example:*

*The floor was uneven to the left side of the property with the bed having timber packing underneath it to keep it level; the bed being adjacent to the chimney on the left side. The timber packing indicates a dip in the floor.*

*The other floor was the bathroom floor, which we understand was refurbished fairly recently in 2022.*



All of this indicates to us there is a problem with the first floor area and this needs to be opened up to check exactly what the problem is.

The property was well presented and as such may be hiding other latent defects.

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## Other factors

As is often the case with older properties, it is not just one issue, but tends to be a combination of issues. In this particular case we believe also the roof structure above, which looks to have been amended over the years and looks to have problems with wood boring insect activity, although we could only see a relatively small proportion of the roof structure (around 5%). We do think the best way forward would be to open up the structure and also monitor it for one year.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You could carry out investigations before you purchase the property by opening it up. You may be lucky within a limited time to be able to identify the main problems, however we think this is going to be quite a difficult problem to resolve, and expensive.

We therefore believe caution is the best way forward and, as this a one off inspection, we therefore recommend that you go down an insurance route see if a claim would be possible.

We would recommend the existing owners take out an insurance claim, advising that the cracking has been noted by a structural surveyor (this should cost them nothing other than time to write the letter/email). This usually means that the insurance company will carry out a monitoring exercise (the Building Research Establishment recommend monitoring any cracks for a minimum of one year) to establish if there is any progressive movement. Your future liability should be limited to the cost of the excess on the insurance providing the insurance company is happy for you to take over the insurance claim.

Your solicitor needs to ensure this is a legally watertight process and ensure your liability is limited to paying the excess on the insurance only.

We also recommend your legal adviser specifically asks the owners in writing whether they have any proof that the cracks were there when they moved into the property and that the cracks are longstanding. The proof can be in the form of original survey with photographs of the cracks, or their own photographs of the cracks.

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### 13.0) Roof structure and wood boring insects

We mentioned in the last section about wood boring insects, usually known as woodworm or beetles etc.

We believe we have identified some wood boring insect activity within the property, found in the room formed in the roof. Unfortunately, as the majority of the roof structure cannot be seen (only approximately 5%) it is very difficult to be conclusive.

We can see flight holes from wood boring insects in the timber roof structure, often these are historic, and they are also elsewhere within the property;

*For example: the staircase*

However, we do think they may be active in this particular case.

The property is well presented and as such there were only a few areas where we could carry out investigations. In this particular case it was the store rooms adjacent to the en-suite shower room in the room in the roof. In these areas we found frass by tapping the timber, indicating there is some active wood boring insects, however our view was very limited due to the amount of stored items.

#### Frass Defined

The wood particles that the beetle leaves behind.



Roof structure



Finding frass



Stored items limited our view



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Our concern is that these are the areas that we can see, with the majority of the roof structure is hidden by plasterboard and insulation.

We are also concerned that the gable ends may be formed in timber and may no longer be supporting themselves properly; please see our earlier comments about the render deteriorating.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend opening up the roof structure to check and confirm the condition of the roof structure.

We also recommend opening up the gable ends to check to see what the construction is.

This matter should also be drawn to the attention of the insurance company who are monitoring movement in the building, as the roof condition could be one of the factors that is contributing to a movement problem.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** If there has to be repairs to the roof structure this will need to meet the requirements of the local Conservation Officer/Listed Building permissions, and as such we would expect these to be expensive. We would set aside the sum of £10,000 to £20,000, if this is not covered by the insurance.

Please obtain quotations before legally committing to purchase the property.

#### **14.0) Dampness to rear and side wall**

We found dampness to the property, which we think could relate to a number of issues:

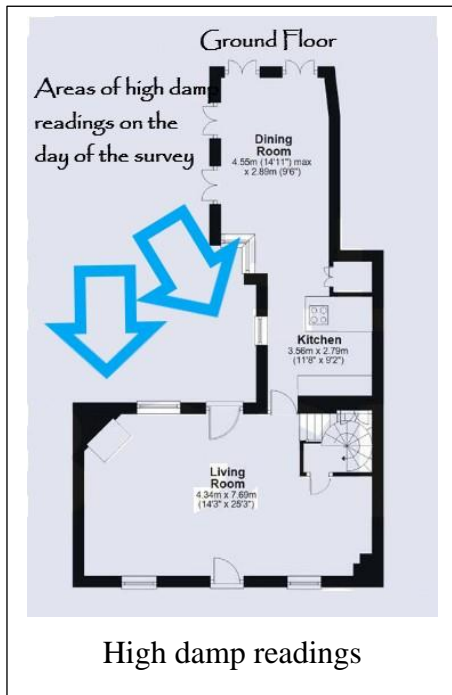
- 1.0) Whilst the overall the site is sloping away from the property we do think that the paved area adjacent to the building may be allowing water to discharge towards the house, leading to some dampness. However, it was not raining at the time of the survey, therefore we have not been able to test this theory.

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The dampness is very unusual, as the overall fall of the garden is away from the property, however we are aware there are some springs in the area that may be leading to the dampness in the cellar and the walls.

- 2.0) Another option is leaking drains. There are three manholes located in the small area of courtyard to the rear. These could be leaking and we have recommended elsewhere within this report you have a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains to check their condition.
- 3.0) It may be the wall is retaining water. The walls originally would have been pointed in a lime mortar, but now some of it looks to have had repointed in cement mortar, meaning the property cannot 'breathe' and dissipate dampness.



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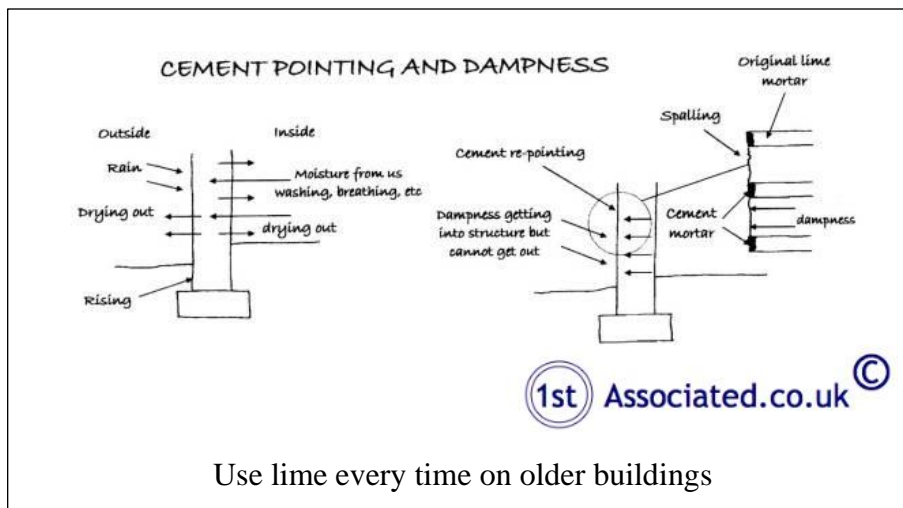
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## Use lime every time on older properties

Originally this property would have all had lime pointing, which helped the building to 'breathe'/dissipate dampness. Cement is a far harder material which acts rather like a raincoat, preventing the walls from breathing, therefore causing dampness and you should use lime every time on older buildings.



### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

1. We think you need to accept that dampness will be a characteristic of this property.
2. You can look at adding a French drain to take the water away, but do bear in mind the amount of water that is in the cellar.

The French drain should consist of a perforated pipe to the base and it should ideally go into main drains (subject to permission) or into a soak-away, which will be an additional cost. Please see our article in the Appendices.

3. You can carry out repointing. Find the oldest stonemason you can, who is experienced with lime work, to carry out a programme of repointing with lime over a period of time during the warmer/summer months of the year.



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**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £5,000 to £10,000 for repointing walls in appropriate lime mortar. Costs for a French drain around £5,000 to £10,000.

Please obtain quotes before you legally commit to purchase the property.

**You may also be interested in**

We always recommend anyone who likes old properties and is about to buy a listed building to attend a SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) course, based at Spitalfields Market in London. Visit their website: [www.spab.org.uk](http://www.spab.org.uk) who will have information on courses, including weekend courses on maintaining old properties. These are very good courses to attend, as not only do you learn something which will help you deal with tradespeople but you may make a few friends with similar old properties as you.



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# **SERVICES & YOUR OWN INDEPENDENT TESTING**

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services, within the property we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services.

## **Electrics**

The electric fuse board is 1990's-2015 and is located by the front door in the lounge; better are now available. There also appears to be a lack of double socket points, as we noted extension leads being used.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our earlier comments.

We recommend a new fuse board with a metal casing; modern standards require half hour to one hour fire resistant casing around a fuse board, plus installing extra socket points.

We recommend a test and report and we would also advise as the property is changing occupancy the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) also recommend a test and report and any recommendations should be carried out by a NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.

### **What are the electric costs in this property?**

We recommend you ask the owners for copies of their electricity bills over the time they have lived in the property.

## **Heating**

There is a wall mounted Worcester boiler located in the kitchen. The owners advised in their vendor questionnaire this was installed in XXX and was last serviced in XXX.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

### **How much does it cost to heat this property?**

We would reiterate you should get bills for as many years as you can to see how expensive it will be to heat through the colder/winter months.

We 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.



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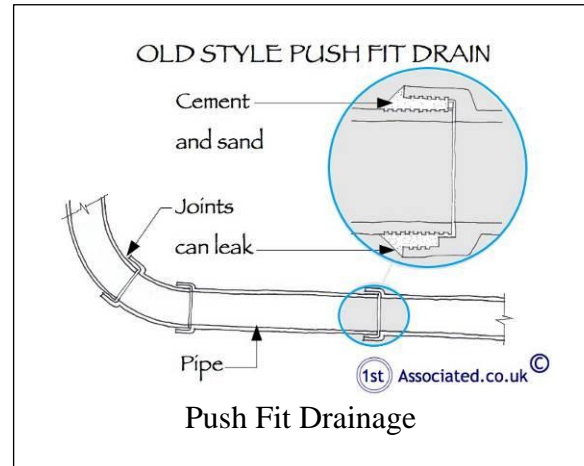
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## Drainage

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.

There is an unusual drainage system with three manholes to the rear. We did not manage to lift any. We suggest that dampness to the cellar could be coming from this area via leaking drains, and as such would recommend a close circuit TV camera inspection of the drains.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Whilst we ran the tap for fifteen minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be one hundred percent certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Few hundred pounds; please obtain quotes before you legally commit to purchase.

## Water Supply

There is a 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 or are there 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.

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## **Maintenance**

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

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.

The owners did not identify any maintenance, just upgrades, such as the rear kitchen/dining room replacement, the excavation of the cellar in 2007/8 and first floor bathroom in 2022. We also noted some cement repointing, rather than lime repointing, and the builders being used may not have understood how to deal with older buildings.

We would draw your attention to things such as gutters and downpipes that are in need of redecoration.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Although we have already asked the owners with regard to maintenance, if they can provide specifications and detailed quotations/receipts on works carried out then we would be more than happy to reconsider our comments.

## **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.

## **Purchase Price**

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



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## **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. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradespeople we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradespeople. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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



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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:

Based upon your answers within the Client's Q&A, particularly with regard to your risk criteria being a minimum risk, and also bearing in mind other factors we are aware of with regard to your property purchasing requirements, we would advise that we feel this property is a high risk for you and would recommend you not to purchase the property. Our decision has been based upon our discussion with you on XXX.

You do need to be aware that not carrying out our recommendations within the report could lead to further problems at a later date. We are happy to discuss this with you further.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these. Please note if you do not carry out our recommendations and investigations then future problems could occur, which in turn will affect the value of the property.

Throughout the Report we have recommended obtaining quotations. 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 legally committing to purchase the property.

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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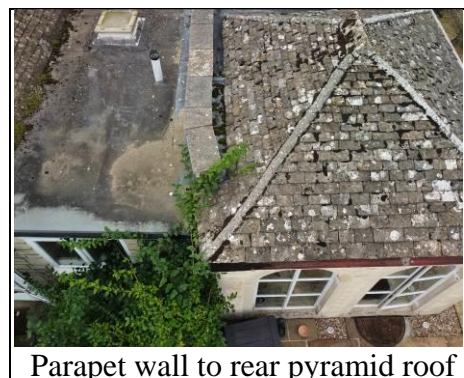
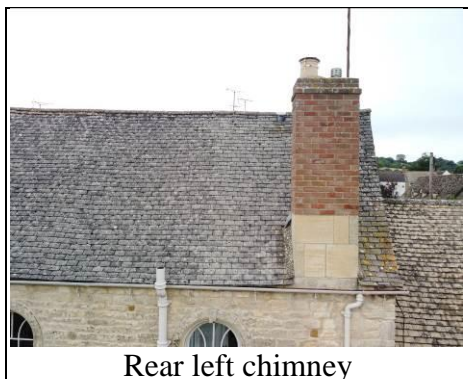
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## AERIAL VIEW - 360 PHOTOS

Where permission has been obtained from the owners we have carried out aerial photographs using an aerial drone, stationary drone or a mono-pod pole (where the environment and weather is suitable).



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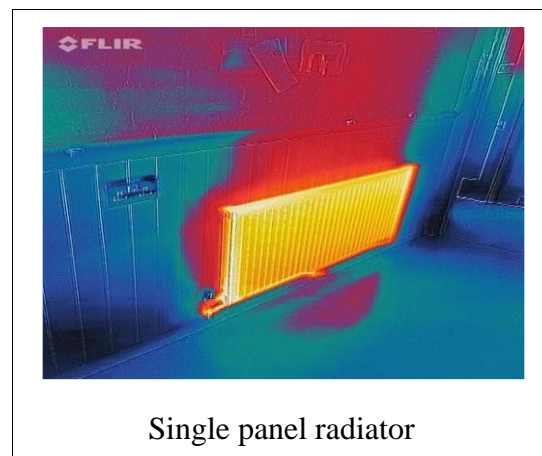
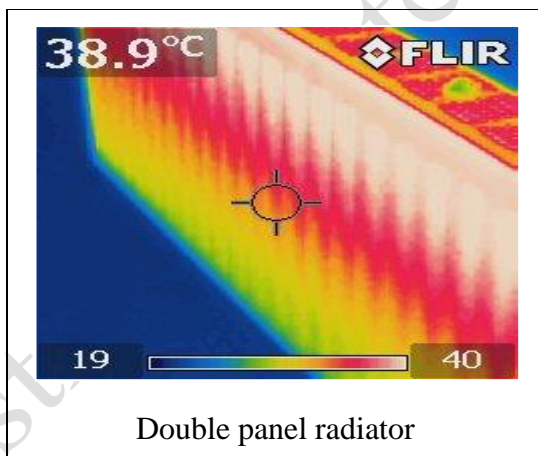
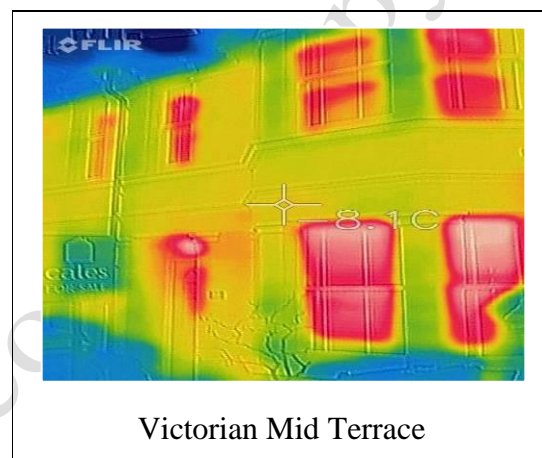
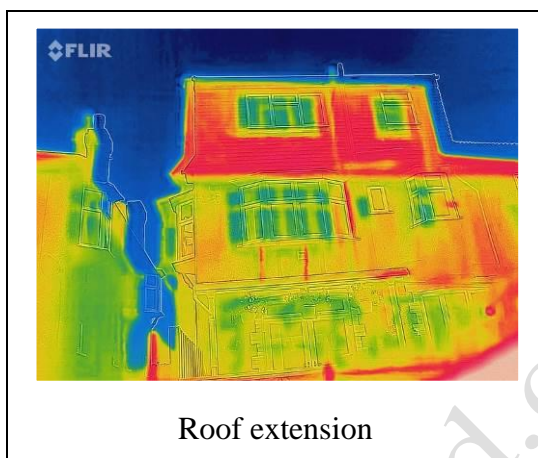
# EXAMPLE THERMAL IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

## – Not Your Property

Thermal imaging photography can establish warm and cold areas, it also helps us to identify materials within the property. In this case we have not carried out any thermal imaging. Below are example thermal image photographs (not your property).

(Key to the colours; blue = cold, red = warm, green/yellow = cool)

(Key to the colours; blue = cold, red = warm, green/yellow = cool)



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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 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 PA from which this survey was sent.

## **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 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

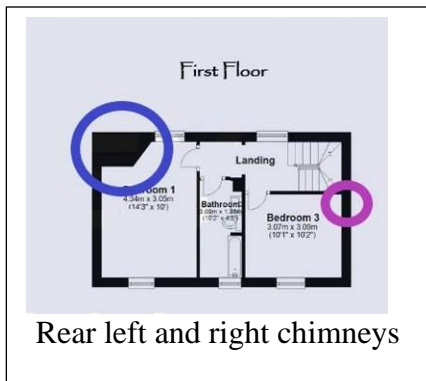


*Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.*

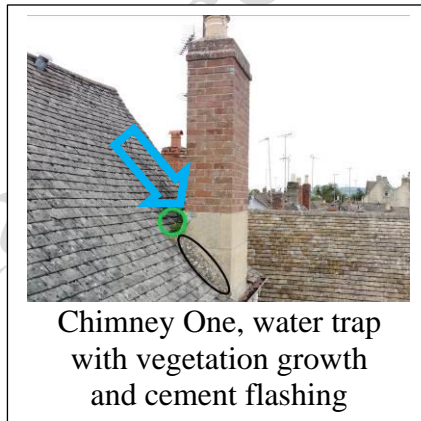
There is two chimneys to this property, Chimney One located one to the rear left and chimney Two to the right side (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney one is a large chimney, with a cement flashing. In this case we can see some cracking to the flaunching (top of the chimney). We noted an aerial attached to the chimney which we are not keen on as it can de-stabilise the chimney.

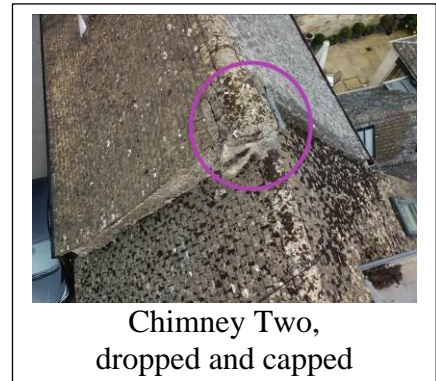
Chimney Two has been lowered and capped and it sits on the Party Wall. This type of chimney can get damp.



Rear left and right chimneys



Chimney One, water trap with vegetation growth and cement flashing



Chimney Two, dropped and capped

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Work is needed to both chimneys.

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### Flaunchings Defined

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

### Flashings Defined:

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



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 and/or aerial photographs. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

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



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# MAIN ROOF COVERINGS

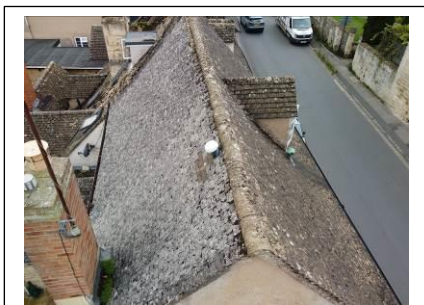


*The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.*

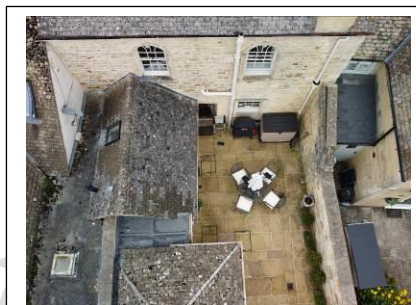
*Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction a protective underlayer may or may not be present, please read on:*

We will consider the roofs in four areas

1. Main Pitched Roof
2. Rear Single Storey Pitched Kitchen Roof
3. Link Corridor
4. Rear Pyramid Dining Room Roof



Main pitched roof



Rear kitchen and corridor roofs



Rear dining area roof

## MAIN ROOF

The roof is pitched and clad with small concrete tiles and, from ground level, this looks in average condition considering the roof's age, type and style, with some moss. Originally this roof is likely to have had stone slates/Cotswold stone.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Periodic inspection.

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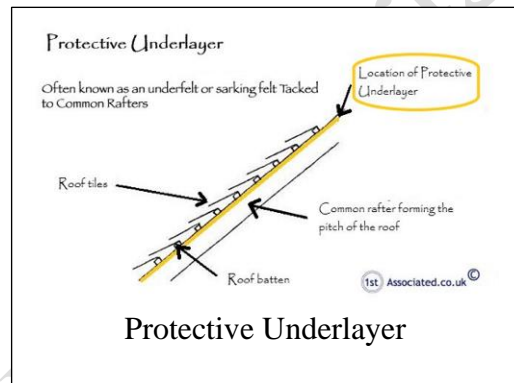
## DORMER ROOF

There is a dormer window to the front of the main roof. It is pitched, with concrete tiles and render to the front and sides, some of which is cracking.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

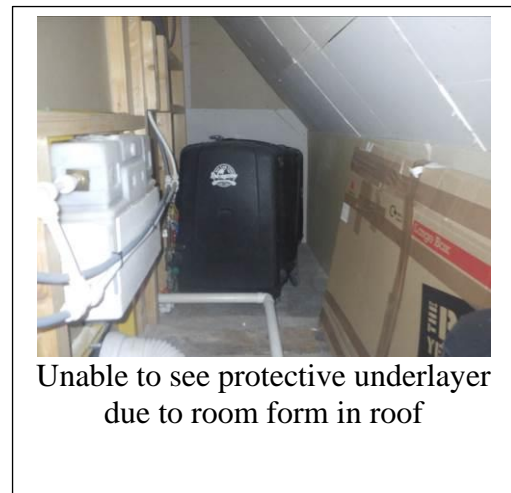
## PROTECTIVE UNDERLAYERS

*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.*



Due to the rooms formed in the roof we were only able to see around 5% of the roof structure and were unable to see if there is any protective underlayer due to the plasterboard and insulation that form the room in the roof.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be certain is to open up the roof.



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# LOW LEVEL ROOFS - SINGLE STOREY ROOFS

## REAR KITCHEN PITCHED ROOF

This roof is steeply pitched, clad with small concrete tiles, with one purpose made roof window.

We would comment it is in slightly below average condition considering its age, type and style, due to the detailing.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

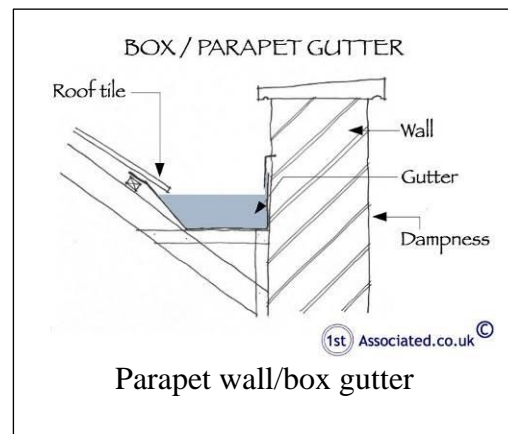
## LINK CORRIDOR ROOF

This is a lead roof. There looked to be a bit of problem with the detailing in this area.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## REAR DINING ROOM PYRAMID ROOF

This roof is a pyramid roof, clad with limestone/Cotswold stone slates. There is a parapet wall with box gutter to the left side and we think this could be problematic.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

Clear moss off roof and out of parapet/box gutter and regularly inspect, otherwise we think you are likely to get dampness in the dining room area.



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Finally, we were only able to see approximately sixty to seventy percent of the main roof properly 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.

All the roofs were inspected from the ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera and/or high-level photographs.

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

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# ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



*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.*



Stored items in roof space



Small area of roof structure we could see (around 5% only)



Signs of wood destroying insects

## MAIN ROOF ACCESS

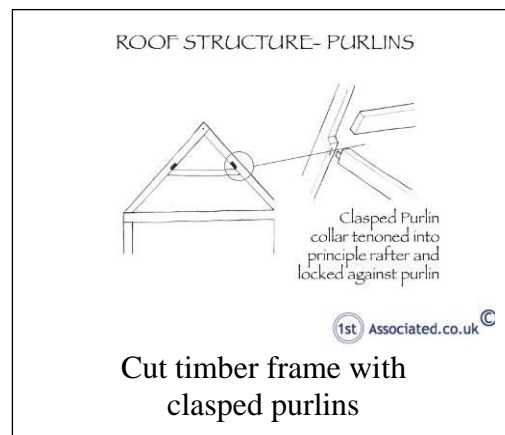
As rooms have been formed in the roof then access is from accesses via the staircase to the right side of the property.

There are also side store areas to the eaves of the roof in the front and back of the left side, either side of the en-suite shower room.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary regarding wood boring insects.

## ROOF STRUCTURE

We believe that this type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof, which is a roof purpose made and hand built on site, with clasped purlins, although it is difficult to be certain as we could see so little of the roof. We would add that we think that some of the principal timbers may have been removed and/or replaced, however we cannot confirm this unless the roof structure is opened up.



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## **ROOF TIMBERS**

We have only been able to inspect around 5% of the roof space (about 1% of the timbers) which we have checked for:-

1. Serious active wood destroying insects
2. Structurally significant defects
3. Structurally significant wet rot and dry rot

Our examination was limited by the rooms formed in the roof and the mass of stored items. What we could see was generally found to be in below average condition for its age, type and style. We found some frass in the roof, which generally indicates active wood boring insects. It is also feasible that there are further problems in the roof that are hidden.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

We recommend the roof is opened up to be checked, as well as checked once it is emptied of stored items.

Common Rafters Defined:

The rafters are the timbers which form the slope to which the battens are secured, and in turn, the roof covering is also secured to them.

Purlins Defined:

Purlins are the horizontal cross members that give support to the common rafters.

## **PARTY WALLS AND FIREWALLS**

*Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, requires agreement under the Party Wall Etc. Act 1996. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.*

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimneys and firewalls. If you carry out any work on these, you will need to deal with the Party Wall Etc. Act 1996. Here is a brief explanation of it.

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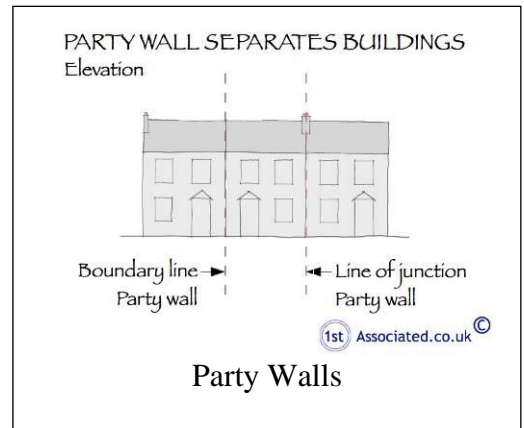
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Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Etc. Act 1996

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



In this case we were unable to see the firewalls due, which should be located to the left side and right sides (all directions given as you face the property), due to the way the rooms are formed in the roof. The firewalls are also Party Walls.

Firewalls Defined:

Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments with regard to the gable ends of the property.

## VENTILATION

We noted a vent on the roof.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to check you have listed building permission for this vent.



## INSULATION

We could see some insulation boards in the stored areas. We do not know how much insulation is in this roof. If there isn't much insulation, which is often the case, these rooms in the roof will tend to get warm during the hotter/summer months and cool during the colder/winter months.

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## ELECTRIC CABLES

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of the 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, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.



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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.*

The property has cast iron gutters and downpipes. They are in below average condition for their age, type and style. They look to have been painted fairly recently, however we can see rusting is extensively coming through.

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.

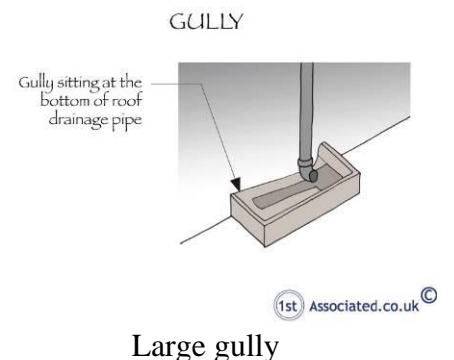
We were pleased to see the downpipe to the front of the property is channelled underneath the path. To the rear there is a sort of gully; we would recommend a better gully is put in place to minimise water getting into the base of the property.



Downpipe going into drain to front



Downpipe to back



## Gullies Defined:

Gullies are useful for the rainwater downpipes to discharge into, as they allow any leaves and other similar debris that have been collected to not go into the main drainage system causing blockages.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see 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 property has cast iron soil and vent pipes to the rear of the property. We noted some rust to the soil and vent pipe.

In our experience, cast iron soil and vent pipes last longer than plastic providing they are regularly maintained by this we mean redecorated and any cracks repaired.



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 one hundred percent 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.

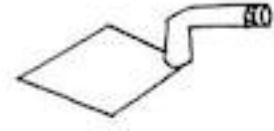
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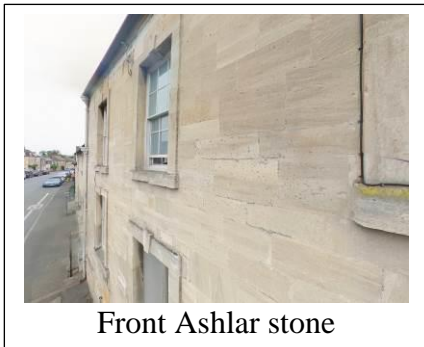


# WALLS



*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 finished with stonework, with Ashlar limestone/Cotswold stone to the front and a coursed semi-irregular stone to the rear, with some render to the left side. There may well be a timber frame underneath and we recommend the rendered areas are opened up to check.



Front Ashlar stone



Rear rubble walling



Left side render

# STONEMWORK

*Stone has always been relatively expensive compared with other building materials and, as such, was used initially for the most prestigious buildings. The use of stone in domestic structures started in approximately the 15th Century and increased towards the end of the 16th Century as timber became scarce and before brick making became established. It was particularly predominant in areas where stone was the natural resource.*

*Stone came from the many small quarries and also often from redundant buildings. By the end of the 17th Century, stone was very much the accepted building material for domestic structures where stone was a natural resource.*

## Ashlar limestone

The front of the property is finished with Ashlar limestone/Cotswold stone.

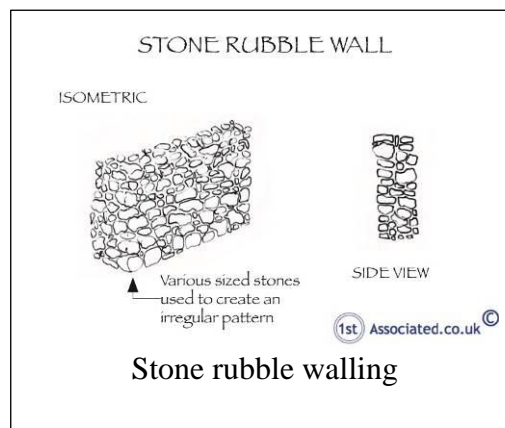
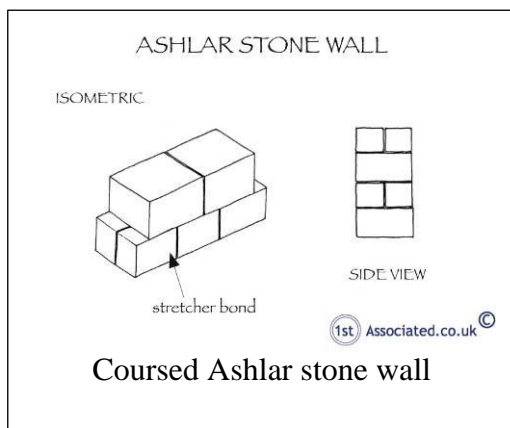
The limestone belt runs from Bath through Cambridge, Oxford with the Gloucestershire area having a honey coloured stone, which is the iron ore within the stone.



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### Ashlar stone defined

This type of stonework consists of larger blocks of stone, which are usually of good quality and squarish in shape and built in courses. Originally this type of stonework was used predominantly in major/important buildings and was only used for domestic construction in areas where stone was plentiful.

### Coursed semi-irregular stone

To the rear of the property is a coursed semi-irregular stone to the rear. This would originally have been bedded in lime and has had cement repairs. Also, there looks to be some stonework replacement around the chimney.

### Rubble walling defined

This property has rubble walling. Rubble stone walling is where there is an outer and inner stone wall with a centre filled with rubble, which are smaller irregular stones. Generally, we find that the outer wall stones are roughly squarish, are reasonably level, if the characteristics of the stone will allow, and are usually set upon a good bed of mortar.

### Use lime every time on older buildings

Originally the property would have been pointed in lime mortar, which has partially been repointed in areas with cement mortar, preventing the walls from 'breathing'.

If the owners can provide evidential information to prove otherwise we will be more than happy to reconsider our comments.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

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## Lintels

Lintels give support above windows and doors and originally would have been timber in this age of property and then possibly stone, although it does look like most of the timber lintels remain.

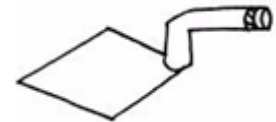
As the walls are damp (please see our comments in the Executive Summary) this can lead to deterioration in the lintels.



We noticed that the lintels over the windows go from front to back, which is not ideal.

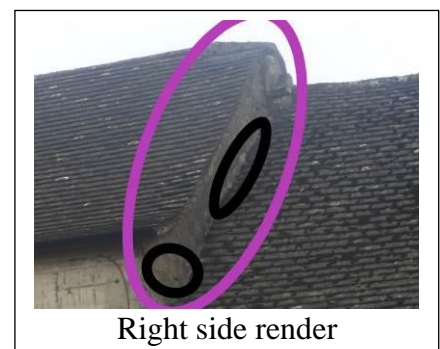
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## RENDER



*Render is a finish on the exterior of a wall. Older renders are lime or earth based, modern are sand and cement. As a surveyor we are aware that render can hide a multitude of sins, particularly where it has also been painted and a waterproof additive has been applied.*

There is smoothish render to the left and right gable ends at high level. The render to the left side gable end is deteriorating, with some water getting behind it. To the right side we can see a rougher plaster, which look to have been repaired several times and it looks like there may be a hole in it as well.



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Key for above photos	Examples of problems
Purple	Left side render
White	Piece of timber
Pink	Right side render
Black circle	Hole in render
Black oval	Cement repairs visible

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## **Timber wall structure**

Within the Executive Summary we discussed the background of these properties and vernacular timber frame buildings.

Traditional timber frame buildings were the way we built for many centuries, although few survive from before 1500. We continued to build predominantly in timber to the 18th century, mainly using Oak and Elm. This is often known as vernacular architecture where we built using local materials. As supplies of timber reduced and the canals and railway transport systems developed we started using materials from further afield.

### Traditional timber defined

This is where the structure appears from the outside (when it is not rendered) to be formed in box shapes. The traditional timber frame method of construction was very popular and came about as a way of building whilst utilising the dwindling supply of oak.

## **Polite Architecture**

This style of architecture in this particular case, is what is referred to as ‘polite architecture’. We have heard this described as a stylistic and romantic style of architecture, often taking features of classical eras, such as Greek and Roman style. We have also heard it described as an architecture that includes non-local style, taking the perceived best bits from these.



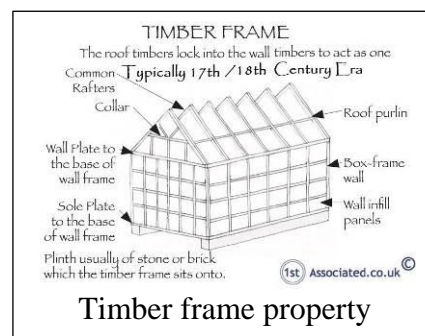
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## Timber frame replaced with stone

At some point during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the property was re-built. Generally there was an emphasis on the front of the building and the parts that could be seen, using the better stone, with the rear often using re-used stone from the local Abbey or similar; in this case a more rough cut stone has been used to the rear.



In some instances the timber frame would remain, such as can be seen in this property, where there are exposed timbers to the ceilings and walls, and we also think timber could be within the gable ends of the building.

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

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



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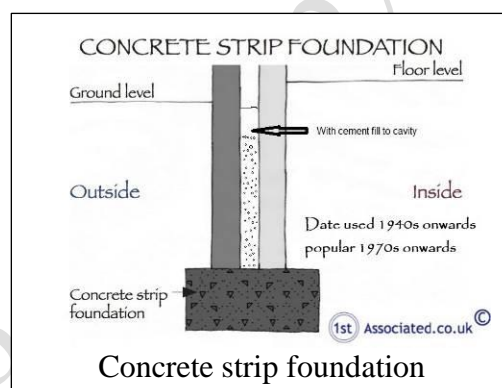
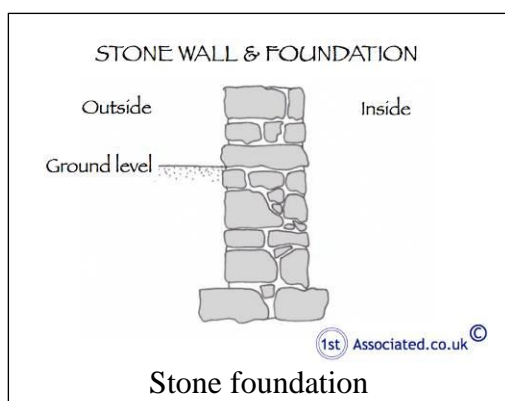
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## FOUNDATIONS

*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.*

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stone foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar, with concrete strip foundations to the rear newer areas.



## 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.

The owner advised in our Vendor Questionnaire that they were not aware of any settlement, subsidence or movement in the property nor any external or internal cracking.

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.

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



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## CRACKS

Cracking was noted; please see the Executive Summary. 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. As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be one hundred 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, BUSHES AND VEGETATION



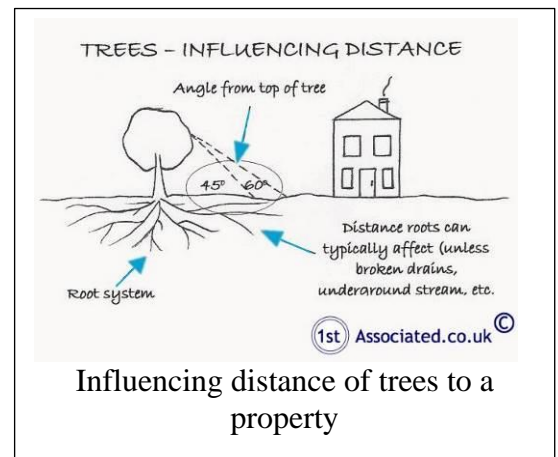
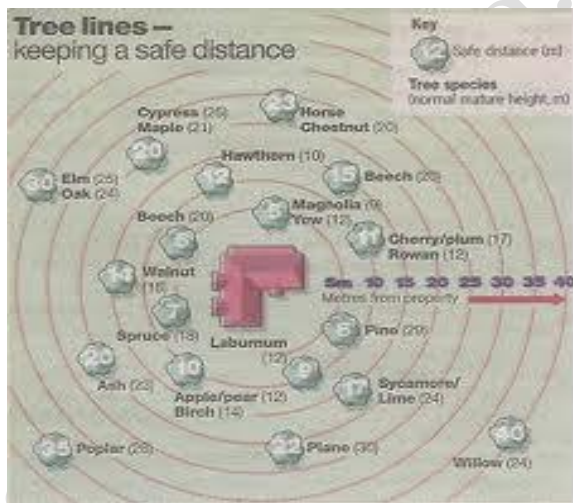
*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There are trees and hedges to the rear, and are some distance from the house and look to not be 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.



Hedges and trees to rear

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You do need to ensure they are regularly maintained, particularly the larger trees. Do not forget the end of the garden drops down the hill towards the River.



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.



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

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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## DAMP PROOF COURSE



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

In properties of this age, they would not have had a damp proof course (DPC) and indeed does not need one, as these walls 'breathe'/dissipate dampness, assuming they are in a lime mortar rather than a cement mortar.

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

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



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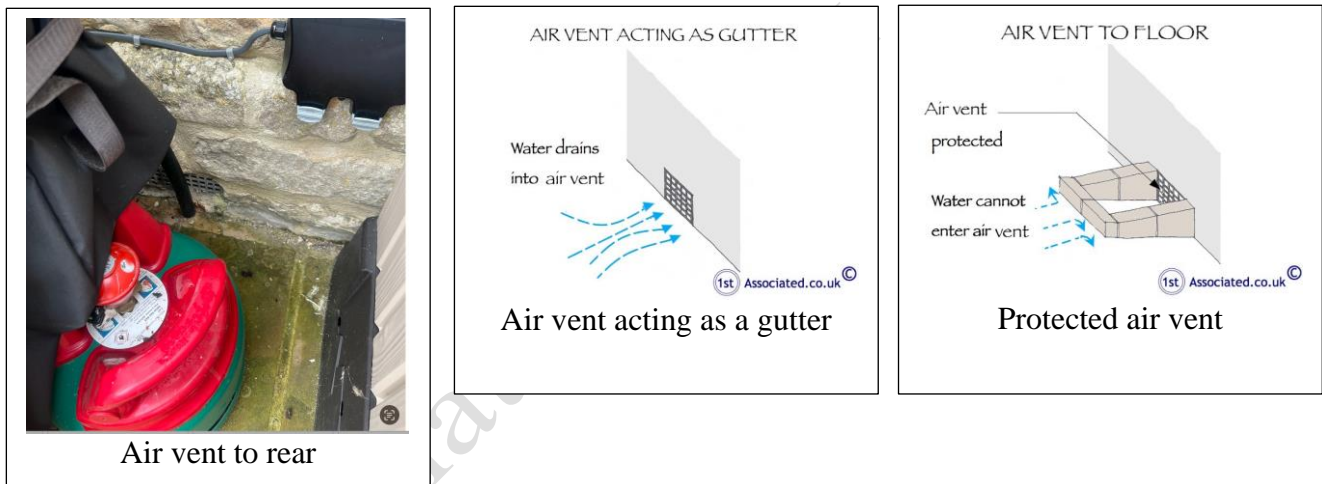
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## AIR VENTS

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

We are not certain what the floor construction is. We think it is probably a suspended timber floor, however it may be a solid floor. We would normally expect to see air vents to the front and rear of the property where there is a suspended timber floor. Air vents are essential to have a through flow of air as this helps to reduce the chances of wet rot, dry rot and wood boring insects.

In this case the only air vent we noted was to the rear of the property. It is low to the ground and could be acting as a gutter, allowing dampness in.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be 100% certain of the floor construction is to open up the floors.

Ensure any air vents are clear and protected.

## RADON

We understand Radon ventilation has been added, with the grey pipe vent being in the rear garden.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would be happy to comment further on this if the owners could provide us with details of it.



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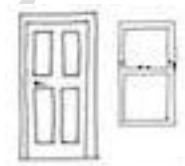
## FASCIAS AND SOFFITS

*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.*

There do not look to be any fascias and soffits to this property. This can make securing the brackets for the guttering more difficult.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary regarding the rusting guttering.

## WINDOWS AND DOORS



The property has single glazed timber sliding sash windows, with some arched windows to the rear and some metal double glazed windows to the rear dining room extension.

Generally, we would comment they are average quality for their age, type and style, with some weathering. They will need seasonal easing and adjusting and the sooner they are redecorated the better.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ease and adjust, repair, prepare and redecorate, the sooner the better.



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

## **EXTERNAL DECORATION AND CLEANING**

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

The external decorations are in average condition in relation to the timber windows, with some weathering and we would redecorate the sooner the better. The cast iron rainwater goods are in very poor condition.

The existing owner advised in the Vendor Questionnaire that they were not aware when the property was last decorated externally, therefore it is long past its redecoration time which we recommend is every four to five years.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend external redecoration in the summer of 2024.

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.

Finally, ideally external redecoration and/or cleaning is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint/plastic areas, its exposure to the elements and the materials' properties. Where this is not carried out repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration and/or cleaning should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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# INTERNAL

## CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES



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

### CEILINGS

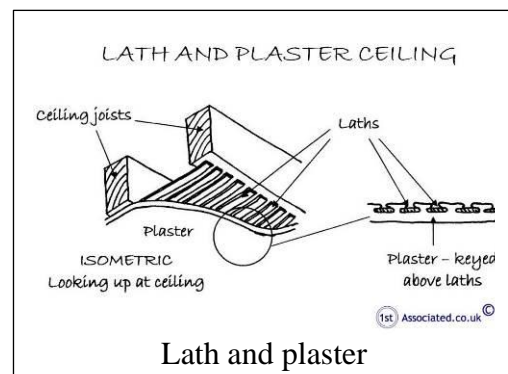
From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction, we believe that the ceilings are likely originally to have been lath and plaster, we believe much of this has been replaced with a modern plasterboard and/or proprietary boarding, or gypsum plaster in the kitchen, link corridor and dining room.

The kitchen, link corridor and the dining room areas have high vaulted ceilings, however these are newer areas and may have insulation behind them. Unfortunately we have no way of checking this without opening up the structure. We can only make an assumption that as the dining area extension was carried out fairly recently it is the most likely area to have reasonable insulation. Having said that, the only true test is to live in the building.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

#### Lath and Plaster Defined

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



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Plasterboard Defined:

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

Proprietary boarding defined:

Proprietary boarding are specially manufactured boards which became popular after the post-war era and are now used for a variety of purposes.

## **INTERNAL WALLS AND PARTITIONS**

These are, we believe, a mixture of solid and studwork construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

### **Walls Removed**

As discussed, this property is likely to have once been two cottages and as such would have had a central wall dividing the lounge area and the bedroom above. This at some point has been removed as the house has been altered and amended.

There are some beams in place (please see our sketches in the Executive Summary), however these do not look to be in the location we would have expected the dividing wall to be.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

Where structural walls are removed internally lintels should be put in their place. Supporting of the ends of the lintels is very important. They require a pad stone and also a pier to sit on, this allows the weight at the end of the lintels to distribute better. In this case we could not see any piers and therefore there is a chance that damage is been caused to the wall. The use of piers is generally considered to be good practice.

Piers defined:

Piers, in this instance, are a supporting structure for lintels and Rolled Steel Joists (RSJ's) and metal beams.

Lintels, Rolled Steel Joists and metal beams defined:

In this particular instance this relates to where they are used to support floor structures and walls where previous walls have been removed.



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## PERIMETER WALLS

The perimeter walls were probably originally lime, now it looks to be a modern gypsum plaster, with dry lining in the rear extension.

### Dry Lining

In modern properties this is used as a way to add insulation. It can, however, be used to hide dampness.

#### Dry Lining/False Walling Defined:

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

This comment on the condition of the walls has been based on the visual look of the wall which is relatively “smooth” and tap testing, as well as our knowledge of finishes within buildings like this.

Again, we cannot be one hundred percent certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.

## CRACKS

We noted a crack which has been filled within the wall between the left bedroom and bathroom.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

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.

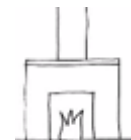


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# CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



*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 sides (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

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



Fireplace in lounge

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you do intend to use the fireplaces then we recommend a chimney sweep checks the lining and that the chimney/s are clear and open up the chimney pots if required.

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

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

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

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



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## **FLOORS**



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

## **CELLAR**

The cellar has a paving slab floor, which may have been added when the cellar was dug out when the extension was carried out.

No sump pump was noted in the cellar.

### Sump Pump Defined:

A sump pump is set in a hole in the ground and is activated when the pump becomes submerged.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend adding a sump pump.

## **GROUND FLOOR**

*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.*

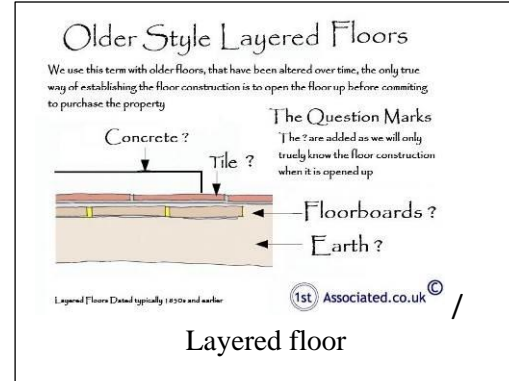
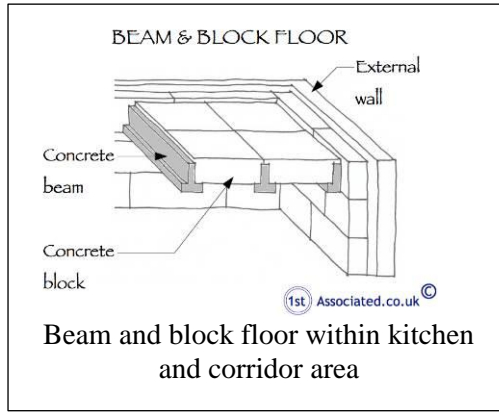
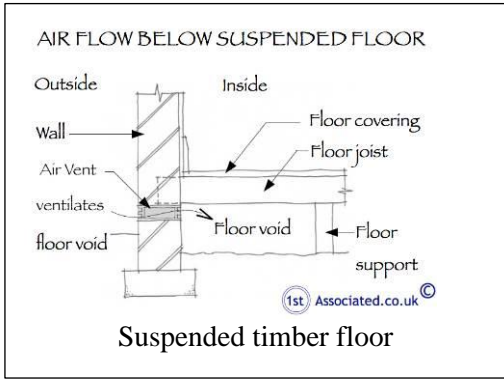
We are not sure what the ground floor construction is, with the exception of the area above the cellar, where we can see is a beam and block floor. We believe the original floors on this property would have been a suspended timber floor and typically we would have expected to have seen some air vents, however we could only see an air vent to the rear. Therefore it may be that this floor was built up with earth and then had floorboards on it, which is now finished with a wood block and we would normally expect to sit on a concrete floor, which we refer to as an older style layered floor, and has been built up over the years.



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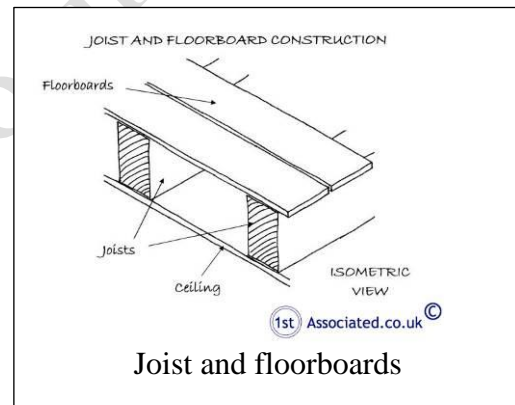
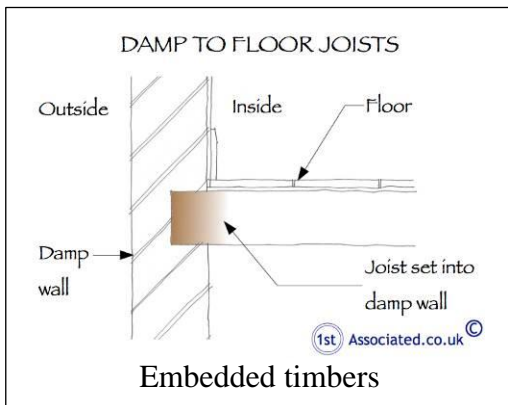
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## FIRST FLOOR

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



### Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined:

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

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## **ROOMS IN THE ROOF**

We believe the floors in the rooms in the roof may be strengthened existing structure.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We can advise further if drawings or photographic evidence are provided by owners.

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets, floor coverings, timber flooring, tiles 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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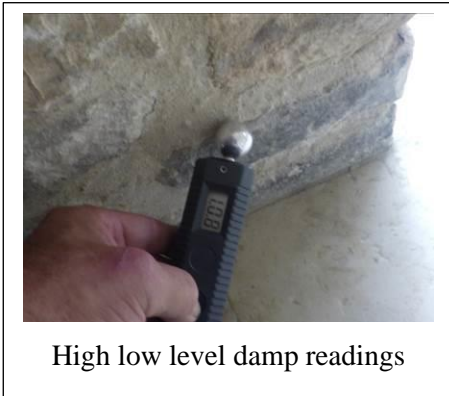
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# DAMPNESS



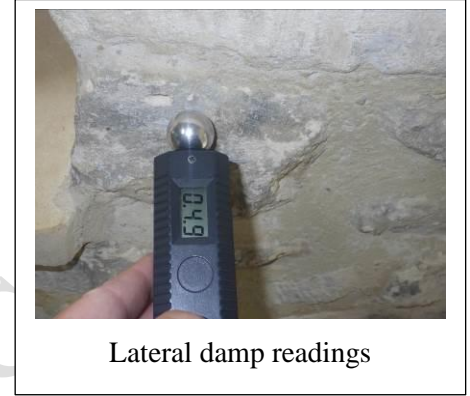
*In this section, we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.*



High low level damp readings



More high low level readings



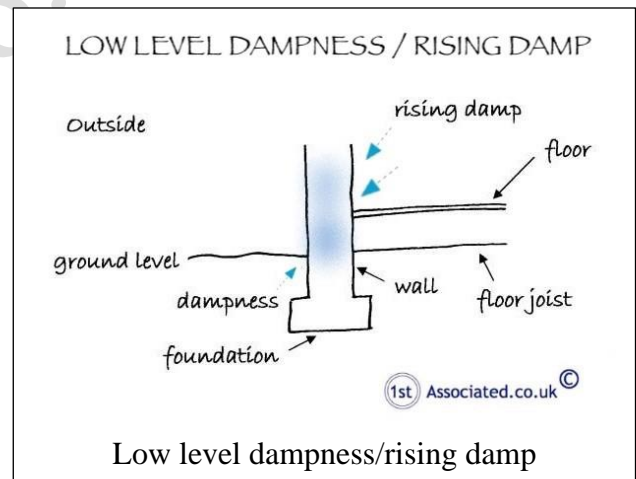
Lateral damp readings

## LOW LEVEL DAMPNESS / 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 high low level damp readings to the rear of the property and also in the kitchen corridor area.

Low Level dampness/Rising Damp defined:



We need to start by saying there is much evidence pointing towards true low level dampness/rising damp being fairly rare.

Low level dampness/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.



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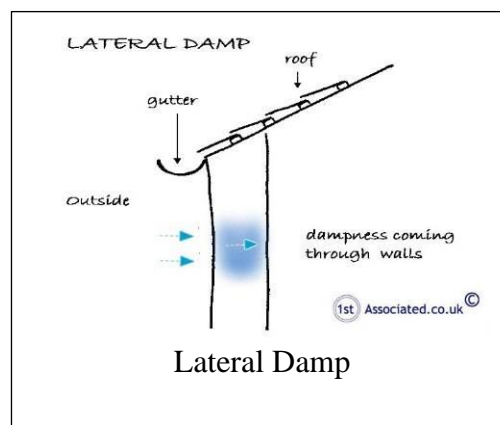
## LATERAL DAMPNESS

We used a resistance meter on the external walls. We found it to be in line with what we would expect for this age, type and style of property.

### Lateral dampness defined:

*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.*

These are based on our damp meter readings, as well as our knowledge and skill in identifying dampness in this age, type and style of property.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## CONDENSATION / BLACK MOULD

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

At the time of the inspection there were no significant signs of condensation. Condensation depends upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window/venting the area you will, of course, get condensation. You need to have a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties.

## EXTRACT FANS IN KITCHENS, BATHROOMS AND DRYING AREAS

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend large, good quality humidity controlled extract fans are added to the bathroom, shower room, kitchen and any humidity generating areas:



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*For example:*

*Rooms that are used for drying clothes internally during winter months (we would assume that clothes will be dried externally during the warmer months).*

By large extract fans we mean 150mm.

Note, as this is a listed building you do need to be aware where you add any new extract fans.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** We would anticipate costs between £250 - £500 per extract fan depending upon the wiring required; we always recommend quotes are obtained before work is agreed/commenced and before legally committing to purchase the property.

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



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## INTERNAL JOINERY



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

### DOORS

The property has painted panel doors.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The door ironmongery needs a little attention in some areas.



Loose door knob

### STAIRCASES

The staircase was stone down to the cellar.

The staircase to the first and top floor/room in the roof was a lined timber staircase, 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.



Lined timber stairs

### KITCHEN

The kitchen was relatively new, but there will no doubt be some wear and tear as one would expect for an occupied property. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our earlier comments about adding a large humidity controlled extract fan.

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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

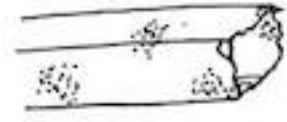


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# **TIMBER DEFECTS**



*This section considers dry rot, wet rot and wood destroying insects and beetles. 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 / WHITE ROT AND WET / BROWN ROT**

We have visually not seen signs of significant dry rot/white rot or wet rot/brown rot during the course of our inspection, however we think there may be some in the roof structure. We only had a very limited view of the roof structure (only around 5%)

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

### Dry Rot/White Rot Defined:

*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.*

### Wet Rot/Brown Rot Defined:

*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.*



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# WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS

*(such as woodworm and beetles, etc)*

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



The roof is usually the main area where we look for wood destroying insects. In this instance we have only been able to view a very small amount of the roof timbers (around 5% only). What we could see there were no obvious signs of what we would term as 'structurally significant' wood boring insect activity, however we could see some frass, indicating active wood destroying insects.

Our concern is there are hidden areas, which is the majority of the roof structure, where there may be deterioration, particularly to the left side where there is dampness getting in by the render.

In many properties there is an element of wood destroying insects where you can see the flight holes that are not active. We tend to see these in all older properties, but it is the frass that we would draw your attention to in this instance.

## Wood Boring Insects Defined:

By this we mean wood boring insects. Historic England identify between 20 and 30 different types. For the avoidance of doubt, we would refer wood boring insects to include beetles and/or similar however we do not identify specific types.

## Frass Defined

The wood particles that the beetle leaves behind.

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## No chemicals

We would add that we would not recommend any chemical treatments, there are natural ways of removing woodworm that are far better in this type of property.



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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 wood destroying insect treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the wood destroying insects they have found are 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the wood destroying insects are active or not.

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



## **INTERNAL DECORATIONS**

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

The internal decorations are in average condition for an occupied property. The existing owner advised in the Vendor Questionnaire that they last redecorated internally in XXX.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

You need to be aware that the decorating may be hiding other latent defects that we simply cannot see.

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.

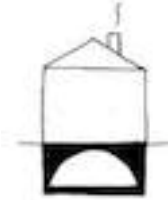


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# BASEMENTS AND VAULTS



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

The property has a below ground cellar. This is in below average condition for its age, type and style and was very wet at the time of the survey, which could be due to a spring in the area. We would normally expect to find a cellar relatively dry at this time of year.



Spiral stairs to cellar



Cellar, no sump pump noted



Very wet floor on a dry day

## Sump Pump

We were unable to find a sump pump. This means that should the cellar flood, the removal of water may be difficult. A sump is a low area within the cellar where the water would gather and often incorporates a sump pump to remove the water.

### Sump Pump Defined:

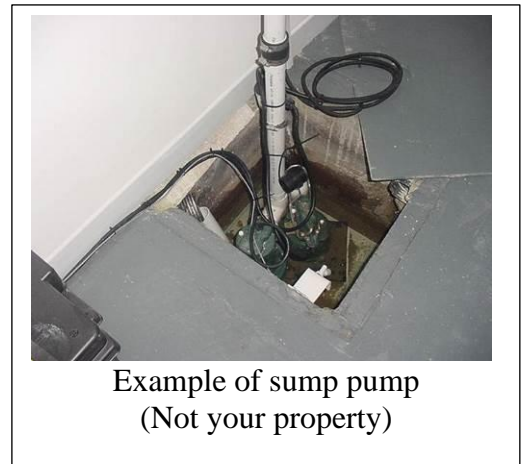
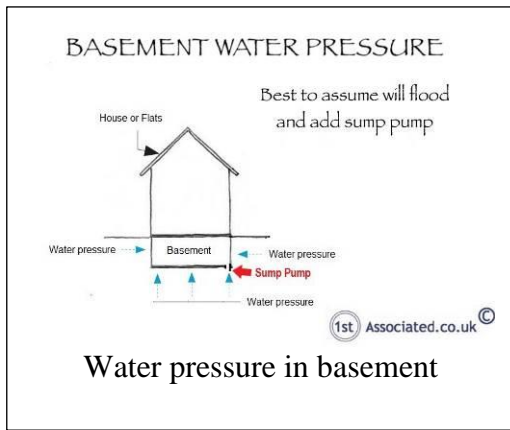
A sump pump is set in a hole in the ground and is activated when the pump becomes submerged.



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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

As mentioned, we recommend you add a sump pump.

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



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## THERMAL EFFICIENCY



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

## THERMAL IMAGING

The property has not been thermal imaged as part of this building survey, the property would usually need preparation, such as pre heating.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We can come back to carry out a thermal imaging survey once/if you purchase the property and prepare a thermal efficiency report, based upon your needs, requirements and budget. If you require this service please contact the office to arrange a suitable day.

## ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE (EPC)

Listed buildings are not generally required to have Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's), however there are some exceptions;

*For example: when a property has been rented out.*

In this case this property has an EPC which is dated 24<sup>th</sup> April XXX and has an energy rating of D.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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

*1. [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), Google: 'Energy Grants' and 'Energy Efficiency'. There is generally information available on the website which is constantly*



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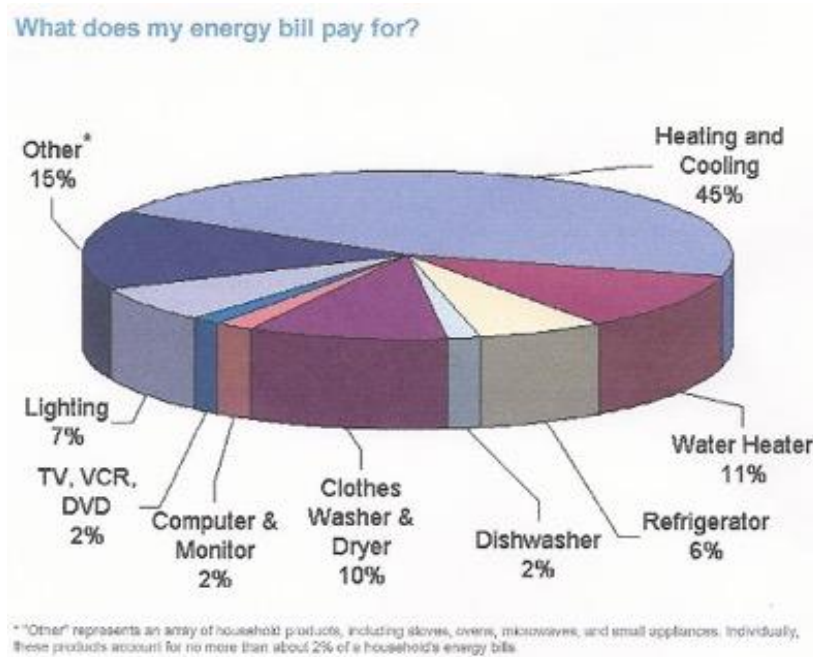
being updated.

2. [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk), [www.cat.org.uk](http://www.cat.org.uk) (Centre for Alternative Technology)

3. You Tube Video: *The Hypocrisy of Being Green* by Belinda Carr

4. It is worth watching the video *How Many Light Bulbs? and Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air* by David J C MacKay – can be viewed on YouTube.

5. SPAB (Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings) have produced a book called *The Old House Eco Handbook*. We believe there will be further research into older buildings as we progress down the path of energy conservation. It is worth checking their website for the latest information at [www.SPAB.org](http://www.SPAB.org)



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.

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## **OTHER MATTERS**



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

## **SECURITY**

The owners advise in their vendor questionnaire that there no security system.

A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also help reduce your insurance.

We personally think alarms are worth having, particularly video cameras and recommend you get specialist advice.

## **FIRE/SMOKE ALARMS**

The owner advised in the vendor questionnaire that there is a hard wired fire alarm system

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Obtain further information from the owners.

## **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.

## **ASBESTOS**

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



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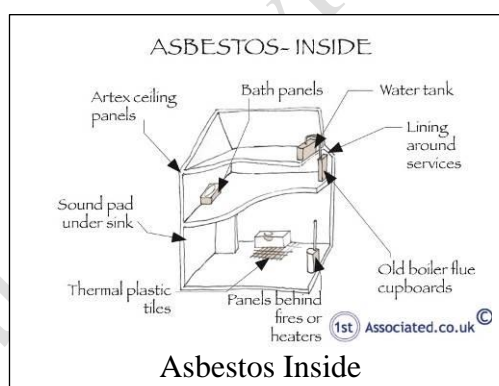
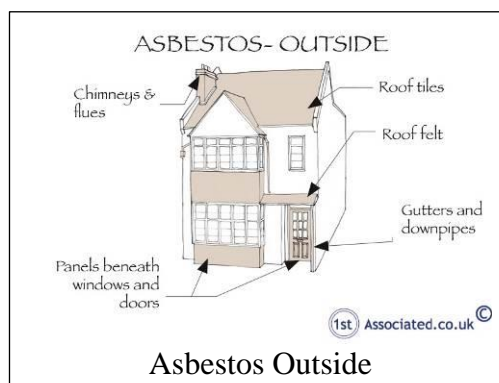
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In years gone by asbestos was commonly used as wood and can be found in all sorts of places. Asbestos was used post war until it was banned only in the UK relatively recently. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned. Properties built before 2000 could have asbestos within them.

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 one hundred percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out on the whole property.



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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.



Worcester boiler



Satisfactory earth test



Dated fuse board

## BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY



We are sometimes asked with regard to the Broadband Connectivity in the area. We have identified some websites which we believe are useful for this:

### [www.broadband.co.uk](http://www.broadband.co.uk)

Advises whether there is phone line broadband or Superfast or Ultrafast broadband in an area.

### [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

Allows you to check broadband availability, check mobile availability and run a speed test.

However, we would always recommend speaking to the owners/occupiers of property to ascertain what they have used.



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# ELECTRICITY



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

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations are important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) 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 fuse board is located in the lounge by the front door. The fuse board looked from the 1990s - 2015 and better are now available. We recommend it is replaced with a metal cased modern fuse board.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Replace. Please see the Executive Summary.

## EARTH TEST

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend a test and report. We would also advise, as the property is changing occupancy, the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) also recommend a test and report and any recommendations should be carried out by a NICEIC registered, or equivalent, approved electrical contractor or similarly approved.

In addition to this, your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005. Any comments made within this Report or verbally do not change this requirement.

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

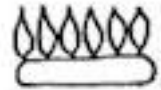


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## GAS



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

We believe that the property has mains gas. The owner advised in their vendor questionnaire that the consumer unit is located to the front lounge.

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As a matter of course, it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and made good, as necessary, by a Gas Safe registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

## CARBON MONOXIDE

The owner advised carbon monoxide monitors. It should be noted that carbon monoxide monitors can also be incorporated in many fire alarms.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It is recommended that an audible carbon monoxide detector is fitted (complying with British Standard EN50291) within the property. Carbon monoxide detectors are no substitute for regular servicing of gas installations and their flues.

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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**

We were advised by the owner in the Vendor Questionnaire that the internal stopcock is located in the front room, and that the location of the external stopcock is on the front public footpath.

The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

### **WATER PRESSURE**

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

### **COLD WATER CISTERN**

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

### **PLUMBING**

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



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## **HEATING**

The wall mounted Worcester boiler was located in a cupboard in the kitchen.

The owner advised in the Vendor Questionnaire that the boiler was installed in XXX and was last serviced in XXX.

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.

## **TEN MINUTE HEATING TEST**

We have not carried out a test of the heating during the course of the survey.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend you return to the property with the estate agent to turn the heating on to ensure it is working.

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

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

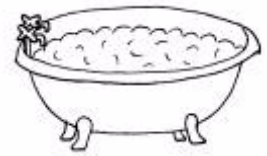


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## **BATHROOMS**



*In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings.*

### **FIRST FLOOR BATHROOM**

The property has a three-piece bathroom suite, consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.

### **ROOMS IN ROOF EN-SUITE SHOWER ROOM**

The En-suite comprises of a three-piece bathroom suite, consisting of a shower cubicle, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our earlier comments about adding large good quality humidity controlled extract fans are added to all bathrooms/shower rooms.

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.



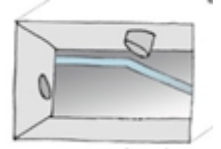
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## MAIN DRAINS



*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 a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the first floor bathroom. No build up or back up was noted.

## INSPECTION CHAMBERS / MANHOLES

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

We have identified three inspection chambers / manholes to the rear of the property.

We were unable to lift the covers due to them being formed in the paving slabs therefore are unable to comment.



Three manholes to rear

Key for above photo	
Orange ovals	Three rear manholes
Orange square	Air vent from cellar for



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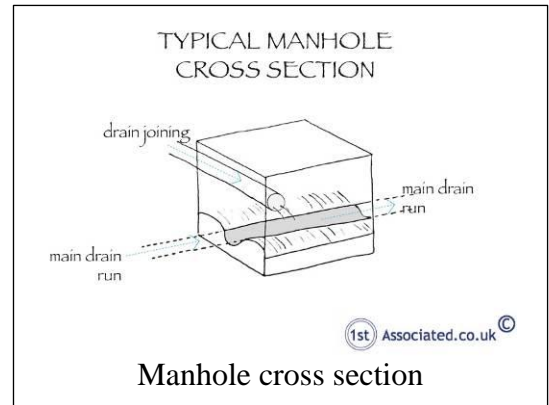
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### Manholes Defined:

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains to check their condition.



**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds; please obtain quotes before you legally commit to purchase the property.

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

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.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND DRAINS**

From 1st October 2011 the water authority took over responsibility for shared private sewers. These private sewers are now public sewers. However, general drainage searches will not show the location of all the public sewers within the boundary of a property and other such matters that may restrict development.

The water authority's prior consent is required to build within 3 metres of a public sewer. The owner is responsible for the cost of obtaining the water authority's consent which may include the re-routing of the public sewer. If you intend to carry out any such development at the property you should obtain a speciality drainage report to ascertain the route of the sewers and drains.



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## **RAINWATER/SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE**

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

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

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

In this era of property, they are likely to be combined/shared drains which are where the foul water and the surface water combines. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 8/9 o'clock rush to work.

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

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



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# OUTSIDE

## SUN MAP

The Sun Map shows the sun's path as it travels around the property on a specific date; the date can be seen at the very bottom of the picture. The arrows show the sun's position using a 24 hour clock face around the property.



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## GARAGE / PARKING



Parking is on the roadside on a first come first served basis.

The property has a single garage in a block of garages a short walk away. It looks to be stone built, with a timber roof structure with a mineral felt covering. It did look like there had been a roof leak of some kind over the years.



Garage, short walk away from house



Timber above door needs redecoration



Stonework and timber roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Specifically ask the owner how repairs are dealt with on the garage. Is it, for example, a freehold or a leasehold garage?

If it is leasehold is there any sinking fund/savings fund for work to be carried out?

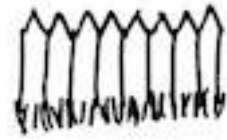


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## **EXTERNAL AREAS**



### **FRONT**

The front sits directly onto the pavement, with buildings either side to the left and right sides.

### **REAR GARDEN**

There rear garden is on a sloping site and has been landscaped, with a level patio area adjacent to the house with a sitting out area, then further landscaping as you walk down the hill.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.

### **OUTBUILDINGS**

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 if so required.

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## **BOUNDARIES**

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.

The owner advised in their vendor questionnaire that the rear boundary fences belong to them, with the left and right fences being shared.

There is normally a 'T' marking which boundary is yours on the Deeds which you can obtain from the Land Registry.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Advisor to check whose boundary is whose.

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

## **NEIGHBOURS**

### **LEFT AND RIGHT HAND NEIGHBOURS**

We knocked on both doors at the time of the inspection but there was no response.

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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) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
  - ii) Certificates confirming chimneys have been swept
  - iii) Roof and similar renewals.
  - iv) Amendments/removal of any walls in part or whole.
  - v) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - vi) Drainage location, maintenance and repairs.
  - vii) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - viii) Rising damp treatments.
  - ix) Asbestos
  - x) Boiler and central heating installation and maintenance.
  - xi) Electrical test and report.
  - xii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - xiii) Have there been any structural problems referred to insurance companies, any insurance claims, monitoring or underpinning, etc.
  - xiv) Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
  - xv) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.



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- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Environmental report 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 Environmental reports 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 Environmental reports or similar general reports on the environment please see our article link on the [www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

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

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

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

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



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

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

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

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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*

Period House Fixtures and Fittings  
*By Linda Hall  
Published by Countryside Books*

The Rising Damp Myth  
*By Jeff Howell  
Published by Nosecone Publications*

Putting Life into Perspective House Price Information  
*Source: Sunlife.co.uk*

Wikipedia.org – We have used Wikipedia as a general reference for historic information. Also, most areas often have Historic Societies for good knowledge of history of the area.

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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 XXX 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.

The Report remains our copyright and anyone forwarding on a copy of the Report without the surveyor's written approval could be liable to legal action should legal action be taken against the surveyor or the surveying company in any form:

*For example: legal action or negative information or defamatory comments being posted on the internet.*

We also refer you to our Terms and Conditions.

## **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.



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## **ONLY HUMAN!**

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

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

## **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.

## **SKETCHES**

We have used sketches throughout the report, these are for illustration purposes only and we would not expect these to be used as technical details for work being carried out. We would be more than happy to advise further if you wish specific help on any elements.

## **WEATHER**

It was a mild dry day autumn 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. This may have adverse effects on many buildings in years to come or the not too distant future.

As you are probably aware there has been some record breaking weather recently:

2022 had the hottest summer on record

December 2015 was the wettest month on record

August 2004 the wettest August on record in many areas

2003 was the driest year on record

2000 was the wettest year on record



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In 1914 the Meteorological Office began recording weather although there are informal diary records and evidence of plant growth, etc. which also indicates weather patterns and is available for a much longer period.

## **FLOODING**

We are often asked about floods and how likely is the property to flood. We no longer think it is possible to predict due to our changing weather patterns and rainfall often being more intense. We simply do not have a crystal ball good enough to be able to advise of the certainty on this matter, other than the obvious that if you are near rivers, springs and on a sloping site you are more likely to flood than most. We have, however been involved in some cases where flooding has occurred when it has not occurred for many decades/in living memory and this we feel is due to new weather patterns; we do not believe there is a one hundred percent accurate way to establish if a property will flood or not.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to carry out your own research on this matter/due diligence before you legally commit to purchase 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.

## **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.

A BBC news report dated April 2018 states that research has been carried out by Swansea University, where they carried out trials near Cardiff and Swansea and tested 19 main methods of controlling the plant and they found that none of these methods eradicated it. See our article:



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<https://buildingsurveyquote.co.uk/japanese-knotweed-buildings-and-resveratrol/>

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to carry out your own research on this matter/due diligence before you legally commit to purchase the property and be aware that Japanese knotweed 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 a full view of the roof due to the rooms formed in the roof and stored items. We only saw about 5% of the roof timbers.
- 2) We did not open up the walls as we could not see a way of doing this without causing damage.
- 3) We did not open up the floors as we could not see a way to do it without causing damage.
- 4) We have not had certificates forwarded onto us with regard to work carried out on the property or left in the property or provided by the estate agent.
- 5) The stored items in the property limited our inspection.
- 6) A lot of DIY and building work has been carried out during the Covid pandemic period, which is making building surveying more difficult as things are covered over with redecoration and repairs.

## **THANK YOU**

We thank you for using our surveying services and for taking the time to meet us during the building survey.

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## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

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

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

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

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

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

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# APPENDICES

1. The Electrical Regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. French Drain
4. Condensation and Cold Bridging

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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](http://www.landreg.org.uk)

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

[www.rics.org.uk](http://www.rics.org.uk)

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

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

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. We believe it is interesting to look at the historic records to give an indication of how the property may perform. It has to be remembered that this information has been taken from the limited source and various assumptions have been made which you can find on the various websites.

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

These are the main Internet search engines for estate agencies which have properties for sale and also have useful information with regard to data on historic sale values, etc.

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# French Drain

## Using a French drain to resolve a dampness problem

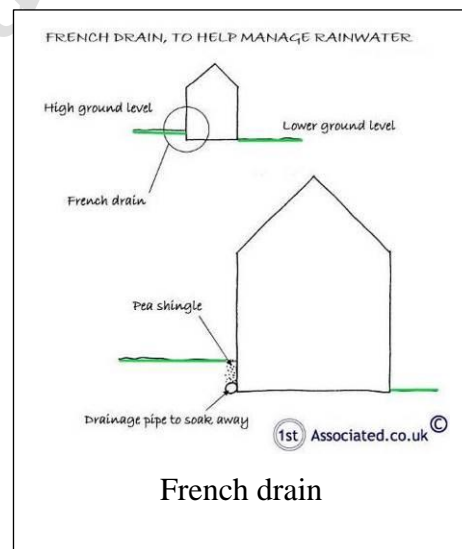
We are finding where we are asked to look at damp walls and damp floors or damp problems in general that commonly it is because the external ground level is higher than the internal ground level, or airbricks have been blocked, or simply paving slabs, decking or briquettes have been used to form a patio 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 being 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 a 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-1980s. 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.



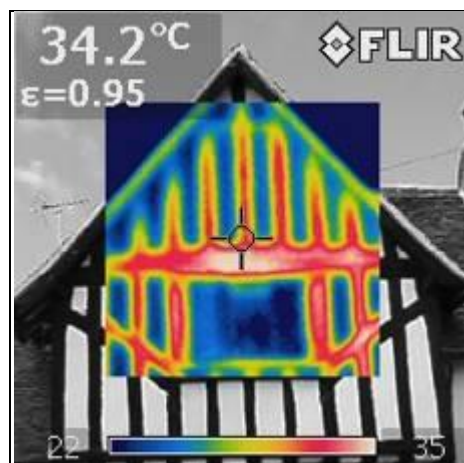
Timber framed House  
Thermal image showing heat loss

## 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, 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.



Thermal image showing heat loss  
around window of timber frame  
house



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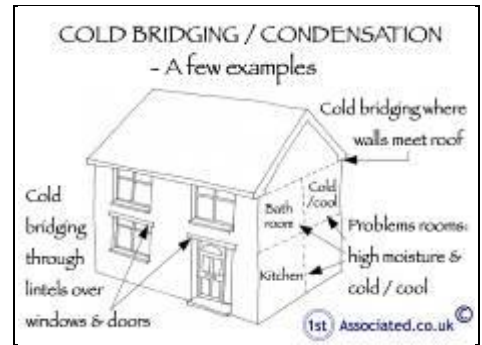
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## Condensation and Cold Bridging the problems explained

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.

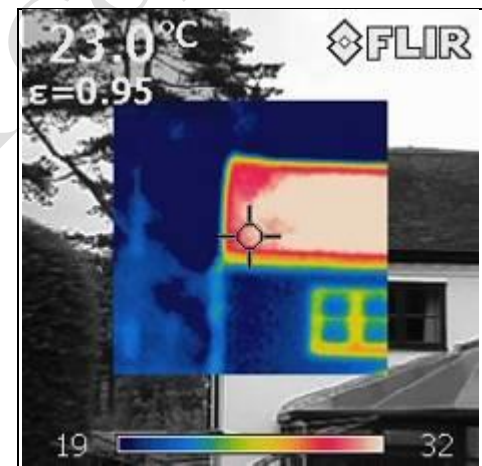


Cold bridging/condensation

### 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.



Cottage thermal image showing no roof insulation

### 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.

For example: Lounges and main bedrooms tend to be warmer than guest 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



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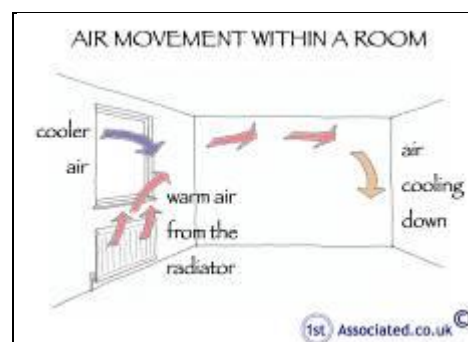
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4) Where it is colder but by no means very cold outside

## 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 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.

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## 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.

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.



Drying washing on radiators can cause condensation

## 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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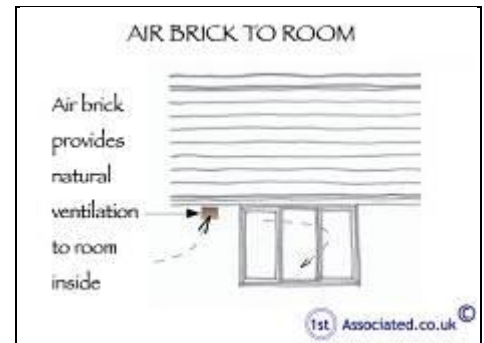
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## Things to remember about an air vent

If you are thinking about adding an air vent 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 vent 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).

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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