



# Building Survey Sample





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## A Introduction to the report

**This Report is produced by a RICS surveyor ('the surveyor'). If you decide not to act on the advice in this report, you do this at your own risk.**

The report aims to help you:

1. make a reasoned and informed decision on whether to go ahead with buying the property;
2. make an informed decision on what is a reasonable price to pay for the property;
3. take account of any repairs or replacements the property needs; and consider what further advice you should take before exchanging contracts (if the property is in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands), or before concluding an offer (if the property is in Scotland).
4. Any extra services the surveyor provides are not covered by these terms and conditions and must be covered by a separate contract.
5. Please read the 'Description of the Service' (at the back of this report) for full details of what is, and is not, inspected.
6. You should note that Surveyor feels that exact adherence to the RICS form is not always in the client's best interest. A form should not do the surveyor's thinking by too rigid an adherence to set paragraphs, instead the approach has been tailored to meet the client's needs, the report is meant to be the basis for discussion and understanding prior to exchange of contracts, and this aspect is considered to be a vital part of the service.



## **B About the Report**

**Date of Inspection**

**Property Address**

**Customers Name**

**Surveyor's name:**

**Surveyor's RICS number:**

**Related party disclosure:**

No relationships to vendors, or lenders, or agents, etc, as this is a report produced by an independent surveyor

**Weather conditions when the inspection took place:**

Dry and overcast after a period of unsettled weather and rain.

**The status of the property when the inspection took place:**

Occupied and furnished with all services connected.

## **B The surveyor's inspection**



The surveyor inspects the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, but does not force or open up the fabric. He also inspects the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating and drainage services that can be seen, but does not test them.

You are made aware in the report of certain risk areas relevant to the property that have not been fully investigated at this stage. You proceed to purchase in full knowledge of these risks. In circumstances where essential repairs or works by specialists are not carried out further deterioration and damage may occur with subsequent increased risk and increased costs.

Where further investigations have been recommended in this report, it is very important that you pursue these matters before proceeding with the purchase, since they may reveal the need for substantial expenditure. If you are informed about these costs before exchange of contracts, then at least you will have the opportunity to renegotiate the purchase price.

To help describe the condition of the home, the surveyor gives condition ratings to the main parts (or 'elements') of the building, garage, and some parts outside. Some elements can be made up of several different parts.

The condition ratings are described as follows.

## Condition rating Definitions

**3**

Defects which are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

**2**

Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be so serious or urgent.

### **1 MAINTENANCE ITEMS**

The property must be maintained in the normal way.



## Limitations

The surveyor will carry out only a visual inspection. This means that they do not take up carpets, floor coverings or floorboards, move furniture or remove the contents of cupboards. Also, they do not remove secured panels or undo electrical fittings.

The surveyor will inspect roofs, chimneys and other surfaces on the outside of the building from ground level, and, if necessary, from neighbouring public property and with the help of binoculars. They will inspect the roof structure from inside the roof space if there is access (although they will not move or lift insulation material, stored goods or other contents). They will examine floor surfaces and under-floor spaces so far as there is access to these (although the surveyor will not move or lift furniture, floor coverings or other contents). The surveyor is not able to assess the condition of the inside of any chimney, boiler or other flues. The surveyor will note in their report if they were not able to check any parts of the property that the inspection would normally cover. If the surveyor is concerned about these parts, the report tells you about any further investigations that are needed. The surveyor will not report on the cost of any work to put right defects or make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out. Some maintenance and repairs the surveyor suggests may be expensive.

I also refer you to the appendix to the rear of this report, which sets out provisions that you need to be aware of as a result of instructing the surveyor. If you are not content with these provisions then you should discuss issues with the surveyor prior to his signing of the inspection report.

Consequently, I am unable to comment fully upon the condition of these concealed areas and, therefore, you must accept the risk of unseen defects should you wish to proceed without further investigation.

This report reflects the condition of the various parts of the property at the time of my inspection. It is possible that defects could arise between the date of the survey and the date upon which you take occupation.

In some cases window and door frames built from unseasoned or defective timber deteriorate gradually from within the timber itself, even though fully protected on the surface and at the joints. In such circumstances, detection of rot may be impossible.

It should be appreciated that other infestations or defects may be present or may arise if those already discovered remain untreated in a proper manner.



It must be accepted that this report can only comment on what is visible and reasonably accessible to the surveyor at the time of inspection.

For the purposes of this report, only significant defects and deficiencies readily apparent from a visual inspection are reported. Compliance with regulations and adequacy of design, condition or efficiency can only be assessed as a result of research

### **The surveyor's overall opinion of the property:**

You are made aware in the report of certain risk areas relevant to the property which have not been fully investigated at this stage. You proceed to purchase in full knowledge of these risks. You are made aware that in circumstances where essential repairs or works by specialists are not carried out further deterioration and damage may occur with subsequent increased risk and increased costs.

Where further investigations have been recommended in this report, it is very important that you pursue these matters before proceeding with the purchase, since they may reveal the need for substantial expenditure. If you are apprised of these costs before exchange of contracts, then at least you will have the opportunity to renegotiate the purchase price.

### **Factors Materially Influencing Value**

The current housing market is atypical; there is a shortage of property owing to limited transactions or stock on offer. Whereas there is little market churn, in a property market generally considerably depressed by the recent banking and mortgage lending catastrophes. It could therefore be argued that there is potential volatility in investment at this time, and that the statement that "property values can fall as well as rise " has much greater relevance than would have been the case a few years ago. House prices have risen recently, but this is in a restricted market by comparison with just a few years ago. Values may be subject to short term volatility if more stock is on the market in the near future.

There is limited supply of local houses in the current market.



In general I do not wish to put you off the purchase, but the purpose of this report is to make you aware of the risks, and of my view that you may be paying too much for the property in the current market. This view may be further enhanced when further investigations are carried out as recommended elsewhere within this report.

### **Valuation Considerations:**

Using a surveyor's valuation approach, looking also at recent valuations of similar properties nearby, as well as comparable evidence from sales, or the tone of the marketing list, I feel that the sales price of £755,000 is at the top end of the likely range of values for a property of this age and type in this location, with a range of £735,000-£750,000. I value the property at £750,000, which takes into account the current market conditions. However a slightly lower figure is more acceptable in my view, and the closer to £735,000 the better. Your offer price is acceptable within the current market conditions where there is a narrow spectrum of properties available, with considerable weight of purchases with equity looking for a restricted number of better quality houses.

My review of the value which indicates that you are paying a slightly higher price than I would prefer, takes into account the configuration of the building of the plot, the proximity of a turning area to the front of the house even though this is on a private road, the sloping nature of the garden, and the fact that the garden is overlooked from the back by a block of flats. St Pauls Road access is also not to a high standard. However the location is good for Woking, with shops, schools, and other local amenities or services being nearby. The property is in a relatively good condition, and is close to the main railway station with excellent services to London or the south coast.

The view which has been given about the likely value of the house may alter when further investigations within this report are carried out. It is therefore important client and surveyor to liaise up to the point of commitment to purchase, and to share information following further investigations recommended within this report.



## Construction:

The property has been built in a traditional manner in conformance with modern building regulations. While I could not see all parts of the construction I can map out the likely construction for you.

The foundations and the ground floor comprises a concrete slab built onto a clay and sand sub soil. Above this is the external walls are constructed of cavity brick and block work. The roof above this is tile covered and has been constructed with the use of pre-fabricated trussed roofing components (I will refer to this later in this report). The cavity brick and block work will be held together with metal wall ties which help to brace the construction of the walls to make them strong. As originally constructed the house is unlikely to have cavity insulation in the walls.

Dampproofing would be by way of strip damp proof membranes to the inner and outer walls, that of the inner wall being tied in with a damp proof membrane below the upper layer of concrete floor. In addition windows and door frames generally have membranes to protect the timber elements from the high water content of the brickwork. (I refer to this detail later in the report)

The window and door apertures are likely to have either steel or concrete and steel lintels above them to support the brickwork. The ground floor is a solid construction, whereas the upper floor is suspended timber. The main floor joists will be hanging from the walls with composite timber boarding as opposed to floorboards being the main floor covering.

The internal partitions are a mixture of glass block, internal block work, and timber frame construction with plasterboard on top of the plaster skim over this. The ceilings are also plasterboard with a plaster skim.

The drainage system will be a separate system for rainwater and waste water from the house.

These services and central heating pipes electric cables etc run behind partitions below floors or are chased into the walls or the concrete floor.

While much of the construction was hidden from view, the description above is likely to be accurate but cannot be fully so. In particular the integrity of the interior of the cavity walls, or the hidden services cannot be confirmed



The original heating to the house is gas central heating with copper pipes leading to pressed steel radiators with control valves. The system in this house is a small bore system, with much narrower pipes than is often found in British houses. I will refer to this later in my report.

## **C Sections of the report for action Following the above definitions**

**3**

Defects which are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

**No Urgent Issues**

**2**



Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be so serious or urgent.

**Action:** NICEIC, NAPIT OR ELECSA registered electrician at to inspect the whole of the electrical circuitry to the house or external areas prior to exchange of contracts and to quote for any work which may be required to make it safe, or to modernise the system. At the same time you will need to consider the costs of re-decoration and repairs preferably with a decorator or builder.

**Action:** CORGI registered engineer to inspect the whole of the heating system including hot water and associated appliances and to confirm that the system is operating satisfactorily and can be serviced with ease.

## 1 MAINTENANCE ITEMS

The property must be maintained in the normal way.

- Monitor the roof tiles and the moss growing on the roof from time to time but when you are in occupation. If necessary consider removing the moss from the main house is roofing, meanwhile the moss to parts of the garage block roof should be removed.
- The gutters and down pipes and associated drains should be inspected at least once a year and accumulated leaves, silt and other debris be removed to prevent blockages.
- The external woodwork will need regular redecoration, typically on a 3-5 yearly cycle depending on the quality of paint or stain coatings, exposure factors, and condition of the surfaces beneath.
- Where visible the electrical wiring in the loft is of a PVC sheathed type. In places it has been buried beneath loft insulation. This can cause overheating of the wires, which could lead to fires. All covered cables must be repositioned on top of the insulation.
- Inspect the areas below baths and showers from time to time to check for any problems due to water leakage or condensation.



- Strengthen the balustrading to the top of the staircase when you are in occupation
- Improve the insulation to the tanks in the loft when you are in occupation.
- Monitor the water content of the garden when you are in occupation. If necessary you should consider consulting with a ground work specialist, or a soil engineer before carrying out any remedial work.
- There is no door between the living accommodation and the conservatory. A door should be provided to improve such matters as security and thermal insulation.

## D About the property

All descriptions in this report are as if viewing the property from the front. Please also see the diagram and the glossary of terms to the rear of this report.

<b>Type of property:</b>
The property is a two storey traditional detached house.
Approximate year the property was built: 1999

### Accommodation:

Floor	Living rooms	Bedrooms	Bath or shower	Separate toilet	Kitchen	Utility room	Store
Ground	3			1	1	1	
First		4	3				



### **Movement within the property**

Minor movement consistent with shrinkage of plaster or low-level movement of the property.

### **Location**

The property is in a private residential area reasonably close to shops schools to public transport and to other local amenities or services.

### **Access**

This is by way of a private roadway which in turn leads to a part made up Lane (Saint Pauls Road) and to a public road.

**Legal:** legal advisor to confirm the that the arrangements for access maintenance and repair wayleaves easements etc along Saint Pauls Road and the private roadway (The Close) immediately serving the house are satisfactory.

### **Leasehold**

I cannot generally value a leasehold house until your legal advisor confirms the details. Generally an additional fee will be required. Houses are assumed to be Freehold. Your Legal Advisor should check that these assumptions are correct. If not then the valuation should be referred back to me for further consideration prior to exchange of contracts.

## **D Services (considered in more detail later in this report)**

### **Drainage**

#### **Foul Drainage**



The property is believed to be connected to the main sewer

### **Gas**

Gas is connected and the meter is in a box outside the house.

### **Electricity**

Electricity is connected and the meter is in a box outside the house.

### **Water**

There is a mains water connection and the stop cock is in the pavement.

## **E Outside of the property**

### **E1 Chimney Stacks**

Chimney stacks have been inspected from ground level only with the aid of binoculars, within the limitations of the site area and ground levels. The stability and condition of chimney stacks, flashings and chimney pots etc, can only be ascertained by close inspection from long extension ladders. Such an inspection may reveal concealed defects, possibly instability. Chimney stacks can be weakened by storms and are prone to frost attack. Repairs can be necessary periodically as part of normal maintenance.

The chimney is of brick construction, with lead flashing (please see the glossary of building terms used in this report as set out under the heading ' definitions ' to the rear). Please also note that all directions in this report are given as if viewing the house from the front. For example, the garage block is to the left of the house as is the main garden.

The chimney is in satisfactory condition allowing for normal weathering over the lifetime of the building. The chimney serves no useful purpose for use with real fires, and is largely decorative, there is no chimney breast within the property but the brick structure largely outside a bond to the right-hand wall, with a small tiled section towards the base, lead flashing where the chimney abuts the roof, and a single pot on the top held in position by cement.



Due to the chimney position, scaffolding will be required for upper level work in due course when maintenance and repair is carried out to the house in the future.

## **E2 Roof coverings**

### **Roof Structure**

The roof is formed of factory made timber trusses supporting the coverings. A trusted roof consists of prefabricated timber elements are held together by metal plates. There is no external or internal evidence to indicate any weakness in the timbers making up the roof structure. There are no major distortions to indicate significant weakness in the roof structure.

Moss growth was observed on the main house roof surfaces but this does not need to be removed at present, as it is not causing any particular damage to the surface. However if the moss continues to grow and covers the overlap of the tiles to a significant extent then as a matter of maintenance the moss should be carefully removed, as it tends to retain moisture, which can cause damage to the roof coverings.

Parts of the similarly constructed pitched and tiled roofing to the garage block have a more severe covering of moss. You should consider removing this when you were in occupation. Care will have to be taken to ensure that moss does not get into the drainage system by blocking off the downpipes to the gutters with this work is carried out.

There is lichen growing on the tiles to the house and the garage, which is unlikely to be of any concern. It is not worth removing.

**Maintenance:** monitor the roof tiles and the moss growing on the roof from time to time but when you are in occupation. If necessary consider removing the moss from the main house is roofing, meanwhile the moss to parts of the garage block roof should be removed.

The roof slopes are covered with factory made tiles, which are in satisfactory condition. One or two tiles have slightly moved out of position but the have not slipped out of place. There is no need to any immediate maintenance or repair.

There are no verge clips (metal restraining devices) at the roof edges. The manufacturers of most roof tiles recommend that verge clips should be installed to help prevent the tiles becoming loose in strong winds.



There is no evidence of significant cracking or loosening of the verge mortar or roof tiles, but the verges should be checked regularly and repointed if necessary.

At the underneath of some sections of the roof there is a lining known as an 'undercloak'. Up until 1990 it was common for such material to be of asbestos cement board. Although the material generally was not used after 1990, some contractors kept stocks of older asbestos-based materials and these were sometimes used on properties after 1990. On balance it is unlikely that the under cloak to the roof of the house is as of asbestos-based cement material, however when major works are carried out to the roof in the future, it would be sensible to ask a registered asbestos contractor to take a small sample of the material and to test it in a laboratory prior to major works being carried out. If for any reason the under cloak should be damaged by weather etc in the future, I also recommend that the test is carried out. I have on occasion found roofing materials of this type for a building of this age to contain small amounts of white asbestos.

The growth of lichen on roof tiles is sometimes indicative of the use of tiles with asbestos content.

**Surveyors comment:** the risk of asbestos-based materials in this house is relatively low. Even such materials are present they will be unlikely to be of any concern to the occupier, particularly to the exterior of the house, provided they are not broken or breaking up, drilled or sanded. As it is worth being cautious even for a house of this age and time where one would not normally expect to find any asbestos-based materials.

The property has roofing felt as is visible within the loft space.. This stops water from getting into the roof space especially during windy weather. The felt was in a reasonable condition during my inspection. Where the roof tiles join together with other parts of the building structure, the house has been provided with lead flashing. This was in a satisfactory condition during my inspection.

The valleys at the intersections of the roof slopes are not lined with lead, as is the case with many houses. Instead the valleys are bridged by special tiles with the roofing felt below. These areas were generally in a satisfactory condition during my inspection.

### **E3 Rainwater pipes and Gutters**

Defective rainwater goods are a very common cause of dampness, which can lead to deterioration in building fabric and the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are, therefore, essential if serious problems such as dry rot are to be avoided.



It was not raining at the time of inspection. Therefore, the water tightness of the joints of the rainwater goods could not be checked. The gutters and downpipes should be observed during rain and any leaking joints resealed or replaced as necessary.

The gutters and downpipes comprise modern plastic sections, which appear to be in serviceable condition.

Plastic gutters are relatively maintenance free but do require regular cleaning out and periodic resealing of their joints. Downpipes need to be checked regularly to ensure that the joints have not come apart.

**Maintenance:** The gutters and down pipes and associated drains should be inspected at least once a year and accumulated leaves, silt and other debris be removed to prevent blockages.

#### **E4 Main Walls**

The foundations have not been exposed. Whilst there is a risk of unseen defects, there are no above ground signs of defective foundations.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the subsoil in this district is predominantly clay. Clay sub-soils are susceptible to shrinkage during periods of extremely dry weather, which can effect building foundations. The risk of foundation damage increases significantly when trees or shrubs are planted near buildings. As a general policy, it is recommended that no shrubs or trees with high water demand be planted close to any buildings. It should be ensured that your buildings insurance policy includes adequate cover for subsidence and heave damage.

**Legal:** legal advisor to ensure that the building is capable of being insured via a buildings insurance policy which includes adequate cover for subsidence and heave or damage to drains, to foundations owing to the action of plants or trees nearby.

I will refer to the grounds later in this report, but I noticed that there were large pine trees to the rear of the house on land forming part of a neighbouring property. Damage to drains by tree roots or foundations is common in this area, and the trees are likely to be protected by the local authority as a conservation measure.

The property is located in a Conservation Area and, therefore, the Local Authority should be consulted before any lopping or pruning of trees is carried out.



My inspection of the external surfaces of the main walls was made from ground level with the aid of binoculars, a spirit level and a standard surveyor's ladder. The inspection was also facilitated via readily accessible windows. The main walls are in satisfactory structural condition, with no signs of significant cracking, settlement or other structural movement in the property.

For the time being at the pointing which is the cement between the bricks that bonds them together is in a reasonable condition. When repointing is carried out it is essential that the joints are raked out sufficiently, usually to a depth of not less than 20mm, so that the new mortar is given sufficient key. Failure to do this can result in the new pointing simply cracking and falling out over a relatively short timescale. The new mortar should not be too weak, but conversely it should not be stronger than the bricks to which it is applied. A common misconception is that mortar requires a large proportion of cement in the mix, but too rich a cement content can cause serious problems. This work should only be entrusted to an experienced bricklayer.

The external fillings around window and door frames are deteriorating. This can allow water to penetrate, with a risk of dampness and decay to timbers and internal plaster. Raking out and replacement with a flexible mastic is recommended. The mastic, however, must be of a type suitable for this specific purpose, and normally should not be applied along the top edge of the frame as this can increase the risk of water retention

**Maintenance:** check the window and door frames when you are in occupation and improve the seal between the frames and the brickwork.

While there is currently no evidence of any serious damage, I was not particularly content with the standard of finish to the windows and doors in this house. It was apparent that many had not even given an adequate seal externally, and although there was no evidence of damage or water penetration this appears to have been an oversight during the construction process. Correcting this error should be a relatively simple matter. However I am unsure as to the extent of lack of attention to detail during the window installation process. Windows and doors in the brickwork should be protected at the top and to the sides and bottom by a damp proof membrane. It is possible that this is lacking also within the subject house, which may mean that in due course the integrity of the windows will be affected. This could take a long time, and as I said before the house is free from any major problems in this respect in terms of associated damage at the moment

It has not been possible to inspect the ties holding together the inner and outer leaves of the cavity walls. Metal wall ties can suffer gradual corrosion with time. With some

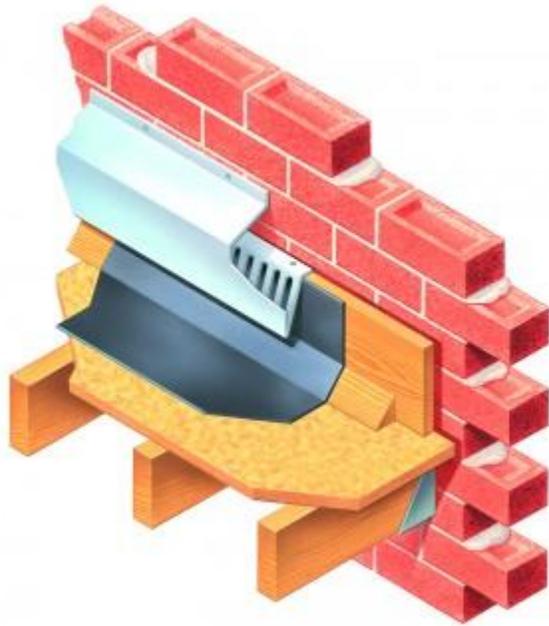


types of ties, this corrosion is sometimes accompanied by rust expansion, causing horizontal cracks to appear at intervals in the external wall surfaces.

With ties of the 'butterfly wire' type, such evidence of failure may not be evident, and the absence of cracks in the mortar joints is not, therefore, a guarantee that the ties are in good condition.

At the time of inspection, there was no evidence of such problems occurring. The risk of wall tie failure is considered low, and no further action is necessary.

When an extension/conservatory is added to existing cavity walls, it is very important to ensure that a cavity tray is fitted within the cavity of the original part of the building, above the line of the extension roof. This is to ensure that any water running down the cavity is prevented from passing into the internal areas of the building. It is good practice to include weep holes (vertical slots in the perpendicular joints of the brickwork) immediately above the line of the cavity tray, to allow any water to escape.



The conservatory which is at the back of the house has led a flashing between the roof to the structure and the main walls. I found no particular problems with this at the time of my inspection, but point out that this is not the best building construction Solution.



Walls require a damp proof course, to prevent moisture travelling up through the structure, which can lead to internal dampness, perished plaster, spoilt decorations and rot in skirting boards and other timbers.

Damp can penetrate if there is no damp proof course, or if the damp proof membrane in the flooring is not properly bonded to the wall damp proof course at the edges.

A modern strip damp proof course is visible in the external walls at an adequate height above ground level.

The recommended minimum height for a damp proof course is 150mm above external ground level. The reason for this gap is to prevent soil etc building up and bridging the damp proof course, and to minimise the risk of dampness caused by rain splashing up from the adjacent surfaces.

In places the damp proof course entirely at an ideal height above the adjoining ground, but as there was no evidence of any dampness issues to the house this does not cause me concern.

### **E5 Windows/E6 Outside Doors**

The joinery was carefully inspected where readily accessible.

The timber windows, doors and external joinery generally were inspected externally from ground level and internally by opening accessible windows.

The windows are mainly double glazed softwood casement units. Although there are some small elements of double glazed plastic covered metal windows to the rear of the house and used in the construction of the conservatory

With regard to the softwood external joinery, generally the standard is reasonably good, although some redecoration will be required in the near future.

Poorly seasoned timber is frequently used in modern joinery and it is essential that the woodwork be well maintained, otherwise rot and decay can develop, both internally and externally. The internal parts of external doors and windows are susceptible to damage by condensation. Any internal or external shrinkage gaps and splits should be filled prior to redecorating and the opening frames and hinges should be eased.



There were no signs of condensation between the double glazing panes at the time of inspection. It should be noted, however, that double glazing can be prone to this problem, which is caused by failure of the hermetic seals at the edges of the panes of glass. The seals will deteriorate, eventually causing unsightly condensation between the panes. When this happens, there is no remedy other than to replace the affected double glazed panes.

If you choose to replace windows in the future then you should ensure that they are installed by a contractor registered with FENSA. This is a government approved trade association whose members can self-certify that their installations meet the standards of the building regulations.

Parts of the external decorations are beginning to show signs of breakdown, particularly at the joints of the timber sections. Redecoration is recommended, in the next 1 to 2 years including thorough preparation which should include removal of all loose and flaking paint, filling of cracks and priming bare surfaces prior to the application of undercoat and gloss coats.

**Maintenance:** The external woodwork will need regular redecoration, typically on a 3-5 yearly cycle depending on the quality of paint or stain coatings, exposure factors, and condition of the surfaces beneath.

## **E 7 Conservatory and Porches**

There is a substantial PVC/metal conservatory built on a concrete floor and base with sections of supporting brick or block work to low level. The conservatory is double glazed.

**Legal:** Conservatories may require approval from the local council under the building regulation and planning regulations. You should ask your legal advisor if these permissions were obtained (see section I). If not, the local council may ask you to remove or alter the conservatory.

The property is a listed building and/or in a conservation area and the conservatory may have required permission from the local council before the work was done. You should ask your legal adviser whether this permission was obtained (see section I). If not, the local council may ask you to remove or alter the conservatory.



**Legal:** You should ask your legal advisor if the conservatory has a transferable guarantee or a warranty from the installer (see section I).

The general construction of the conservatory was found to be satisfactory, although it is open to the kitchen without a separating door. Ideally there should be a door between the conservatory and the main house. The main walls of the original house have not been altered to incorporate the conservatory. I noted that the conservatory has under floor heating, which has been recently installed. The whole of the electrical system to the house should have been certified by a suitably qualified electrical engineer after this installation was made. I will refer to this data in the report.

I found some minor elements of wear and tear externally to the glass and plastic framework of the conservatory but these were not significant in nature.

### **E8 Other joinery and finishes**

The external decorations are beginning to show signs of breakdown, particularly at the joints of the timber sections. Redecoration is recommended in the next 1 to 2 years, including thorough preparation which should include removal of all loose and flaking paint, filling of cracks and priming bare surfaces prior to the application of undercoat and gloss coats.

**Maintenance:** The external woodwork will need regular redecoration, typically on a 3-5 yearly cycle depending on the quality of paint or stain coatings, exposure factors, and condition of the surfaces beneath. Redecoration is recommended in the next 1 to 2 years

The external joinery includes: soffits/bargeboards/timber boarding. These are made of a mixture of timber and PVC. The timber surfaces are a mixture of painted and stained finishes. In general the condition is reasonable for the age and type of the house

To redecorate external surfaces safely, contractors will have to use appropriate access equipment (e.g. scaffolding, hydraulic platforms, etc.). This can increase the cost of the work.

### **E9 Other**

No other comments



## F Inside the property

### F1 Roof Structure

#### Roof Spaces

Access to the main roof space is from a hatch above the landing.

Each and every timber has not been inspected in the manner of a Timber Specialist report. Timbers were inspected on a random basis only. Inspection of the timbers, especially ceiling joists was limited by any stored goods, insulation or boarding. Timbers inspected on a random basis indicated no evidence of active infestation. We cannot confirm freedom from defects in concealed areas. We would draw your attention to further comments under the 'Timber Defects' heading later within this report.

Modern Timber Trusses – Internally, the roof framework comprises modern timber trusses. These are factory made and the services of a structural engineer would be necessary in order to confirm their adequacy for load and span involved. From what can be seen the structure is adequately braced and tied, free from significant distortion and would appear adequate to carry present imposed loads to the supporting walls. Such roofing has the following advantages:

- Roof structures are erected quickly.
- Trusses are generally spaced at 600mm centres
- giving economy in the use of timber.
- Erection procedure is simple and repetitive,
- requiring only a minimum of skilled labour.
- Architects and developers have a free rein in
- forming economic roofscapes.
- Standard designs require only external walls to be
- load-bearing, thereby eliminating intermediate
- supports.

Internally, as stated above I noted that the roof framework comprises modern timber trusses. These are factory made and the services of a structural engineer would be necessary in order to confirm their adequacy for load and span involved. From what can



be seen the structure is adequately upright and free from significant distortion, but would be considered inadequately braced and tied by modern Building Regulation standards. This is because the building lacks metal restraint strapping to the end flank and party walls, ideally installed in accordance with current recommendations. The structure would, however, appear adequate to carry presently imposed vertical loads to the supporting walls. This is a typical comment in a house of this age and type. Further strengthening would be ideal but is not absolutely necessary in my view, as it has been strongly constructed.

The loft space should be used for the storage of lightweight items only.

There was no evidence of significant distortion in the roof timbers. If, however, any alteration in the load pattern or structure is contemplated, care and some additional strengthening may be needed. Advice from a structural engineer should be obtained before such work is contemplated. It should be noted that the roof provides some bracing to the gable end (the triangular top of the roof where it joins the front wall), and to the external chimney structure. Alteration without the structural advice could undermine the integrity of the building.

I understand that you are interested in expanding the space within the house into the loft. I should advise you that this is a major operation in the roof of this type of construction, and any designer should comply with modern building regulations, which may in turn necessitate considerable alteration to the existing structure.

No comment can be made on the concealed roof timbers. It is possible that these may have suffered decay, or been weakened from attack by woodboring beetle.

It is now standard practice to insulate lofts in order to conserve energy and reduce heating costs. With the increase in insulation it has become necessary to reduce the risk of condensation problems by ventilating roof spaces. I consider that the roofing is adequately ventilated

The undersides of the roof slopes have been lined with felt in order to provide a secondary defence against water penetration. The underfelt is in satisfactory condition where visible.

**Maintenance:** Where visible the electrical wiring in the loft is of a PVC sheathed type. In places it has been buried beneath loft insulation. This can cause overheating of the wires, which could lead to fires. All covered cables must be repositioned on top of the insulation.



### **F2 Ceilings:**

The ceilings are made of modern plasterboard and apart from some minor shrinkage cracks are in a good condition with no need for repairs.

### **F3 Walls and Partitions**

The walls and partitions have been inspected within the rooms and no opening up has been undertaken. The precise composition of the wall structures, linings and finishings cannot be ascertained without damage being caused.

The condition of the plasterwork is reasonable for its age.

The walls have been partially lined with plasterboard for example to the kitchen and the living room on the garden side, often referred to as 'dry lining'. This is a popular method of finishing off the internal surfaces of walls as it saves on costs and reduces the drying out period.

Dry lining is where plasterboard sheets are fixed to either timber battens or dabs of plaster and then decorated over. This means that there is a gap between the plasterboard and the walls. Because of this gap, it is difficult to screw directly into the walls, although a range of proprietary fixing products can be found in DIY stores. Accordingly, it is not recommended that heavy units be fixed directly to the walls, e.g. bookshelves. Rather, it is recommended that heavy items be placed on freestanding units such as bookcases and fixings to the wall be made only to prevent overturning.

The internal walls and partitions are made of bricks or blocks/timber framework that have been plastered either side. There is a small element of glass brickwork to the living room. I was generally satisfied with the condition of the internal walls to the house.

### **F4 Floors**

The laminated floor or fixed carpet coverings could not be raised, and I was unable to see all areas of the construction. It should be noted that there are practical limitations on the inspection of floors, if bare or covered by fitted coverings and furniture. Where it is possible to raise floorboards, this can only be done on a random basis and inevitably there are areas which cannot be seen. Floorboards have not been lifted where this could cause damage, or where the vendor's permission has not been given. In cases where floorboards could not be lifted, only a general comment can be made and complete assurance cannot be given that there are no concealed defects.



The risk must be accepted that concealed defects may exist beneath the floor coverings.

The ground floor is of solid construction. The ground floor is generally reasonably firm and level. It would appear to be capable of bearing normal domestic loads.

The upper flooring is of suspended timber construction with timber floor joists, and composite boarding above this. Such composite boarding can be more easily damaged by water spillage than traditional timber floorboards. Fitted finishes prevented direct visual examination of the floor surfaces. However, they are generally firm and level with no undue deflection or springiness noted.

Ceramic tiles have been laid in the bathrooms above the timber floors. These tiles are currently in a sound condition but it must be recognised that they are inherently brittle and can become cracked when laid on timber flooring, due to the natural springiness of the flooring.

The flooring beneath the baths or showers could not be inspected as this would involve damaging investigations which are beyond the scope of a normal survey. I found no evidence of any decay, but further investigations from time to time are advisable when you are in occupation.

**Maintenance** inspect the areas below baths and showers from time to time to check for any problems due to water leakage or condensation.

At the time of inspection there was no evidence of damp related damage to decorations or skirtings. It cannot be categorically stated, however, that no defects exist in hidden parts of the structure and, therefore, the risk must be accepted that such defects may exist.

Various parts of the house were tested using an electronic test meter, and no significant damp areas were found throughout the building.

### **Penetrating Damp**

Chimneys can become damp from rainwater soaking down through the masonry, or due to condensation. Walls beneath windows can become damp, because of rainwater run off from the glazing. I have already mentioned the need for the seal between the windows and a brickwork to be improved in the future.



## **Condensation/Mould**

There is no evidence of some condensation within the property in the form of black spot mildew.

Lack of condensation in a building cannot be guaranteed when there is a change of ownership. This depends on the person of use and heating/ventilation in the building for the new occupier. The control of condensation involves maintaining surface temperatures above the dew point (the humidity related temperature at which water vapour turns into moisture), and the provision of adequate thermal insulation and proper ventilation. Unfortunately, the modern emphasis on draught proofing reduces ventilation in dwellings, increasing the risk of condensation. The extent of condensation in a dwelling will depend, not only on its orientation and construction, but on variable factors such as weather conditions, lifestyle, and how the property is heated and ventilated. Adequate heating and ventilation will help to keep condensation to a minimum. Condensation is difficult to totally cure and depends on a balance of ventilation, insulation and heating.

Improvements are needed to the ventilation arrangements in this property, which could be achieved by mechanical extract ventilation, particularly to those areas where excessive humidity is likely to be created, such as bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms. Passive ventilation fitted to window frames can help to disperse humidity, but additional measures may prove necessary. Adequate heating and ventilation will help to keep condensation to a minimum.

The control of condensation can be significantly improved by installing extractor ventilators in bathroom and kitchen areas, with ducts arranged to disperse the humid air to an external position. This will help to remove water vapour at source. The extractors should be operated whenever these rooms are in use.

Some of the extractors in the house may not be operating correctly at present, and I refer to electrical checks later in the report.

## **Timber Defects**

There is no evidence of timber decay in the accessible timbers. All reasonable care has been taken, but hidden decay may be present in parts of the structure which are inaccessible.



There is no evidence of wood boring beetle infestation in the accessible timbers. Whilst all reasonable care has been taken, hidden infestation may be present in parts of the structure which are inaccessible.

#### **F5 Fireplaces Chimney Breasts and Flues**

Not applicable

#### **F6 Built in Fittings and appliances**

The kitchen and bathrooms are fitted with built-in fittings that will add to the attractions of the home.

Built-in fittings can conceal a variety of problems that are only revealed when they are removed for repair

#### **F7 Joinery and wood work/Decoration**

The glazed doors to the living room do not appear to contain safety glass. There is a risk of injury if this is of concern to you then it is recommended that you instruct a glazier to inspect and quote for any necessary replacement with safety glass to comply with current glazing safety standards.

The provision of general storage cupboards is appropriate to the scale of the dwelling.

The joinery items consist of: doors/door frames/staircases/bannisters/handrails. These are made of natural wood. The joinery was in reasonable condition during the inspection.

Over time, the wood to staircases can shrink and split loosening the various joints causing the stairs to creak when used.

Around the edge of the landing, vertical pieces of wood (called balusters or spindles) support the handrail. The handrail rocked from side to side when I gently pushed from the side. This is not yet a safety hazard likely to collapse if someone leant or fell against it, but it will need strengthening when you are in occupation

**Maintenance:** strengthen the balustrading to the top of the staircase when you are in occupation



## **F8 Bathroom fittings**

The bathroom fittings were not exhaustively tested but were found to be in reasonable condition at the time of inspection

## **F9 Other:**

### Kitchen Units

No inspection has been made of built-in appliances. If the condition of these is important to your purchase, then they must be fully serviced and tested by an appropriate engineer before exchange of contracts.

It should be remembered that I have not taken out any of the kitchen appliances and cannot verify the adequacy of connections. Leaks can occur at any time between the date of survey and your taking occupation. If leaks are found when you take up occupation, you should not assume that they were visible, accessible, or indeed in existence at the time of survey. Any such leaks should be promptly rectified. Removal of appliances can reveal or cause defects in plasterwork and services. This must be accepted when proceeding with your purchase.

The kitchen is provided with a satisfactory range of units, cupboards and worktops.

## **G Services**

**Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. As a result only the visible parts of the available services can be inspected. The surveyor does not carry out specialist tests. The visual inspection does not assess the services to make sure they work properly and efficiently and meet modern standards.**

It is impossible to fully assess the condition of an electrical installation on the basis of a visual inspection only. There are many factors relating to the adequacy of electrical installations which can only be identified by a test which covers matters relating to resistance, impedance and current, etc.

## **G1 Electricity**



This is relatively modern house and I consider that the electrical installation would have been installed in accordance with the building regulations which applied at the time of construction. However the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend that electrical installations should be tested every 10 years. This means that the house is due for an inspection (which should include a certification from the contractor). In addition there have been some alterations to the property with the installation of the conservatory which has electrical power. This work would have required certification.

RCCB The installation is fitted with a Residual Current Circuit Breaker. This is a modern system designed to protect the users from electric shock. RCCB's are extremely sensitive and consequently occasional tripping of switches will occur, effectively shutting down the affected circuit. It can often result when a light bulb fails, or it may be the result of a defective appliance such as a washing machine or refrigerator. When this happens, the 'trip-switch' has to be reset. If this occurs with any frequency, an electrician should be instructed to investigate.

It is possible that the existing owners have some recent testing and certification of the changes to the electrical wiring in the house. I am generally reluctant to accept certification from vendors, and in addition I recommend certain qualifications from the person inspecting the electrical circuitry.

Where testing or indeed any work is carried out to the electrical installation, I recommend that you use a contractor who is affiliated to NICEIC, NAPIT OR ELECSA regulatory bodies.

I found no particular fault with the electrical circuitry during my superficial inspection. However electrical faults in buildings are a common source of fire or electrocution, particularly where alterations have occurred. Cost of works can be high especially as decorations can be disturbed by the work. Institute of Electrical Engineers at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors recommend that electrical systems are inspected and tested on change of occupancy. If you want to be reassured, you should ask an appropriately qualified person to inspect the electrical system now.

**Action:** NICEIC, NAPIT OR ELECSA registered electrician at to inspect the whole of the electrical circuitry to the house or external areas prior to exchange of contracts and to quote for any work which may be required to make it safe, or to modernise the system. At the same time you will need to consider the costs of re-decoration and repairs preferably with a decorator or builder.

## **G2 Gas**



The property has a mains gas supply.

A test of the gas installation, fittings and pipework etc, has not been carried out. If advice is required with regard to the condition, age, and safety of fittings and pipework, then an inspection should be undertaken by a qualified Gas Engineer. Any works required could necessitate associated repair works to plaster and decorations.

In a property of this age the pipework to the gas installation is not likely to be suspect.

However it is sensible for most properties that the whole installation should be tested annually. This should be carried out by a CORGI registered engineer. The system should, therefore, be fully tested if there is no recent test certificate.

### **G3 Water:**

Every property with a mains water supply requires both internal and external stopcocks for proper control of the incoming water supply. It is important to know the position of the stopcocks so that the water can be turned off in an emergency and when carrying out alterations to the plumbing system. They should be checked regularly to ensure that they open and close properly. All occupants of the house should be aware of the stopcock locations.

The external stopcock is situated on the pavement outside. There are various internal stopcocks and you should familiarise yourself with their position when you are in occupation.

The cold water storage and expansion tanks are located in the loft. They are modern plastic units.

The insulation jacket prevented a full inspection, but the cold water tank appears properly covered and serviceable with no evidence of leakage or other defect. While both the tanks were fitted in with a cover and insulation, I consider that would be sensible to improve the insulation when you are in occupation.

**Maintenance:** improve the insulation to the tanks in the loft when you are in occupation.

### **G4/G5 Heating**

#### **Central heating and Hot water Systems**



Domestic hot water is provided by a Baxi (trade name) boiler and by hot water cylinders. This is a modern appliance, which was operating satisfactorily at the time of inspection.

Hot water is also provided via a hot water cylinder located upstairs. Inspection of the cylinder was limited due to the insulation, enclosure and store goods etc. However, no significant leakage was noted at the time of inspection. The internal condition is unknown and can only be confirmed by removal. Internal build-up of limescale can limit life span and efficiency; tanks do have a limited life span and can require renewal fairly frequently, especially in hard water areas.

The output of hot water from this type of boiler can vary with changes in water pressure and demand. When hot water is needed, it can only be supplied at the speed at which the boiler can heat the water. Accordingly, filling of baths can take a long time in comparison with a conventional system where stored hot water can be drawn off from a hot water cylinder.

Modern boilers are more reliable than those installed in the early 1990's. Nevertheless, combination boilers are prone to sudden malfunction. A main cause of this is failure of the printed circuit board (PCB), which governs the operation of the boiler. When the PCB fails, the boiler can no longer provide hot water or central heating. Whilst replacement of the PCB is straightforward, diagnosis of its failure is often overlooked by some heating engineers.

There was a reasonable flow of hot water through the taps to the sanitary appliances. The water was hot at the time of inspection.

Space heating is provided by pressed steel water filled radiators, and by electric underfloor heating in the conservatory..

The boiler is connected to the radiators by small bore copper pipework.

The radiators, visible pipework and valves appear satisfactory with no significant corrosion or leakage noted. The thermostatic radiator valves have not been tested. It should be noted that these can be temperamental and are not always fully effective.

During the survey the boiler was activated and within a reasonable period of time the radiators warmed up.

Heating installations should be installed and serviced regularly (usually every year) by an appropriately qualified person who is registered under the government-approved



competent person scheme. The competent person will leave appropriate documentation with the homeowner that identifies the type and extent of the work done. This should include all heating systems and appliances, for example, boilers, individual room heaters, all open fires, etc. Heating systems and appliances that have not been checked may be a safety hazard.

It is recommended that service records be obtained and if the boiler has not been serviced recently a CORGI heating engineer specialising in gas fired boiler systems should be instructed to undertake a full service, including checking the ventilation to the boiler and checking the flues/ventilation as found to be necessary. The whole of the system should be checked including pipes, radiators, tanks and containment vessels as well as electrical components and circuitry.

Balanced flue heating appliances discharge their combustion gases and get their fresh air through the same flue terminal. This usually goes through the wall close to the appliance but the flue to some modern types can be a considerable distance away. Sometimes called room sealed, these are safer than open flue appliances but to work efficiently and safely, the flue terminal must be properly located. The flue to this appliance discharges at right angles to the boiler and is immediately above the glass to the conservatory.

There are two aspects of this system which I do not particularly like. I have to declare that surveyors are not experts in heating systems. The first is the age and make of the boiler. Not all BAXI boilers are a problem, and some of the latest units are of very high quality. However this company changed ownership at about the time of the building of this house, and at that time this make of boiler was not particularly known for its reliability.

In addition there is a small bore heating system throughout the house. This means that the copper pipes serving the radiators are approximately half the size of more conventional systems. They are therefore more likely to be prone to problems of blockages or furring up, this is especially true of a hard water area like Woking. It also seems to be general knowledge that the house next door has had many problems with the system. Therefore I think it is expedient to have the system checked prior to exchange of contracts possibly by an independent CORGI registered engineer. You might choose to rely on the existing heating contractor, especially as there has been a recent service.

This system is complex and it would be possible to write another report and to spend several hours investigating the system to fully understand it. However the two issues raised above make me feel that it is better to be cautious before you buy.



**Action:** CORGI registered engineer to inspect the whole of the heating system including hot water and associated appliances and to confirm that the system is operating satisfactorily and can be serviced with ease.

I noted that the Energy Efficiency Rating in the Energy Performance on the sales particulars from the estate agent. I was surprised to notice that the efficiency was relatively low. I think that this may well be due in part to the installation of the industrial chilling and air circulation/filtering system to the house. While there should be reasonable cross ventilation to the upper parts of the house when the windows are opened up front and bank it is clear that the building has suffered from heat build up at the upper levels. This is the reason for the plant and machinery being installed. Similar comments apply to the Sanyo installation in the house as I make for the gas boiler. A competent engineer should have recently maintained the system, and if they have not then you should obtain an independent check before exchange of contracts.

The unit is installed externally with new wiring to the property. This is another reason why there should be a fresh certification of the electrical system, because we do not know exactly when these additions to the existing systems in the house were made. When the conservatory was installed and when the air handling plant was installed at both times there should have been a fresh electrical certification. I consider that there have been too many changes to rely on these alone, and you should seek your own fresh inspection before exchange of contracts. When the air handling plant is checked it should be confirmed whether or not the system is viable for filtering air as opposed to chilling it alone, and if that is the case, the gas heating engineer should confirm that there is no detrimental effect on the central heating system or controls

## **G6 Drainage**

I was unable to see the underground drainage system, but for house of this age and type there should be a separate rainwater and foul water system. There was limited inspection facility for the drainage system. I saw no particular problems with the system at the time of my inspection.

The absence of any obvious problems within the chambers does not necessarily mean that the concealed parts are free from defect. In the absence of a full inspection by a drainage specialist, you must accept the risk of such defects existing.

The drainage system passes over a private roadway. I'm not sure if the system connects immediately to the main sewer. The drain from this property possibly joins with those



from the neighbouring homes before it connects to the main sewer. This combined drain is called a private sewer. Because all the dwellings were built after 1937, the owners of the homes are jointly responsible for the maintenance of this private sewer. You should ask your legal adviser to check this (see section I).

**Legal:** your legal advisors should make enquiries about the status of the drainage system to this house particularly where it may run below a private roadway. I repeat the need for there to be insurance cover for damage to drains or foundations.

**Surveyors comment:** the drains ran to the front of the house, and the large trees which could damage the drains are to the rear of the property. While this may be small it is essential to obtain insurance cover. The insurers will generally pay for the effect of damage to drains owing to trees etc, but will not pay for the cause of the fault, for example work to the trees.

### **Rainwater Drainage**

Without extensive exposure I cannot identify the system. Nevertheless there were no signs of flooding

## **H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)**

### **H1 Garage**

I could not inspect the interior of the garage because it was locked and I was not provided with keys. The exterior of the building appeared to be in reasonable condition for the age and type of the property. The garage is a double garage situated in a separate block adjacent to the front of the house. It has pitched and tiled roof and brick work externally. The garage is adequate for its purpose. However, it should be realised that it will not have been constructed to the same standard as a dwelling.

### **H2 Other:**

Japanese knotweed is increasingly common, I found none during my inspection but it is potentially very damaging and difficult to eradicate, you should get insurance cover against an out break.



**Legal:** Confirm that insurance cover can be provided for an out break of Japanese knotweed as to can affect the marketing of a house.

A raised decking platform has been built in the garden and this may need the approval of the local council. You could ask your legal adviser to check this or you may consider that it is a worthwhile risk to leave matters alone.

I was concerned during my inspection (after a period of heavy rain) that the ground immediately to the left hand side of the house was saturated with water. During heavy rain and there will be considerable run-off from the sloping garden down to the ground next to the house. It is difficult at this stage for me to declare that this is a fault. However I think that you should monitor this area when you are in occupation. If there is excessive groundwater in this area this could in turn cause problems in terms of your enjoyment of the garden, or even eventually cause problems to the subsoil in the immediate position close to the house.

Clay sub soils are difficult to manage. The property is likely to be much better constructed than many older houses which have shallow foundations. If you intervene to improve the drainage and the system by installing a soak away (an underground system of drains and gravel below the garden which helps to absorb excessive water content this could have an adverse effect on the clay subsoil, although given the age of the house the risk is not likely to be too great.

**Maintenance:** monitor the water content of the garden when you are in occupation. If necessary you should consider consulting with a ground work specialist, or a soil engineer before carrying out any remedial work.

**Surveyors comment:** this may be no more than an occasional high content of water during very heavy rain. However it would be wrong of me not to mention the high water content of the soil immediately close to the house.

### **Other Buildings**

There are no substantial outbuildings.

Timber buildings such as sheds and summerhouses are considered as temporary buildings and are beyond the scope of the report. They have not been inspected

### **Conservatories**



The conservatory is a modern unit of satisfactory quality. Conservatories are not required to be built to the same exacting standards as dwellings and, therefore, cannot be expected to function or last as well.

Typically, there will be inevitable problems with the double glazing seals, although this may not occur for some years to come. I understand that some of the seals have recently been renewed under the present guarantee for the conservatory.

**Maintenance:** There is no door between the living accommodation and the conservatory. A door should be provided to improve such matters as security and thermal insulation.

The conservatory is presently used as a habitable room. Whilst it is a reasonably substantial structure in itself, it does not comply with current Building Regulation standards for habitable accommodation.

**Legal:** The conservatory has been recently erected and may have the benefit of a 10 year guarantee. Your legal adviser should be requested to check whether the guarantee can be transferred to you

## Issues for your legal advisor

**The surveyor does not act as 'the legal adviser'. However, if, during the inspection, the surveyor identifies issues that the legal advisers may need to investigate further, the surveyor will refer to these in the report. The surveyor will not comment on any legal documents or any materials that may be included in a Home Information Pack.**

### I1 Regulation

Before exchange of contracts the following matters should be drawn to the attention of your legal advisor

In addition to the normal searches carried out, it is recommended that further investigations are made on the following:

- Confirm that the arrangements for access maintenance and repair Wayleaves Easements etc along Saint Pauls Road and the private roadway (The Close) immediately serving the house are satisfactory



- Ensure that the building is capable of being insured via a buildings insurance policy which includes adequate cover for subsidence and heave or damage to drains, to foundations owing to the action of plants or trees nearby.
- Check the window and door frames when you are in occupation and improve the seal between the frames and the brickwork
- Conservatories may require approval from the local council under the building regulation and planning regulations. You should ask your legal advisor if these permissions were obtained. If not, the local council may ask you to remove or alter the conservatory.
- You should ask your legal advisor if the conservatory has a transferable guarantee or a warranty from the installer.
- Your legal advisors should make enquiries about the status of the drainage system to this house particularly where it may run below a private roadway. I repeat the need for there to be insurance cover for damage to drains or foundations.
- Confirm that insurance cover can be provided for an out break of Japanese knotweed as to can affect the marketing of a house

### **Statutory Enquires**

Confirmation should be obtained from the Local Authority that Building Regulations and Town and Country Planning Approvals have been obtained in respect of the conservatory

If it is proposed to alter or extend the property, it is recommended that you should discuss your proposals with the local Town Planning and Building Control Officers.

### **Rights of Way, Easements & Shared Services**

Your legal adviser should check:



## Services

That the property is connected to the main sewer.

Responsibilities for maintenance of jointly used private roadway. This should include Saint Pauls Road

That adequate access easements and maintenance provisions exist in respect of the shared private driveway.

The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) has not identified the area in which the property is situated as one in which, in more than 1% of dwellings, the level of radon gas entering the property is such that remedial action is recommended. It is not possible in the course of a building survey to determine whether radon gas is present in any given building as the gas is invisible and odourless.

I cannot confirm whether or not there are any issues relating to contaminated land. Without detailed research of previous land usage, and/or subsoil analysis, it is impossible to comment further. It should be noted that there are onerous liabilities on the owners of the property, which are affected by contaminated land, and such contamination seriously affects saleability and mortgageability. Your legal advisors should make appropriate routine checks.

## **12 Guarantees**

The conveyancer should check for transferable guarantees for double glazing, water pump, boiler and central heating, window installations, or damp proof treatment if any.

Obtain the testing and service records for the electrical, gas and heating installations.

Where work has been carried out to the property, it is recommended that guarantees are obtained. These should ideally be indemnified against eventualities such as the contractors going out of business, and should cover workmanship as well as materials. Guarantees are worth little if not backed by insurance. Confirmation should also be obtained that the residue of the guarantees will transfer with the ownership of the property.



Where any work is carried out now or in the future, it is recommended that only reputable and indemnified contractors, installers or specialists are used. At least two competing firms should be asked to quote for the work. Before deciding, you should ask to see examples of recent work and references should be sought. Companies should be affiliated to recognised trade associations. Examples include Chartered Building Companies, British Wood Preserving and Damp Proofing Association, Arboricultural Association, International Institute of Arboriculturists, National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation and Contractors, Confederation of Registered Gas Installers, etc. Whilst these affiliations do not necessarily guarantee good workmanship, in most cases they do provide a greater likelihood of satisfactory work.

## **J** Risks

### **J1 Risks to the Building**

Possible inadequate electrical or heating alterations.

Subsoil movement due to clay soil

### **J2 Risks to the Grounds**

Tree damage from adjacent large trees

High water content from the sloping site affecting the building

### **J3 Other**

The surveyor will be pleased to discuss matters prior to exchange of contracts and to comment on any further investigations

## **K** Valuation

In arriving at my valuation, I made the following assumptions.



**With regard to the materials, construction, services, fixtures and fittings, and so on I have assumed that:**

an inspection of those parts that I could not inspect would not identify significant defects or a cause to alter the valuation;  
no dangerous or damaging materials or building techniques have been used in the property;  
there is no contamination in or from the ground, and the ground has not been used as landfill;  
the property is connected to, and has the right to use, the mains services mentioned in the report; and  
the valuation does not take account of any furnishings, removable fittings or sales incentives.

You should make your legal adviser aware of these assumptions, and place an obligation upon him or her to advise me in the event of any factors which are likely to have a material effect on the valuation provided at the time of the report.

**With regard to legal matters I have assumed that:**

The property is sold with 'vacant possession' (your legal adviser can give you more information on this term);

The property is not subject to any illegal use or occupation.

That there are no onerous restrictions covenants or other obligations which run with the land and buildings.

That during the course of the usual legal inquiries, there are no problems associated with all necessary planning permission and Building Regulations permission (including permission to make alterations); and the property has the right to use the mains services on normal terms with no unusual provisions these services including gas water electricity and mains drainage.

That the sewers, mains services and roads giving access to the property have been 'adopted' (that is, they are under local-authority, not private, control).

Your legal advisers, and other people who carry out property conveyancing, should be responsible for checking that there are no unusual aspects of the purchase which may have any bearing on my valuation concerning legal matters.

I have set out in section I of this report a list of legal checks and controls to be investigated prior to exchange of contracts. If any of these investigations have any material effect likely to impact upon the valuation on the matter should be referred back to me for further consideration.

I've also set out areas that require action, these should be investigated using contractors or other specialists prior to exchange contracts, and if the likely cost of such works is significant in terms of the valuation then again the valuation should be referred back to me for reconsideration.

It is therefore important that both client and surveyor maintain a line of contact prior to exchange of contracts, so that they may jointly assess the impact on the valuation provided with the normal valuation assumptions as indicated above.



**In my opinion the current market as inspected was:**

**£750,000**

This value is considered to be a high price for the house and I have valued at the top of a likely range.

#### **TENURE**

Assumed to be Freehold, if other then the matter should be referred back to us for reconsideration.

In my opinion, the current reinstatement cost of the property (see below) is

**£689,000**

this reinstatement estimate is provided as a check, it is assumed that the purchaser will in any event have an insurance reinstatement estimate provided by the mortgage lender. You should use the insurance reinstatement estimate provided by your lender, if you are purchasing the property for cash then the matter should be referred to me, and I will carry out a more detailed assessment of the reinstatement for your purposes. If there is any wide divergence between my estimate and that provided by the mortgage lender, then the estimate should be referred back to me for reconsideration.

This valuation is for guidance and cannot be used for mortgage lending purposes. The current market is volatile owing to lending difficulties you run the risk that values may fall depending on economic, fiscal, and banking circumstances, property should be seen as a long term investment. If you are purchasing the property without a mortgage, then I should be advised of this in advance, and I will provide more detailed valuation information your benefit as an addendum to this report, and at no extra charge.

## **L Surveyor's Declaration**

**I confirm that I have inspected the property and prepared this report, and the market value given in the report.**



**Signature:**

**Surveyor's name:** RICS SURVEYOR

**Surveyor's RICS number:**

**Qualifications:**

### **What the client should do on receipt of this report:**

In making this report the surveyor will not be able to provide estimates in the way that contractors, or specialist consultants such as engineers will be asked to do as a result of this report. Therefore prior to any legally binding commitment to buy the property reports and estimates for repairs or other investigations which the survey identifies should be considered. You should communicate fully these findings with the surveyor prior to exchange of contracts.

Reasonable feedback and advice which follows from the production of this report by the surveyor, will not be charged as an extra to you as a result of such liaison. The surveyor signing of this report emphasises the need for good communication to protect the client interest as well as that of the surveyor. Potentially this may also be of benefit to your mortgage provider if you have one. Mortgage valuers are not working to the same detail as this report, and information that may materially affect the mortgage valuation should be referred back to the lender.

When you obtain estimates you should ask for references from fearful they have worked for:

In addition you should describe in writing what information you require from them, and seek that they should put any estimates provided in writing.

Prior to the use of any contract you should check that were specialist skills are required such as poor electrician's, gas engineers, planners, etc that they are properly qualified for the job in hand. If you are in any doubt then the matter should be referred back to the surveyor, in addition, I refer you to other comments about the use of contractors as recommended within this report see section I.



Some work may require approval from the appropriate regulatory bodies for example building regulations consents and approvals, or planning permission from your local authority.

In this respect I refer you to the government's website at

[www.direct.gov.UK/en/HomeAndCommunity/planning/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.UK/en/HomeAndCommunity/planning/index.htm)

Where further investigations are recommended in this report, this will be because within the limitations of the building inspection a full assessment was not possible by me and will be a need to discover the true extent of any potential problem.

As well as the government website mentioned above, I have given information in part I of this report as to the types of contractors that you should consider using. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you discuss this aspect further. In some cases investigation work by the contractors or specialist or other professionals may require some disturbance of the property. This may be expensive.

The action points or condition ratings within this report aim to help to describe the urgency of the repair or replacement work. This information should not be treated as an absolute recommendation, and if there are any doubts about the reasons given by the surveyor for any particular category then you should speak to them. The condition ratings are described at the beginning of this report, but in general condition rating 3 implies that work needs to be carried out as soon as possible for the urgent protection of the property.

### Warning

When I mention maintenance items, I consider these to be routine matters, although this category can also reveal above-average costs when areas are investigated during the course of your occupation. As a result you should regularly check elements with the condition rating 2 or maintenance items, to make sure they are not getting any worse. Some hidden items, may deteriorate quickly once you are in occupation, and defects may be revealed when the maintenance work is carried out. Therefore you should investigate as much as is practicable as mentioned in this report prior to exchange of contracts. You should also follow up investigations as quickly as possible when you are in occupation, as some defects may deteriorate rapidly for example problems with flat roofs, gutters, sub floor structures, hidden pipes or electrical cables etc. In the case of modern buildings, especially new build, there can frequently be snagging items, or inherent design defects, which need to be investigated before any house builder's guarantee runs out. These areas should be investigated in the first year of occupation,



as the degree of guarantee deteriorates through time. For example the NHBC certification, you will need to take legal advice about such guarantees prior to exchange of contracts. If a particular insurance risks are set out in the report, then you should ensure that adequate cover can be provided prior to exchange of contracts.

## Definitions

**Aggregate:** Pebbles, shingle, gravel etc. used in the manufacture of concrete, and in the construction of "soak ways".

**Airbrick:** Perforated brick used for ventilation, especially to floor voids (beneath timber floors) and roof spaces.

**Architrave:** Joinery moulding around window or doorway.

**Asbestos:** Fibrous mineral used in the past for insulation. Can be a health hazard specialist advice should be sought if asbestos (especially blue asbestos) is found.

**Asbestos Cement:** Cement with 10-15% asbestos fibre as reinforcement. Fragile will not bear heavy weights. Hazardous fibres may be released if cut or drilled.

**Ashlar:** Finely dressed natural stone: the best grade of masonry.

**Asphalt:** Black, tar-like substance, strongly adhesive and impervious to moisture. Used on flat roofs and floors.

**Barge Board:** (See Verge Board)

**Balanced Flue:** Common metal device normally serving gas appliances which allows air to be drawn to the appliance whilst also allowing fumes to escape.

**Beetle Infestation:** (Wood boring insects: woodworm) Larvae of various species of beetle which tunnel into timber causing damage. Specialist treatment normally required. Can also affect furniture.

**Benching:** Smoothly contoured concrete slope beside drainage channel within an inspection chamber. Also known as Haunching.

**Bitumen:** Black, sticky substance, related to asphalt. Used in sealants, mineral felts and damp-proof courses.

**Breeze Block:** Originally made from cinders ("breeze") the term now commonly used to refer to various types of concrete and cement building blocks



**Carbonation:** A natural process affecting the outer layer of concrete. Metal reinforcement within that layer is liable to early corrosion, with consequent fracturing of the concrete.

**Cavity Wall:** Standard modern method of building external walls of houses comprising two leaves of brick or block work separated by a gap ("cavity") of about 50mm (2 inches).

**Cavity Wall Insulation:** Filling of wall cavities by one of various forms of insulation material - Beads: Polystyrene beads pumped into the cavities. Will easily fall out if the wall is broken open for any reason - Foam: Urea formaldehyde foam, mixed on site, and pumped into the cavities where it sets. Can lead to problems of dampness and make replacement of wall-ties more difficult - Rockwool: Inert mineral fibre pumped into the cavity.

**Cavity Wall - Tie:** Metal device bedded into the inner and outer leaves of cavity walls to strengthen the wall. Failure by corrosion can result in the wall becoming unstable specialist replacement ties are then required.

**Cesspool:** A simple method of drain comprising a holding tank that needs frequent emptying. Not to be confused with **Septic Tank**.

**Chipboard:** Also referred to as "particle board". Chips of wood compressed and glued into sheet form. Cheap method of decking to flat roofs, floors and (with Formica or melamine surface) furniture, especially kitchen units.

**Collar:** Horizontal timber member intended to restrain opposing roof slopes. Absence, removal or weakening can lead to Roof Spread.

**Combination Boiler:** Modern form of gas boiler which activates on demand. With this form of boiler there is no need for water storage tanks, hot water cylinders etc and generally the pressure is much better for showers.

**Condensation:** Occurs when warm moist air meets a cold surface. The water in the air then either settles as water droplets on the surface (as it does on windows for example), or if the surface is absorbent, it soaks into the surface. In the latter case condensation is often not noticed unless or until mould appears. **(See also Ventilation)**

**Coping / Coping Stone:** Usually stone or concrete, laid on top of a wall as a decorative finish and to stop rainwater soaking into the wall.

**Corbell:** Projection of stone, brick, timber or metal jutting out from a wall to support a weight.

**Cornice:** Ornamental moulded projection around the top of a building or around the wall of a room just below the ceiling.

**Coving:** Curved junction between wall and ceiling or (rarely) between ceiling and floor.

**Dado Rail:** Wooden moulding fixed horizontally to a wall, approximately 1 metre above the floor, originally intended to protect the wall against damage by chair-backs now very much a decorative feature.



**Damp Proof Course: (DPC)** Course Layer of impervious material (mineral felt, PVC etc) incorporated into a wall to prevent dampness rising up the wall or lateral dampness around windows, doors etc. Various proprietary methods are available for damp proofing existing walls including "electro-osmosis" and chemical injection.

**Death-watch Beetle: (Xestobium Refovillosum)** Serious insect pest in structural timbers, usually affects old hardwoods with fungal decay already present.

**Double Glazing:** A method of thermal insulation usually either: Sealed unit: Two panes of glass fixed and hermetically sealed together; or Secondary: In effect a second "window" placed inside the original window.

**Downpipes:** Drainage pipes from guttering.

**Dry Rot:(Serpula Lacrymans.)** A fungus that attacks structural and joinery timbers, often with devastating results. Can flourish in moist, unventilated areas. Not to be confused with **wet rot**.

**Eaves:** The overhanging edge of a roof.

**Efflorescence:** Salts crystallised on the surface of a wall as a result of moisture evaporation.

**Engineering Brick:** Particularly strong and dense type of brick, sometimes used as damp-proof course.

**Fibreboard:** Cheap, lightweight board material of little strength, used in ceilings or as insulation to attics.

**Flashing:** Building technique used to prevent leakage at a roof joint. Normally metal (lead, zinc, copper) but can be cement, felt or proprietary material.

**Flaunching:** Contoured cement around the base of chimney pots, to secure the pot and to throw off rain.

**Flue:** A smoke duct in a chimney, or a proprietary pipe serving a heat-producing appliance such as a central heating boiler.

**Flue Lining:** Metal (usually stainless steel) tube within a flue essential for high output gas appliances such as boilers. May also be manufactured from clay and built into the flue.

**Foundations:** Normally concrete, laid underground as a structural base to a wall - in older buildings may be brick or stone.

**Frog:** A depression imprinted in the upper surface of a brick, to save clay, reduce weight and increase the strength of the wall. Bricks should always be laid frog uppermost.

**Fused Spur:** Power socket that does not have a plug going into it, instead the cable from an appliance like a fridge, radiator, burglar alarm etc and has a fuse socket built into it.

**Gable:** Upper section of a wall, usually triangular in shape, at either end of a ridged roof. - Gable end.



**Gang:** Referred to for 13amp power pints 1 gang = 1 single socket 2 gang = 1 double socket.

**Ground Heave:** Swelling of clay sub-soil due to absorption of moisture: can cause an upward movement in foundations.

**Gully:** An opening into a drain, normally at ground level, placed to receive water etc. from downpipes and wastepipes. Haunching: **See Benching**. It is also a term used to describe the support to a drain underground.

**Hip:** The external junction between two intersecting roof slopes.

**Inspection Chamber:** Commonly called a man hole. Access point to a drain comprising a chamber (of brick, concrete or plastic) with the drainage channel at its base and a removable cover at ground level.

**Jamb:** Side part of a doorway or window.

**Joist:** Horizontal structural timber used in flat roof, ceiling and floor construction. Occasionally also metal.

**Landslip:** Downhill movement of unstable earth, clay, rock etc. often following prolonged heavy rain or coastal erosion, but sometimes due entirely to sub-soil having little cohesive integrity.

**Lath:** Thin strip of wood used in the fixing of roof tiles or slates, or as a backing to plaster. Lath and plaster walls were very common in houses from late 1800,s to 1950's

**Lintel:** Horizontal structural beam of timber, stone, steel or concrete placed over window or door openings.

**LPG:** Liquid Petroleum Gas or Propane. Available to serve gas appliances in areas without mains gas. Requires a storage tank.

**Man Hole:** - See Inspection Chamber

**Mortar:** Mixture of sand, cement, lime and water, used to join stones or bricks.

**Mullion:** Vertical bar dividing individual lights in a window.

**Newel:** Stout post supporting a staircase handrail at top and bottom. Also, the central pillar of a winding or spiral staircase.

**Oversite:** Rough concrete below timber ground floors: the level of the oversite should be above external ground level.

**Parapet:** Low wall along the edge of a flat roof, balcony etc.

**Pier:** A vertical column of brickwork or other material, used to strengthen the wall or to support a weight.



**Plasterboard:** Stiff "sandwich" of plaster between coarse paper. Now in widespread use for ceilings and walls.

**Pointing:** Smooth outer edge of mortar joint between bricks, stones etc.

**Powder Post Beetle: (Bostrychidae or Lyctidae family of beetles)** A relatively uncommon pest that can, if untreated, cause widespread damage to structural timbers.

**Purlin:** Horizontal beam in a roof upon which rafters rest. **Quoin:** The external angle of a building; or, specifically, bricks or stone blocks forming that angle.

**Rafter:** A sloping roof beam, usually timber, forming the carcass of a roof. **Random Rubble:** Primitive method of stone wall construction with no attempt at bonding or coursing.

**Rendering:** Vertical covering of a wall either plaster (internally) or cement (externally), sometimes with pebbledash, stucco or Tyrolean textured finish.

**Reveals:** The side faces of a window or door opening. **Ridge:** The apex of a roof.

**Riser:** The vertical part of a step or stair.

**Rising Damp:** Moisture soaking up a wall from below ground, by capillary action causing rot in timbers, plaster decay, decoration failure etc.

**Roof Spread:** Outward bowing of a wall caused by the thrust of a badly restrained roof carcass (**see Collar**).

**Screed:** Final, smooth finish of a solid floor, usually cement, concrete or asphalt.

**Septic Tank:** Tank Drain installation whereby sewage decomposes through bacteriological action, which can be slowed down or stopped altogether by the use of chemicals such as bleach, biological washing powders etc. Not to be confused with **Cesspool**.

**Settlement:** General disturbance in a structure showing as distortion in walls etc., possibly a result of major structural failure, very dry weather conditions etc. Sometimes of little current significance. (**See also Subsidence**)

**Shakes:** Naturally occurring cracks in timber; in building timbers, shakes can appear quite dramatic, but strength is not always impaired.

**Shingles:** Small rectangular slabs of wood used on roofs instead of tiles, slates etc.

**Soakaway:** Arrangement for disposal of rainwater, utilising graded aggregate laid below ground.

**Soaker:** Sheet metal (usually lead, copper or zinc) at the junction of a roof with a vertical surface of a chimneystack, adjoining wall etc. Associated with flashings that should overlay soakers.



**Soffit:** The under-surface of eaves, balcony, arch etc. **Solid Fuel:** Heating fuel, normally coal, coke or one of a variety of proprietary fuels.

**Spandrel:** Space above and to the sides of an arch; also the space below a staircase.

**Stud Partition:** Lightweight, sometimes non-load bearing wall construction comprising a framework of timber faced with plaster, plasterboard or other finish.

**Subsidence:** Ground movement, generally downward, possible a result of mining activities or clay shrinkage.

**Sub-soil:** Soil lying immediately below the topsoil, upon which foundations usually bear.

**Sulphate Attack:** Chemical reaction activated by water, between tricalcium aluminate and soluble sulphates. Can cause deterioration in brick walls and concrete floors.

**Tie Bar:** Heavy metal bar passing through a wall, or walls, to brace a structure suffering from structural instability.

**Torching:** Mortar applied on the underside of roof tiles or slates to help prevent moisture penetration. Not necessary when a roof is underdrawn with felt.

**Transom:** Horizontal part of a step or stair.

**Tread:** The horizontal part of a step or stair.

**Trussed Rafters:** Method of roof construction utilising prefabricated triangular framework of timbers. Now widely used in domestic construction.

**Underpinning:** Method strengthening weak foundations whereby a new, stronger foundation is placed beneath the original.

**Valley Gutter:** Horizontal or sloping gutter, usually lead-or-tile-lined, at the internal intersection between two roof slopes.

**Ventilation:** Necessary in all buildings to disperse moisture resulting from bathing, cooking, breathing etc. and to assist in prevention of condensation. Floors - necessary to avoid rot, especially Dry Rot; achieved by airbricks near to ground level. Roofs - necessary to disperse condensation within roof spaces; achieved either by airbricks in gables or ducts at the eaves. **(see Condensation)**

**Verge:** The edge of a roof, especially over a gable.

**Verge Board:** Timber, sometimes decorative plastic material, placed at the verge of a roof: also known as bargeboard.

**Wainscot:** Wood panelling or boarding on the lower part of an internal wall.



**Wall Plate:** Timber placed at the eaves of a roof, to take the weight of the roof timbers.

**Wastepipe:** Drainage pipe for baths, basins, WC's.

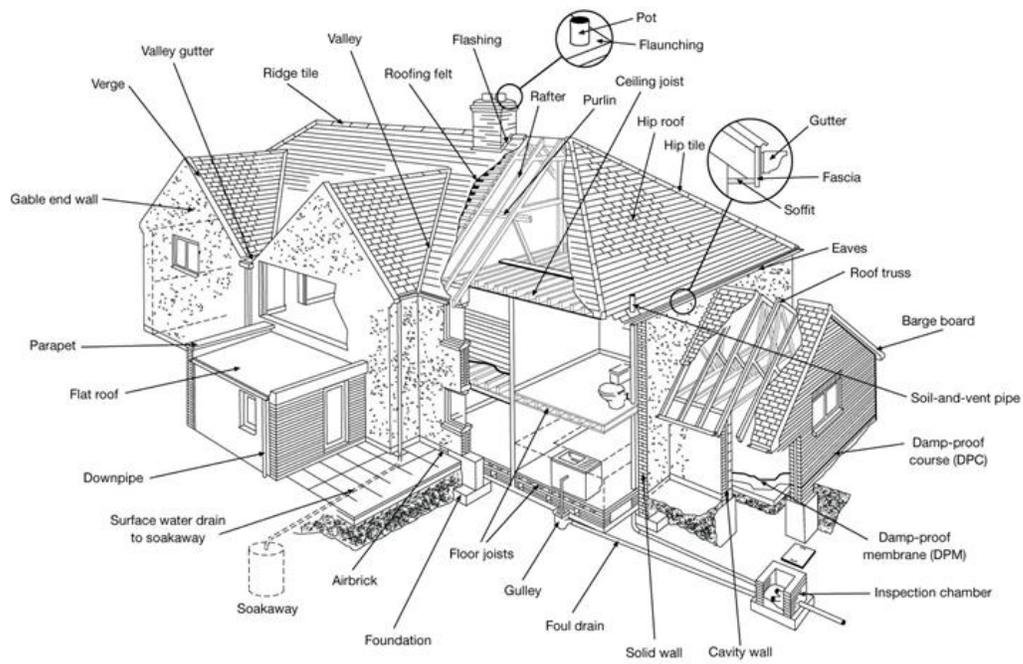
**Wet Rot: (Coniophora Puteana)** Decay of timber due to damp conditions. Not to be confused with the more serious **Dry Rot**.

**Woodworm:** Colloquial term for beetle infestation: usually intended to mean Common Furniture Beetle (**Anobium Punctatum**): by far the most frequently encountered insect attack in structural and joinery timbers.

The above has been compiled to assist people with terminology. We advise that this information is for guidance only and cannot be relied on for accuracy and that you should consult a qualified legal representative if you require full explanation

SAMPLE

## House diagram



SAM



## Appendix

### Description of the service provided by this report

The service provides an inspection of the property, a report based on this inspection, a valuation, and in addition the surveyor aims to give you professional advice to make a reasoned and informed decision on whether or not to buy the property. This includes an informed decision about a reasonable price to pay for the property, taking into account any repairs or further investigations that the property needs, and where appropriate further advice will be given prior to exchange of contracts. The report will only be produced if the property is in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, or the Channel Islands. Reports abroad or in Scotland will be in a totally different format, as agreed with the client prior to instruction.

The surveyor inspects the interior and exterior of the main building and any permanent outbuildings, but will not force or open up the fabric. In addition carpets floor coverings floor boards the removing of furniture, and the contents of cupboards, fixed covers, removing secured panels or electrical fittings will not be carried out unless there is a prior agreement with the vendor. Where possible the surveyor will carry out the inspection at ground level from public property or from next door. Suitable equipment such as a damp-meter, binoculars and torch will be used. A small ladder will be used to inspect flat roofs and any ceiling inspection hatch if it is no more than three meters above the level ground outside, or floor levels inside if it is safe to do so.

No specialist tests will be carried out to any services which will only be subject to a visual inspection. Services are usually hidden within the property and may require specialist contractors to investigate further. Swimming pools and sports facilities will be mentioned in the report, but are not to be the subject of the advice in this report.

If the property which is inspected is within a block of flats or as a flat conversion, there will be limitations to the scope of the inspection. Roof spaces will only be inspected if there is access from within the property. In the case of a block of flats the surveyor will not inspect drains, lifts, fire alarms, security systems, or other common services.

The surveyor will not make enquiries about contamination or environmental dangers. The surveyor will assume that there is no harm from dangerous materials have been used in the construction, and does not have a duty to justify this assumption. If the inspection indicates that harmful materials may have been used the surveyor will report



this and ask for further instructions. There will be limitations as to the scope of this service owing to the difficulty of fully assessing materials on the site.

The surveyor is not an inspector within the provisions of the control of asbestos regulations currently in force at the time of the inspection. The surveyor will assume that in the case of a block of flats that the management regime for the block will have an asbestos register and ineffective management plan in place. Your legal advisor should make enquiries in that respect, and if there is no such provision in place, then the matter should be referred back to the surveyor for reconsideration.

The report is for your use only, there is no liability whatsoever if it is used by anybody else. If you decide not to act on the advice within the report you do this at your own risk.

The surveyor reports only upon property related risks or hazards but will include defects that need repairing or replacing, as well as issues that have existed for a long time but may present a health and safety risk or hazard, if it is feasible to identify this within the constraints of the report..

The surveyor and client will agree a fee in advance of the report. The client may terminate the instruction up to the point of inspection of the property. The surveyor may decline to report if circumstances make this necessary, in such a case he will discuss the matter with the client.

