

RICS HomeBuyer REPORT

Property survey and valuation

Date of inspection:

Property address:

Customer's name:



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RICS is an independent professional body originally established in the UK by Royal Charter. Since 1868, RICS has been committed to setting and upholding the highest standards of excellence and integrity – providing impartial, authoritative advice on key issues affecting businesses and society.



Introduction to the report

This HomeBuyer Report is produced by an RICS surveyor ('the surveyor'). They have written this report for you to use. If you decide not to act on the advice in this report, you do this at your own risk.

The HomeBuyer report aims to help you:

- make a reasoned and informed decision on whether to go ahead with buying the property;
- make an informed decision on what is a reasonable price to pay for the property;
- 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).

Any extra services the surveyor provides are not covered by these terms and conditions and must be covered by a separate contract.

If you want to complain about the service, please refer to the complaints handling procedure in the 'Description of the RICS HomeBuyer Service' enclosed with this report.

Please read the 'Description of the RICS HomeBuyer Service' (at the back of this report) for full details of what is, and is not, inspected.

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About the inspection



Surveyor's name:

Surveyor's RICS no:

Company name:

Tim Stubbs Limited

Date of the inspection:

Report reference no:

Related party disclosure:

None.

Full address and postcode of the property:

Weather conditions when the inspection took place:

Weather conditions were dry, mainly sunny, with some overcast spells, preceded by a period of mixed spring weather.

The status of the property when the inspection took place:

The property was vacant at the time of inspection and was empty of furniture, with only floor coverings in place. The Seller was not available to answer any questions and a number of assumptions have therefore been made. Where highlighted in this report, assumptions should be clarified by raising enquiries of the Seller via your Legal Adviser.

Fitted floor coverings prevented a detailed inspection of floor surfaces and no sub-floor areas were inspected. No carpets or corners of carpets were lifted as these were tightly fitted.

The external inspection was carried out from a ground level position, using binoculars where applicable.



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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. They also inspect the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating and drainage services that can be seen, but they do not test them.

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. For example, a home can have a pitched (sloped) roof to the main building and a flat roof to an extension. In this case, the surveyor will give each a condition rating and use the worst one to define the element in section C.

In the element boxes in parts E, F, G and H, the surveyor will describe the part that has the worst condition rating first and then briefly outline the condition of the other parts. The condition ratings are described as follows.

Condition Rating Definition

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 either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

1

No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

NI

Not inspected. (See 'Important note' in the panel opposite.)

The report focuses on matters that, in the surveyor's opinion, need to be dealt with or may affect the value of the property.

Important note

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.

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Summary of the condition ratings

This section summarises the condition ratings of the different elements of the property. If an element is made up of a number of different parts (for example, a pitched roof to the main building and a flat roof to an extension), only the part in the worst condition is shown here. To make sure you get a balanced impression of the property, we strongly recommend that you read all sections of the report.

3

Condition rating 3: Defects which are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

Section of the report:	Element number:	Element name:
E: Outside of the property	E3	Rainwater pipes and gutters
F: Inside of the property	F1	Roof structure
	F3	Walls and partitions
	F4	Floors
	F5	Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues
G: Services	G1	Electricity
	G3	Water
	G4	Heating
H: Grounds (part)		

2

Condition rating 2: Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

Section of the report:	Element number:	Element name:
E: Outside of the property	E1	Chimney stacks
	E2	Roof coverings
	E4	Main Walls
	E5	Windows
	E6	Outside doors
	E8	Other Joinery and finishes



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Section of the report:	Element number:	Element name:
F: Inside of the property	F6 F7 F8 F9	Built-in fittings Woodwork Bathroom fittings Other
G: Services	G6	Drainage
H: Grounds (part)	H2	Other

1 Condition rating 1: No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

Section of the report:	Element number:	Element name:
E: Outside of the property		
F: Inside of the property	F2	Ceilings
G: Services	G2 G5	Gas/oil Water heating
H: Grounds (part)		

The surveyor's overall opinion of the property:

The property is considered to be a reasonable proposition for purchase at the agreed price of £79,000 (Seventy nine thousand pounds). This opinion is based on the presumption that you are prepared to accept the cost and inconvenience of dealing with the various repair and improvement works reported. It would be prudent to obtain estimates for any works recommended prior to a legal commitment to purchase, so that you are aware of repair costs involved. Provided that the necessary works are carried out to a satisfactory standard and assuming continued good maintenance, there should not be any particular difficulties on re-sale under normal market conditions.



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About the property

 Type of property:

 Approximate year the property was built:

 Approximate year the property was extended:

 Approximate year the property was converted:

 For flats and maisonettes:
Accommodation:

Floor	Living Rooms	Bedrooms	Bath or shower	Separate toilet	Kitchen	Utility room	Conservatory	Other	Name of other
Lower Ground									
Ground	2				1			1	
First		2	1						
Second									
Third									
Other									
Roof space									

Construction:

The property is constructed of solid brick elevations. The roof is of pitched design, covered with natural slates. Floors are a mixture of solid and timber construction.



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Energy

The property's energy performance, as recorded in the Energy Performance Certificate

■ Energy-efficiency rating:

■ Environmental impact rating:

Mains services

Drainage Gas Electricity Water

The ticked boxes show that the mains services are present

Central heating

Electric Gas Solid fuel Oil

Other services or energy sources:

None

Outside the property

There is no garage, garage space or off street parking provided. Parking restrictions are in place in front of the property. It is understood that a resident permit scheme is in operation. Full details of this scheme should be verified with the Local Authority.

To the front elevation, the property abuts the pavement. There is a shared pedestrian passageway to the side of the property which gives access to a small rear garden and yard area. The property occupies a regular size and shape plot for a property of this type in this location.

There is a small attached outbuilding, accommodating the external wc.

The location

The property is located in an established residential area of similar property types close to the city centre.

Facilities

A good range of shops, services and leisure facilities are available within a reasonable distance.



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Local environment

There are no known adverse environmental factors affecting the property. As a precautionary measure, an environmental search should be obtained - see Section 13 Other Matters.



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Outside of the property

The external inspection was carried out from a ground level position, using binoculars where applicable.

Any reference to left or right is expressed from a position within the front garden facing the property.

It was not possible to see all roof slopes clearly. As defects were noted to visible roof slopes, it is recommended that all areas of the roof covering are inspected when the roof is overhauled.

E1 Chimney stacks

2

There are three brick built chimney stacks. There are two stacks to the main accommodation, both of these stacks are shared with the adjoining property. To the rear face of the rear wing accommodation, there is a third stack shared with the neighbouring property.

Deterioration has occurred to stack detail. Defects include: perished and deteriorated brickwork, this is most pronounced to the third stack at the rear of the property; weathering has occurred to mortar joints of all three stacks and re-pointing is recommended. Close inspection of the chimney stacks is recommended via a roofing contractor or general builder and an estimate should be obtained for all recommended repairs. (Condition Rating 2)

The third stack at the rear of the property is currently disused. The stack appears to have been capped and there is an air brick evident at the top of the stack to ventilate the disused flue. From a ground level position it is not possible to confirm that the chimney has been appropriately capped. A general overhaul of the brickwork to this stack is required and the cement soaker around the base of the stack requires upgrading - see further comments below. It is recommended that when any repairs are carried out to chimney stacks, it should be ensured that all disused chimney flues are appropriately capped and ventilated to prevent problems of dampness within disused flues. (Condition Rating 2)

The chimney stacks are weather sealed to the roof covering by the use of cement soakers. These will be susceptible to deterioration and there was deterioration evident to the soaker around the third stack to the rear wing accommodation. As it is necessary to carry out repairs to the roof covering and chimney stacks, this will provide an economic opportunity to upgrade these soakers with a more conventional metal flashing. Further advice and a cost estimate for this upgrading should be obtained from a general builder or roofing contractor. (Condition Rating 2)

The cost of high level repairs will be increased because of the need for specialist scaffolding access. Any estimate for roof level repairs should include the cost of scaffolding hire, where applicable.



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E2 Roof coverings

The roof is a pitched, timber framed structure, covered with natural slates. There is no secondary waterproof barrier in place beneath the covering.

2

Some general deterioration was noted to the roof covering and this is commensurate with the age of the property. A number of damaged, slipped or loose slates were noted. When the roof covering was examined from the underside, there are areas of daylight visible through the roof slates, indicating damaged or slipped slates. A general overhaul of the roof covering is required, to ensure it is weather proof and to prevent further deterioration. An estimate for the work should be obtained from a roofing contractor, along with costs for scaffolding. As a symptom of age, ongoing maintenance should be anticipated to the covering. (Condition Rating 2)

A number of slates are damaged or deteriorated but the roof covering is considered capable of repair and continued serviceability. It was noted that a number of neighbouring properties of a similar age have had their roof coverings renewed, an indication that the covering to the subject property will be nearing the end of its useful life. Whilst it is not considered essential to strip and re-cover the roof at the present time, this decision will be dependent upon your tolerance to carrying out maintenance to the existing slates.

It would be sensible to discuss with a roofing contractor the likely cost and frequency of maintenance to be anticipated and obtain a benchmark estimate for stripping and re-covering, so that in the longer term, you are aware of potential costs involved.

There is no lining under the roof covering which increases the risk of water penetration if the roof cover is breached. However, the expense of replacing the roof covering in order to provide a felt or PVC lining is not justified. Regular inspection of the roof covering is recommended to check for potential leaks. (Condition Rating 1)

Deterioration was also noted to the roof structure and this will be discussed under Section F1 Roof Structure.

E3 Rainwater pipes and gutters

Rainwater fittings are provided in painted cast iron sections. Downpipes are provided in painted cast iron sections.

3

Corrosion has occurred to cast iron sections, especially to guttering. The deterioration is extensive and rainwater fittings should be replaced, preferably in PVC for reduced future maintenance. An estimate for this work should be obtained from a roofing contractor or general builder, along with the cost for scaffolding. (Condition Rating 3)



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E4 Main walls

2

Walls to the original building are constructed of solid brickwork of approximately 230mm thickness (where measured).

Some general weathering was noted to brickwork and pointing. This is most pronounced to the upper section of the front elevation, the entry wall to the right side of the property and in isolated areas to the rear wing accommodation and to the rear elevation of the main building. Some further re-pointing and cutting out of any badly perished brickwork will be required in the short term. Further advice and a cost estimate for this repair should be obtained from a general builder. (Condition Rating 2)

To the front elevation, facing bricks are provided. These have a narrow mortar joint. It was noted that a number of neighbouring properties have had the mortar between brickwork re-pointed in the past. The pointing to this property does not appear to have been renewed. There are areas of deteriorated mortar and this is pronounced in sections to the upper courses of the front elevation and to the panel of brickwork between the ground floor reception room window and front door. Deterioration of the pointing will leave walls vulnerable to penetrating dampness and early re-pointing will be required. (Condition Rating 2)

To the entry wall at the side of the property, part of the front section of this wall has been re-pointed in the past. To other sections of the wall, the pointing has not been upgraded and this is soft, sandy and deteriorating. Some general re-pointing will be required to the entry wall. Further advice and a cost estimate should be obtained from an appropriate contractor. (Condition Rating 2)

Similar comments apply to the rear elevations, where standard bricks have been used. Re-pointing appears to have been carried out in the past. Some of this pointing has deteriorated through frost action and this indicates insufficient raking out of mortar joints prior to re-pointing. The deterioration of the upgraded pointing may also have been exacerbated by leaking rainwater goods. Some further repairs will be required to wall surfaces to the rear of the property and this should be discussed with an appropriate contractor, providing an estimate for all recommended works. (Condition Rating 2)

To the front elevation, painted stone lintel and sill details are provided. Painted stone sills are provided to the rear of the property. There was no evidence of significant deterioration, although future routine painting will be necessary. There are shallow brick arch lintels above window openings to the rear of the property. These can be susceptible to movement. There was no evidence of significant distortion of these arches at the time of the inspection and no immediate repairs are considered necessary. (Condition Rating 1)

A damp proof course (DPC) is a waterproof layer built into, or formed within, the walls to prevent ground dampness from rising.

The external walls incorporate an original blue brick DPC.

There is evidence that a silicone injection DPC has been injected to the based of walls. It is recommended that enquiries be made of the Seller regarding the extent of work and the availability of an enforceable guarantee - see Section I2 Guarantees.

Dampness was evident to the internal surface of some external walls. This is discussed in Section F3 Walls and Partitions.



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E4 Main walls

Old properties with solid walls are generally less energy efficient than properties constructed with modern, insulated cavity wall structures. It is also more difficult to insulate solid walls, the only practical option being to line the walls internally with insulated plasterboard. This is clearly disruptive to fittings and decorative finishes and is not considered economically viable. (Condition Rating 1)

E5 Windows

Windows are double glazed within replacement white uPVC frames.

No significant defects were noted to uPVC frames. Some surface markings and weathering were noted. However, no economic repair or replacement is considered necessary at present. (Condition Rating 1)

The Seller should be asked to confirm the age of replacement windows. There may be guarantees for these windows and this should be investigated by your Legal Adviser - see Section I2. If windows were replaced after 1st April 2002, Building Regulation approval would have been required or a FENSA certificate should be obtained to confirm compliance with Building Regulations - see Section I1.

Interstitial condensation (condensation within a double glazed panel) has occurred to all of the double glazed units in the front reception room window. Similar defects may become apparent to other window panels in the future. Replacement of defective glazing is recommended and cost estimates should be obtained from a FENSA registered double glazing contractor. (Condition Rating 2)

There is no adequate fire escape window to the first floor accommodation. You are advised to provide an adequate fire escape from first/second floors to comply with prevailing Building Regulations. Further advice should be obtained from a FENSA registered double glazing contractor and/or Building Control at the Local Authority. (Condition Rating 2)

Window lock requirements should be verified with your insurer to ensure they comply with your insurance policy. (Condition Rating 1)

Window openers have not all been tested and some adjustment should be anticipated to ensure that all windows open and close correctly.



E6 Outside doors (including patio doors)

The external door to the front of the property is provided in stained timber. There was no evidence of significant deterioration to the door. One of the stained timber panels to the side of the door frame requires re-fixing to the brickwork. The stained finish will require future routine maintenance. It was noted that the front door is appointed with a Yale lock only and most insurers will require a 5 lever mortice lock as a minimum requirement. Door lock requirements should be verified with your insurer to ensure they comply with your insurance policy. (Condition Rating 2)




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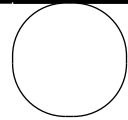
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E6 Outside doors (including patio doors)

The door from the kitchen to the rear yard is provided in painted timber. This is a basic quality door and insubstantial. This may prove a weak point for intruders wishing to gain access to the property and you should consider upgrading this door. It was noted that the door is fitted with a 3 lever mortice lock only and this will not meet with most insurers minimum requirements. Door lock requirements should be verified with your insurer. (Condition Rating 2)

E7 Conservatory and porches

None.



E8 Other joinery and finishes

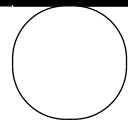
As window frames have been replaced in uPVC, there was little external joinery. Painted timber fascias and soffits are provided to the front of the property. It is assumed that there will be timber fascias concealed by the guttering to the rear of the property and the external doors have a painted or stained finish. Some general deterioration was noted to the paint finish of roof level joinery and early redecoration is required. (Condition Rating 2)

2

It may be economic to combine redecoration with overhaul of rainwater fittings or any other roof level repairs. The cost of high level repairs is increased because of the need for specialist scaffolding access.

E9 Other

None.



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Inside of the property

It was not possible to enter into the roof space. The roof access hatch was screwed shut. The hatch has been unscrewed which is beyond the standard terms of the Home Buyer Report, but given the accessibility of the screw heads, deterioration noted to the roof covering, further investigation was deemed prudent by the surveyor. It was not possible to enter into the roof space as the ladders could not be set against the access hatch because of fixed shelving in the cupboard below the roof hatch. Loose insulation over ceiling joists and the lack of crawler boards also made entry into the roof space unsafe. The inspection of the roof void was carried out from standing on a set of drawers in the overstairs cupboard below the hatch. The inspection was therefore of a limited nature.

Carpet coverings were firmly fitted and therefore no carpets or floor coverings were peeled back.

F1 Roof structure

3

The roof space was accessed via a loft hatch situated in the fitted cupboard above the stairs off the rear bedroom.

The roof structure is of traditional timber rafter and purlin construction.

The front and rear roof slopes are supported by one main purlin to each slope. Some deflection was noted to the front purlin but this is not excessive and is commensurate with the age and construction of the property. To the rear purlin, some deterioration was noted and the purlin appears to have been supported with a timber prop in the past. Where the purlin bears onto the chimney stack at the party wall with the neighbour, some of the bricks which have been set out from the stack to support the purlin have distorted and where the purlin bears onto this brickwork, the support is at an angle. From a limited single inspection of this arrangement it is not possible to confirm that further deterioration of the bearing to this purlin will not occur. As such, it is considered appropriate to instruct a competent builder/roofing contractor or structural engineer to carry out further investigation of the support to this rear purlin. They should provide a report with estimate for any required or recommended upgrading to prevent further deterioration. (Condition Rating 3)

Cracking was noted to some structural roof timbers. This is probably the result of timbers drying out and is not considered to be structurally significant.

There was no evidence of significant rot or infestation to roof timbers. From the limited inspection undertaken, however, close inspection of these timbers was not possible. As it is necessary for a PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor to carry out further investigation with regard to dampness, it would be sensible to carry out a precautionary check of all timbers throughout the property when this inspection is undertaken - see further comments under Section F3 Walls and Partitions. (Condition Rating 3)

There is no loft light, ladder or boarding. The space available for storage is considerable and provision of the aforementioned items could be considered to better utilise the roof space for the storage of occasionally used items. Access is awkward as the hatch has been screwed shut and you may wish to consider upgrading this arrangement.

You are reminded that only lightweight items should be stored, because ceiling joists are not designed to carry heavy loads.



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F1 Roof structure

Insulation above ceilings in the roof space is below the standard recommended. Upgrading, including insulation to the roof access hatch, may be worthwhile. An approximate depth of 100-150mm of loose and glass fibre matting is currently provided and an improvement would be to increase this to 270mm, as prescribed by prevailing Building Regulations. Care should be taken when upgrading loft insulation not to force insulation into the eaves as this will restrict ventilation. Any wiring situated in the roof space should lie above the insulation and not below or within it to prevent overheating to the wiring with a consequent fire risk. (Condition Rating 2)

F2 Ceilings

Ceilings are constructed of plaster surfaces. Finishes are in painted plaster, textured paint and textured paper, although cracked and uneven in places, ceilings remain generally serviceable.

Cracking and unevenness was noted to some older ceilings and this is consistent with the age of the property. These are not considered serious defects but the extent of any further work will be dependent upon the quality of finish you require. Paper decorations may conceal other defects which may not become apparent until future redecoration. (Condition Rating 1)

Insulation may not have been provided between sloping ceilings and the roof covering. Adjacent room space may be vulnerable to greater temperature variations and provision of insulation may be difficult to achieve.

1

F3 Walls and partitions

Internal partitions are partly of solid masonry and partly of timber construction, with wall plaster surfaces. Wall surfaces have textured paper, painted plaster, painted paper and tiled finishes.

A Proti meter, a moisture measuring instrument, was used to test the base of the ground floor wall structures and other areas susceptible to dampness penetration.

Intermittent moderate to high damp meter readings were noted to the base of various ground floor walls. Further investigation by a PCA registered damp proofing contractor is recommended. If damp proofing treatment is required, this could be expensive and will be disruptive. An estimate for any damp proofing treatments should be obtained prior to a legal commitment to purchase the property. This should include all associated works, for example, removal and re-application of plaster, removal and replacement of joinery items, radiators, etc. Any damp proofing treatment undertaken should be covered by a long term, insurance backed guarantee. The contractor should inspect the whole property and provide estimates for damp proofing and associated works required. (Condition Rating 3)

Interior timbers adjacent to damp walls are at risk of decay. Any remedial damp proofing work and re-plastering should be accompanied by an inspection of adjacent timbers for rot attack. If deterioration is severe, replacement timbers will be required and a contingency sum discussed with your PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor. As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that all timbers throughout the property are inspected when an estimate for damp proofing works is obtained. (Condition Rating 3)

3



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F3 Walls and partitions

Areas of uneven and hollow plaster were noted. These defects are consistent with the age of the property. Paper decorations may conceal other defects which may not become apparent until future redecoration, when some renewal of wall plaster may be necessary. The full extent of the re-plastering may only be revealed upon initiating repairs. (Condition Rating 2)

Wall tiling has been provided in the bathroom. Tiling work appears to have been undertaken to a reasonable standard with no serious defects. (Condition Rating 1)

The seal between wall tiling and sanitaryware can be prone to possible leakage and regular upgrading of grouting and mastic should be carried out to prevent this occurrence which can lead to dampness which can affect plasterwork and joinery items. (Condition Rating 2)

Wall tiling in the kitchen is dated/basic and renewal is recommended. (Condition Rating 2)

The internal decorative condition is generally reasonable. It is likely that some renewal of decoration will be required once damp proofing works have been undertaken. (Condition Rating 2)

No significant condensation problems were noted. Wet areas, such as the kitchen and bathroom, may be vulnerable to condensation. The installation of the extractor facilities, where missing, is recommended to help restrict condensation. (Condition Rating 2)

Condensation is a lifestyle problem caused by the introduction of moisture into a building from cooking, bathing, washing and drying of clothes. If ventilation and heating are kept to a good level, this should reduce the occurrence of condensation in the future. If windows are opened on a regular basis this should also restrict condensation.

In some instances mould spores, which form due to condensation, may be toxic and the presence of such spores can therefore be injurious to the health of the occupants. Chemical analysis is required to determine whether or not such spores are toxic. Within the scope of this report, we cannot advise whether or not any such spores are toxic. You are therefore advised to seek further specialist advice if such spores become a problem.

F4 Floors

Floors are a mixture of solid and timber construction.

It is not possible to confirm whether solid floors are original or whether they have been replaced. Documentary evidence relating to previous damp proofing works should be inspected to determine whether replacement solid floors or bitumen screeds have been provided.

If solid floors are original, it is unlikely that they will incorporate adequate damp proof membranes. Fitted floor coverings prevented an inspection for dampness at the time of the inspection and you are advised to have these floors checked for dampness via a PCA registered damp proofing contractor - this should be carried out in conjunction with the further investigation recommended under Section F3 Walls and Partitions. (Condition Rating 3)




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F4 Floors

Damp readings in the front reception room were high to the entry wall. It is possible that timbers adjacent to this damp wall may be affected by dampness and rot. When further investigations into dampness are undertaken, the condition of the suspended timber floor in the main reception room should be assessed. Ventilation to the cellar should also be assessed by a PCA registered damp proofing contractor and any additional ventilation or upgrading provided as recommended - see also Section F9. (Condition Rating 3)

Springiness was noted to some timber floors. However, springiness is not considered to be excessive and no economical remedial works are recommended. Some floor movement is to be expected in a property of this age. (Condition Rating 1)

There are isolated loose floorboards. These should be secured, care should be taken not to damage services contained in the floor. (Condition Rating 1)

Carpet/laminate floor coverings were firmly fitted and therefore no carpets or floor coverings were peeled back.

F5 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues

A balanced flue is provided for the gas boiler and this exhausts via the side elevation of the rear wing accommodation. The flue is close to a window opening to the rear bedroom and this could permit harmful fumes to re-enter the building. Prior to use, comment upon the above should be made by a Gas Safe registered contractor. (Condition Rating 3)



Fireplaces are located in the front and rear reception rooms. The fireplace in the rear reception room is a dated feature and it is thought likely that many purchasers would wish to upgrade this fireplace. In the front reception room, a stained timber surround is provided. There is a painted plywood backplate and a false stone hearth. Again, some purchasers would wish to upgrade this fireplace. The extent of work required will depend upon your individual taste. (Condition Rating 2).

Fireplaces in the first floor accommodation are disused and have been blocked up. Condensation within disused flues can cause pattern damp staining to chimney breast walls. Disused chimney flues should be appropriately capped at chimney stack level and, where possible, ventilated externally at the base of the disused flue. No damp staining to chimney breasts was apparent at the time of inspection. (Condition Rating 1)

The chimney flues could not be inspected internally and it is not possible to comment upon the adequacy of the flue linings. Prior to use, flues should be checked to ensure they are not blocked and that linings are sound. (Condition Rating NI)



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F5 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues

The fireplace in the front reception room is currently appointed with a free standing electric stove. Enquiries should be made with the Seller as to whether this is included in the purchase. This appliance will not require any flue arrangement. If it is your intention to reinstate a solid fuel or gas appliance to this fireplace which will require a flue then the adequacy of the flue, ventilation to the room and fireplace will require further investigation by a suitably qualified heating engineer. The gas fire in the rear reception room is a dated feature - see further comments under Section G4 Heating.

F6 Built-in fittings (built-in kitchen and other fittings, not including the appliances)

Kitchen fittings, although modern, are of poor quality and have been fitted to a basic standard. It is thought likely that most purchasers would wish to upgrade kitchen fittings. Good quality refurbishment of the kitchen should enhance future value and re-sale prospects. (Condition Rating 2)

2

The wall tiling between kitchen units and the work tops would benefit from upgrading and will require renewal if the units are replaced. There is no sealant between the wall surfaces and work tops. Sealant should be provided. (Condition Rating 2)

F7 Woodwork (for example, staircase and joinery)

Internal joinery is typical of a property of this type and age and appears to be in a generally serviceable condition. Some minor damage is evident as a result of normal wear and tear but no significant defects were identified. (Condition Rating 1)

2

The gloss finish to much of the woodwork, particularly to the first floor skirting boards, is poor and some general upgrading under a course of redecoration would be beneficial. (Condition Rating 2)

Fitted floor coverings to the top surface of staircase treads/risers. It is not possible to confirm that these timbers are free from infestation from wood boring insects or other decay. Further comment to be provided by a PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor.

The straight flight staircase is relatively steep with narrow treads. Care will be required when using the staircase to reduce the possibility of accidents. Staircases are the most common source of accidents in the home. The handrail provided is slightly loose and this should be re-fixed. You should ensure that there is adequate lighting to the staircase. (Condition Rating 2)

Interior doors are a mixture of different styles. To the ground floor accommodation, there is a glazed door from the front reception room to the rear room. There is no door at the foot of the stairs and the kitchen door is provided in a plain gloss painted, timber to match the first floor doors. These are of basic quality, although remain serviceable. The extent of upgrading required to doors will depend upon the quality of finish you wish to achieve. Some minor adjustments should be anticipated to doors, handles and catches to ensure satisfactory closure. Internal glazing at low level should be in safety glass. It is not possible to confirm that safety glass has been fitted and further advice should be obtained from a glazing contractor - see Section J3. (Condition Rating 1)



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F7 Woodwork (for example, staircase and joinery)

Interior timbers adjacent to damp walls are at risk of decay. Any remedial damp proofing work and re-plastering should be accompanied by an inspection of adjacent timbers for rot attack. If deterioration is severe, replacement timbers will be required and a contingency sum discussed with your PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor. (Condition Rating 2)

F8 Bathroom fittings

Sanitaryware would benefit from further upgrading. There is a green coloured wash hand basin and bath. A replacement white wc has been provided. This does not match the other fittings. The fittings appear to remain in serviceable condition, although no plumbing or shower facilities were tested. However, the colour of the suite is unlikely to be to most purchasers taste and it is anticipated that most purchasers would wish to carry out further upgrading. The extent of work required will depend upon your individual preference. (Condition Rating 2)

2

The seal between wall tiling and sanitaryware can be prone to possible leakage and regular upgrading of grouting and mastic should be carried out to prevent this occurrence which can lead to dampness which can affect plasterwork and joinery items.

F9 Other

A cellar extends beneath the front reception room. The walls and floor of the cellar are inherently damp due to their location below ground level. The cellar will be a useful area for storage, but items could be affected by dampness. The amount of work required to the cellar will be dependent upon the use to which you wish to put the cellar. Complete damp proofing of cellars can be difficult to achieve and is unlikely to be cost effective. If this will influence your decision to purchase the property, you are strongly advised to obtain further advice and an estimate from a suitably qualified, PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor prior to a legal commitment to purchase the property. (Condition Rating 1)

2

There are brick steps down from the ground floor accommodation to the cellar. These have timber nosings. Some of the nosings are loose and this is potentially hazardous. Upgrading is required. There is no handrail to the cellar staircase and you should ensure that the stairs are adequately lit. (Condition Rating 2)

It is important that adequate ventilation is maintained to the cellar. The old coal chute has a metal grate and this currently ventilates the cellar area. The coal chute is open and this could allow surface water to run into the cellar. Some upgrading of this arrangement would be beneficial and dependent upon the extent of the work additional ventilation may then be required. The options for upgrading ventilation to the cellar and alterations to the coal chute should be discussed with a PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor. The cellar should remain capable of use for storage purposes, provided that adequate ventilation is maintained, although stored items could be affected by dampness. (Condition Rating 2)



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Services

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property and, 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.

One of the inspection chamber cover lids to the rear section of the shared entryway was rusted in place and could not be lifted. No inspection of this chamber was undertaken.

Comment on the electrical installation is made from a visual inspection only and no tests have been carried out on electrical circuits, fittings or appliances.

G1 Electricity

Safety warning: You should have your electrical installations inspected and tested regularly to protect your home from damage and to avoid putting your safety at risk. Guidance published by the Institution of Electrical Engineers recommends that electrical installations should be inspected and tested at least every 10 years and when the occupiers of the property change. All electrical work carried out after 1 January 2005 should be recorded on an Electrical Installation Certificate.

Mains electricity is available to the property. The electricity meter is located in the cellar. The consumer unit is situated next to the meter. Comment on electrical installations is made from a visual inspection only and no tests have been carried out on electrical circuits, fittings or appliances.

3

There is evidence of past upgrading of electrical installations. This evidence includes replacement PVC cabling, upgraded earthing, a modern consumer unit and replacement fittings. However, further upgrading may be necessary in order to fully comply with regulations published by the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE). By way of further investigation, electrical installations should be tested. The electrical contractor should comment regarding the following items, which may require improvement: out of date test labeling to the consumer unit that indicates further testing should have been carried out circa June 2007. In addition, the number of power points is limited and should be increased in accordance with your requirements. In order to determine the extent of any further upgrading required, electrical installations should be inspected and tested by a NICEIC approved electrical contractor. (Condition Rating 3)

Electrical installations to the outbuilding, as well as external lighting to the walls and garden areas, should be checked.



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G2 Gas / oil

Safety warning: All gas and oil appliances and equipment should regularly be inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' and in line with the manufacturer's instructions. This is important to make sure that the equipment is working correctly, to limit the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning, and to prevent carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from leaking into the air. For more advice, contact the Gas Safe Register for gas installations, and OFTEC for oil installations.

Mains gas is connected to the property. The gas meter is located in the cellar. No significant visible defects were noted to the apparatus. (Condition Rating 1)



It is assumed that a suitable sleeve is provided where gas pipework passes through cavity wall structures, with mastic sealant provided between the gas pipe and the sleeve. This should be confirmed by a Gas Safe Contractor. (Condition Rating 1)

G3 Water

Mains water is connected to the property.

The stop tap is located beneath the work top in the kitchen.

The incoming water supply is in lead pipework and the underground supply may also be in lead, but this cannot be confirmed visually. (Condition Rating 3)

Lead is a deleterious material and concern has been expressed in the media regarding health risks associated with lead pipework and drinking water supplies. Lead pipework should be replaced in PVC and your responsibility will be to the boundary of the property. This work could be expensive and disruptive and further advice should be obtained from a plumber or the local water authority - see Section J. Visit the Drinking Water Inspectorate at www.dwi.gov.uk.

Since the boiler is a combination type, no hot or cold water storage facilities are required for this type of boiler.

There is an external tap located to the rear of the property. This should incorporate a non-return valve to prevent back suction and an isolator valve to prevent deterioration during inclement weather conditions. (Condition Rating 1)



G4 Heating

Central heating and domestic hot water is provided by a "Ravenheat" wall mounted gas fired combination boiler, located in the airing cupboard in the bathroom. This is a modern boiler and a guarantee may be applicable, your Legal Adviser should investigate - see Section I2. Although the boiler is modern, it is not the latest generation of condensing boilers and will not be as efficient as a condensing boiler. However, the cost benefit of upgrading on this basis alone is unlikely to be economic. Further advice may be obtained from a Gas Safe engineer or appropriate energy specialist. The central heating system was not seen in operation. As a precautionary measure, the boiler should be tested and serviced prior to use by a Gas Safe contractor. (Condition Rating 3)




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G4 Heating

It is assumed that ventilation to the gas boiler is in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines. Your Gas Safe contractor should comment regarding the adequacy of ventilation.

A circuit of radiators is in situ and no significant corrosion or other serious defects were noted to radiator surfaces, or pipework, where seen. The radiators are connected to one another by microbore pipework. Microbore pipework tends to have a limited life, being prone to blockage from scale build-up and to denting/puncture from physical impact. It is recommended that a de-scaling and anti-corrosion fluid is applied to the system. It is recommended that all radiator services, pipework and valves are checked at the time of the next servicing.

There is a dated looking gas fire located within the rear reception room. This will require servicing and testing prior to use. Ventilation to rooms containing gas fires may require upgrading and your Gas Safe contractor should comment upon this. (Condition Rating 3)

G5 Water heating

The hot water is provided by the heating boiler without a storage tank. (Condition Rating 1)



G6 Drainage

It is assumed that drains are connected to the mains sewer. This should be confirmed by your Legal Adviser - see Section I3.

A soil vent pipe is located to the rear face of the rear wing accommodation and is made of PVC sections. No significant defects were noted and no immediate repairs are required. (Condition Rating 1)

Waste water drainage from the kitchen and bathroom is provided in PVC pipework. Where waste pipes extend from the bathroom and cut into the soil vent pipe at the rear of the property, the pipe appears to be out of alignment and there is a possibility of leakage at joints. Some upgrading of this waste pipe would be beneficial. (Condition Rating 2)

Three inspection chambers are located on site, these have metal covers. Two of the chambers are located in the entryway to the side of the property. The front chamber cover lid is damaged and this should be replaced. The rear chamber cover lid is rusted into place and this could not be lifted. Ideally, this should be released and a precautionary check of the chamber and drainage channel undertaken. There is a third chamber located within the rear yard. This was lifted to reveal a shallow brick chamber and drainage channel. (Condition Rating 2)

Inspection of the drainage runs within the chambers revealed no significant defects to the chamber or drains. (Condition Rating 1)




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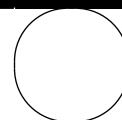
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G6 Drainage

It must be emphasised that a visual check of inspection chambers cannot confirm that other parts of the drainage system are free from defects, although there is no reason to anticipate such problems. Specialist advice should be obtained from a drainage contractor.

G7 Common services



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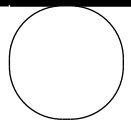
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Grounds (including shared areas for flats)

H1 Garage

None.



H2 Other

There is an attached brick outbuilding accommodating an external wc. This has a pitched slate roof. Some general wear and tear was noted to the roof and there are isolated damaged slates. It is recommended that this roof covering is overhauled when the main roof is repaired. There is no wash hand basin provided to the external wc. Ideally, a wash hand basin should be provided for health and hygiene purposes. The outbuilding remains stable. The extent of work required will depend upon the quality of finish you wish to achieve. (Condition Rating 2)



H3 General

To the front elevation, the property abuts the pavement. There is a shared pedestrian passageway to the right side of the property which gives access to the rear yard and garden. The passageway has accommodation over, rights and responsibilities to be verified by the Legal Adviser - see Section I3.

To the rear of the property, there is a brick yard area. Some surface unevenness was noted and some re-levelling of the bricks would be beneficial to prevent the possibility of trip accidents. The rear garden is mainly laid to paving slab hard standing. There is a small border and path. Some grass and weed growth was evident to the paving slabs and the border requires weeding and planting.

The adequacy of surface water drainage to the rear yard should be checked under rainfall conditions. If water pools adjacent to brickwork, this can cause deterioration and damp penetration. Under these circumstances, improved surface water drainage is recommended via the creation of soakaways or other surface water drains. Further advice should be obtained regarding repairs from a drainage contractor or general builder.



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H3 General

There is a concrete block wall to the left side boundary with the neighbour. Some general wear and tear was noted to this wall. There was no evidence of instability. Future maintenance will be required. There is a timber fence to the rear boundary, early maintenance to this fence will be required. To the right side boundary, timber posts have been provided but there is no fencing. Upgrading is recommended.

It is always sensible when purchasing any property who owns all boundaries and who is responsible for their maintenance. Your Legal Adviser will have this information.



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Issues for your legal advisers

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

Building Regulation approvals may have been necessary for the following: for any recent upgrading of electrical installations or the central heating system, dependent upon the date of these works. Documentary evidence to confirm this should be obtained via your Legal Adviser. If this is not available, enquiries should be made of Building Control at the Local Authority to determine whether or not approvals would be applicable.

A number of building regulations have been quoted. There are many aspects of the property which do not meet current Building Regulation standards and those mentioned in this report should not be thought exhaustive. Some Building Regulations are referred to where these are thought to impact significantly upon health and safety.

I2 Guarantees

A guarantee may exist for damp proofing works. This should be verified along with a schedule of works undertaken and it should be ensured that the guarantee is enforceable. If no enforceable guarantee is available, any works which may be required will be at your own expense.

A guarantee may exist for timber treatment works. This should be verified along with a schedule of works undertaken and it should be ensured that the guarantee is enforceable. If no enforceable guarantee is available, any works which may be required will be at your own expense.

Guarantees may exist for replacement double glazing/window frames. These should be obtained, verified and transferred to you on completion of the purchase.

Building Regulation approval or a FENSA Certificate should have been obtained for windows replaced on or after 1st April 2002. Documentary evidence should be obtained.

I3 Other matters

The property is assumed to be held on a freehold title, but the deeds have not been inspected. It is further assumed that vacant possession will be provided upon completion. Confirmation of title and vacant possession should be obtained via your Legal Adviser.

Roads and footpaths appear made up and adopted.

The property shares a pedestrian passageway having accommodation over. Ownership and maintenance liabilities, together with assumed pedestrian/vehicular rights of way and rights of service should be clarified by your Legal Adviser.



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I3 Other matters

The neighbouring property appears to have pedestrian right of way over the property. Your Legal Adviser should be asked to investigate all rights of way and rights for services.

Shared drainage arrangements, repair liabilities and easements should be verified by your Legal Adviser. You should also obtain a drainage search from the Local Water Authority.

It is assumed that all necessary legal arrangements exist for access over neighbouring land for future maintenance of the property.

It is assumed that all necessary way leaves are applicable with regard to overhead and underground cabling and other services. Your Legal Adviser should be asked to verify this.

It is assumed that the property is connected to the mains sewer which should be confirmed by the Local Water Authority. A drainage search should be obtained by your Legal Adviser.

The position and ownership of boundary lines should be verified as per title deeds plans.

An environmental search should be obtained.



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Risks

This section covers defects that need repairing or replacing, as well as issues that have existed for a long time and cannot reasonably be changed but may present a health and safety risk or hazard. If the defects affect specific elements, they will be referred to in the individual section. Other risks or hazards that also affect value are also reported.

J1 Risks to the building

The home is affected by dampness caused by failure of the damp proof course. Further comment upon dampness and the condition of timbers throughout the property should be provided by a PCA registered damp proofing/timber treatment contractor.

The bearing of the rear purlin to the chimneystack has distorted. Further deterioration could lead to instability of the roof structure. Further investigation is required. See further comments under Section F1.

J2 Risks to the grounds

An environmental search should be obtained by your Legal Adviser.

J3 Risks to people

In a property of this age, there is a possibility that lead paintwork may have been used. Care should be taken as lead is a deleterious material.

A handrail should be provided to the cellar staircase. The nosings are loose and this is a potential hazard. Better lighting to staircases, fixing of the handrail to the main staircase is recommended.

Carbon monoxide detectors are recommended for safety reasons. These should be monitored and renewed in accordance with the manufacturers guidelines.

You are advised to provide an adequate fire escape window. This should comply with prevailing Building Regulations. Further advice should be obtained from a FENSA registered double glazing contractor and/or Building Control at the Local Authority.

Ideally, mains wired in smoke alarms should be provided to the property for safety reasons.

Lead pipework has been identified in the plumbing system and is hazardous to health.

Certificate for electrical wiring to be obtained and verified.

Service documentation for gas appliances to be obtained and verified.



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J3 Risks to people

Re-surface uneven paths.

There are loose slates to the roof covering.

There is extensive deterioration to guttering and this could be a hazard.

J4 Other

None.



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Valuation



In my opinion the current market value on [REDACTED]

as inspected was:



(amount in words) [REDACTED]

TENURE **Freehold**

AREA OF PROPERTY (M²)* **93sqm**

In my opinion, the current reinstatement cost of the property (see below) is: £ **130,000**

* Approximate gross external / internal area of the building or flat.

You can find information about the assumptions I have made in calculating this reinstatement cost in the 'Description of the RICS HomeBuyer Service' provided. The reinstatement cost is the cost of rebuilding an average home of the type and style inspected to its existing standard using modern materials and techniques, and by acting in line with current Building Regulations and other legal requirements. This will help you decide on the amount of buildings insurance cover you will need for the property.

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.

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 condition of the property, or the purpose the property is, or will be, used for does not break any laws;
- no particularly troublesome or unusual restrictions apply to the property, that the property is not affected by problems which would be revealed by the usual legal inquiries, and that you have applied for and acted in line 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, and 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).

Any additional assumptions relating to the valuation:

Your legal advisers, and other people who carry out property conveyancing, should be familiar with these assumptions and are responsible for checking those concerning legal matters.

My opinion of the market value shown here could be affected by the outcome of the enquiries by your legal advisers (section I) and/or any further investigations and quotations for repairs or replacements. The valuation assumes that your legal advisers will receive satisfactory replies to their enquiries about any assumptions in this report.

Other considerations affecting value:

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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:

Surveyor's RICS number:

Qualifications:

Street:

Town:

Postcode:

E-mail address:

Website:

Phone:

Fax no:

Date this report was produced:

Property address:

Customer's name:

Property address:

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What to do now

Getting estimates

The cost of repairs may influence the amount you are prepared to pay for the property. Before you make a legal commitment to buy the property, you should get reports and estimates for all the repairs and further investigations the surveyor may have identified.

You should get at least two estimates from experienced contractors who are properly insured.

You should also:

- ask them for references from people they have worked for;
- describe in writing exactly what you want them to do; and
- get the contractors to put the estimates in writing.

Some repairs will need contractors with specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers, plumbers, and so on). Some work may also need you to get Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority. You can get more advice on these from the Government's website at www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/Planning/index.htm.

Further investigations

If the surveyor was concerned about the condition of a hidden part of the building or could only see part of a defect, or does not have the specialist knowledge to fully assess part of the property, they may have recommended that further investigations should be carried out to discover the true extent of the problem.

Who you should use for these further investigations

You should ask an appropriately qualified person. It is not possible to tell you which one because specialists belonging to several different types of organisations will be able to do this. For example, qualified electricians can belong to five different government-approved schemes. If you want further advice, please contact the surveyor. You can also get more advice on how to find an appropriately qualified person from the Government's website mentioned above.

What will the further investigations involve?

This will depend on the type of problem but, to do this properly, parts of the home may have to be disturbed and so you should discuss this matter with the current owner. In some cases, the cost of the investigation may be high.

When to do the work

The condition ratings help describe the urgency of the repair and replacement work. The following summary may help you decide when to do the work.

- Condition rating 2 – repairs should be done soon. Exactly when will depend on the type of problem but it usually does not have to be done right away. Many repairs could wait weeks or months, giving you time to organise suitable reports and estimates.
- Condition rating 3 – repairs should be done as soon as possible. The speed of your response will depend on the nature of the problem. For example, repairs to a badly leaking roof or a dangerous gas boiler need to be carried out within a matter of hours, while other less important critical repairs could wait for a few days.

Warning

Although repairs of elements with a condition rating 2 are not considered urgent, if they are not dealt with they may develop into more serious repairs. Flat roofs and gutters are typical examples. These can quickly get worse without warning and result in serious leaks.

As a result, you should regularly check elements with a condition rating 2 to make sure they are not getting worse.

Description of the RICS HomeBuyer Service

The service

The RICS HomeBuyer Service includes:

- an inspection of the property (see 'The inspection' below);
- a report based on the inspection (see 'The report' below); and
- a valuation, which is part of the report (see 'The valuation' below).

The surveyor who provides the RICS HomeBuyer Service aims to give you professional advice to help you to:

- make a reasoned and informed decision on whether to go ahead with buying the property;
- make an informed decision on what is a reasonable price to pay for the property;
- 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 concluding an offer (if the property is in Scotland).

The 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. This means that they do not take up carpets, floor coverings or floorboards, move furniture, remove the contents of cupboards, remove secured panels or undo electrical fittings. If necessary, the surveyor will carry out parts of the inspection when standing at ground level from public property next door.

The surveyor may use equipment such as a damp-meter, binoculars and torch, and may use a ladder for flat roofs and for hatches no more than three metres above level ground (outside) or floor surfaces (inside) if it is safe to do so.

Services to the property

Services are often hidden within the construction of the property and, as a result, only the visible parts of the available services can be inspected. The surveyor will not carry out specialist tests, or test or assess the efficiency of electrical, gas, plumbing, heating or drainage installations (or whether they meet current regulations) or the inside condition of any chimney, boiler or other flue.

Outside the property

The surveyor inspects the condition of boundary walls, fences, permanent outbuildings and areas in common (shared) use. To inspect these areas, the surveyor walks around the grounds and any neighbouring public property.

Buildings with swimming pools and sports facilities are also treated as permanent outbuildings, but the surveyor will not report on the leisure facilities, such as the pool itself and its equipment, landscaping and other facilities (for example, tennis courts and temporary outbuildings).

Flats

When inspecting flats, the surveyor will assess the general condition of outside surfaces of the building, as well as its access areas (shared hallways, staircases and so on). The surveyor will inspect roof spaces only if they can gain access to them from within the property. The surveyor will not inspect drains, lifts, fire alarms and security systems.

Dangerous materials, contamination and environmental issues.

The surveyor will not make any enquiries about contamination or other environmental dangers. However, if they suspect a problem, they should recommend a further investigation.

The surveyor may assume that no harmful or dangerous materials have been used in the construction, and does not have a duty to justify making this assumption. However, if the inspection shows that these materials have been used, the surveyor must report this and ask for further instructions.

The surveyor will not carry out an asbestos inspection, and will not act as an asbestos inspector when inspecting properties that may fall within the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. With flats, the surveyor will assume that there is a dutyholder (as defined in the regulations), and that an asbestos register and an effective management plan is in place which does not need any immediate payment or present a significant risk to health. The surveyor will not consult the dutyholder.

The report

The surveyor produces a report of their inspection for you to use, but cannot accept any liability if it is used by anyone else. If you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do this at your own risk. The report focuses on matters that, in the surveyor's opinion, may affect the value of the property if they are not dealt with.

The report is in a standard format and includes the following sections.

- A Introduction to the report
- B About the inspection
- C Summary of the condition ratings
- D About the property
- E Outside of the property
- F Inside of the property
- G Services
- H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)
- I Issues for your legal advisers
- J Risks
- K Valuation
- L Surveyor's declaration

What to do now

Description of the HomeBuyer Service

House diagram

The surveyor gives condition ratings to the main parts (or 'elements') of the main building, garage, and some outside elements. The condition ratings are described as follows.

Condition rating 1

No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

Condition rating 2

Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

Condition rating 3

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

NI Not inspected

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. However, there is general advice in the 'What to do now' section at the end of the report.

If, during the inspection, the surveyor identifies issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, the surveyor will refer to these in the report. The surveyor will state the Energy Efficiency Rating and Environmental Impact Rating as stated on the Energy Performance Certificate on the home, if available. The surveyor will not specifically comment on any legal documents or any documents that may be included in a Home Information Pack or Home Report.

The surveyor reports on property-related risks or hazards that will include defects that need repairing or replacing, as well as issues that have existed for a long time and cannot reasonably be changed but may present a health and safety risk or hazard.

If the property is leasehold, the surveyor will give you general advice and details of questions you should ask your legal advisers.

The valuation

The surveyor gives their opinion on both the market value of the property and the reinstatement cost at the time of their inspection. (See the 'Reinstatement cost' section opposite.)

Market value

'Market value' is the estimated amount a property should exchange for, on the date of the valuation, between a willing buyer and a willing seller, in an arm's length transaction after the property was properly marketed wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.

When deciding on the market value, the surveyor also makes the following assumptions.

The materials, construction, services, fixtures and fittings, and so on

The surveyor will assume that:

- an inspection of those parts which have not yet been inspected would not identify significant defects or cause the surveyor to alter their 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 and sales incentives of any description.

Legal matters

The surveyor will assume that:

- the property is sold with 'vacant possession' (your legal adviser can give you more information on this term);
- the condition of the property, or the purpose that the property is, or will be, used for does not break any laws;
- no particularly troublesome or unusual restrictions apply to the property, that the property is not affected by problems which would be revealed by the usual legal enquiries, and that you have applied for and acted in line 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, and 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).

The surveyor will report any more assumptions they have made or found not to apply.

If the property is leasehold, the general advice referred to above will explain what other assumptions the surveyor has made.

Reinstatement cost

'Reinstatement cost' is the cost of rebuilding an average home of the type and style inspected to its existing standard using modern materials and techniques and in line with current Building Regulations and other legal requirements.

This includes the cost of rebuilding any garage, boundary or retaining walls and permanent outbuildings, and clearing the site. It also includes professional fees, but does not include VAT (except on fees).

The reinstatement cost will help you decide on the amount of buildings insurance cover you will need for the property.

Standard terms of engagement

1 The service – the surveyor will provide the standard RICS HomeBuyer Service ('the service') described in the 'Description of the RICS HomeBuyer Service', unless you and the surveyor agree in writing before the inspection that the surveyor will give you additional advice.

2 The surveyor providing the service will be a full Member or Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, who has the skills, knowledge and experience to survey, value and report on the property.

3 Before the inspection – you will tell the surveyor if there is already an agreed, or proposed, price for the property, and if you have any particular concerns (such as plans for extension) about the property.

4 Terms of payment – you agree to pay the surveyor's fee and any other charges agreed in writing.

5 Cancelling this contract – you are entitled to cancel this contract by giving notice to the surveyor's office at any time before the day of the inspection. The surveyor will not provide the service (and will report this to you as soon as possible) if, after arriving at the property, they decide that:

- a they lack enough specialist knowledge of the method of construction used to build the property; or
- b it would be in your best interests to have a building survey and a valuation, rather than the RICS HomeBuyer Service.

If you cancel this contract, the surveyor will refund any money you have paid for the service, except for any reasonable expenses. If the surveyor cancels this contract, they will explain the reason to you.

6 Liability – the report is provided for your use, and the surveyor cannot accept responsibility if it is used by anyone else.

Complaints handling procedure

The surveyor will have a complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask.

Note: These terms form part of the contract between you and the surveyor.

House diagram

