



MI HOME BUYER SURVEY

360° CONFIDENCE FOR HOME BUYERS

# HOME BUYER SURVEY

CLIENT

PROPERTY

SURVEY DATE 25 Aug 2020

REF 8629




The format of this Mi HOME BUYER SURVEY is consistent with the guidance note requirements for a Survey Level 2 as defined by RICS Surveys of Residential Property 3rd edition May 2016



Domestic Property Surveys



RPSA<sup>TM</sup>  
Residential Property  
Surveyors Association

	<b>Index</b>	
<b>Section</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	
1.1	About the survey and the report	
1.2	How the survey is carried out	
1.3	Condition Ratings	
1.4	Conflicts of Interest	
1.5	Specific Exclusions for this property	
<b>2</b>	<b>Property Information</b>	
2.1	About the property	
2.2	Overall condition summary	
2.3	External photographs	
2.4	Summary of accommodation	
2.5	Floorplan	
2.6	Energy Efficiency	
<b>3</b>	<b>Conveyancing, Health &amp; Safety and Environmental Related Matters</b>	
3.1	Conveyancing related matters	
3.2	Health & Safety related matters	
3.3	Environmental matters	
<b>4</b>	<b>Outside of the Property</b>	<b>Condition Rating</b>
4.1	Chimney Stacks	1
4.2	Roof Coverings	1
4.3	Rainwater and Above Ground Drainage Fittings	1
4.4	Walls	2
4.5	Windows and External Doors	1
4.6	External Joinery and Finishes	1
4.7	Conservatories and Porches	1

5	Inside of the Property	Condition Rating
5.1	Roof spaces	2
5.2	Ceilings	1
5.3	Walls	1
5.4	Floors	1
5.5	Chimney Breasts, Fireplaces and Flues	NA
5.6	Built-In Fittings	1
5.7	Internal Joinery	1
5.8	Bathroom and Sanitary Fittings	1
6	Services	Condition Rating
6.1	Electricity	HS
6.2	Gas/Oil	HS
6.3	Water	1
6.4	Heating and Cooling	HS
6.5	Drainage	NI
6.6	Other Services	1
7	External Elements	Condition Rating
7.1	Garaging	2
7.2	Outbuildings and Sheds	1
7.3	Grounds	1
7.4	Common and Shared Areas	NA
7.5	Neighbourly Matters	
8	Addendum	
8.1	About your surveyor	
8.2	Maintenance advice	
8.3	Customer Care	



## 1.1 - About the survey and the report

### Introduction

This report is for the private and confidential use of the client named in the report and for whom the survey is undertaken, and for the use of their professional advisors, and should not be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon by Third Parties for any purpose without the express written authority of the Surveyor.

This report is produced by a properly qualified surveyor who will provide an objective opinion about the condition of the property which you, as the buyer, will be able to rely on and use. However, if you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do so at your own risk.

### What this report tells you;

- about the construction of the property and the history of its development as far as could be ascertained.
- about the condition of the property on the date it was inspected.
- any limitations that the surveyor experienced during the course of the inspection, and the nature of risks that may be present in those areas
- the nature of any significant defects that were found.
- how to approach rectification of defects identified.
- about elements of the property that will require more frequent or costly maintenance than would normally be expected
- whether more enquiries or investigations are needed.

### What this report does not tell you;

- the market value of the property or matters that will be considered when a market valuation is provided.
- about the nature or condition of any part of the property that is/was
  - specifically excluded from the inspection by prior arrangement
  - not accessible or visible using normal and accepted surveying practices
  - not accessible or visible for health or safety reasons
- about any minor defects that would be anticipated in a property of the type and age being inspected - the nature of such minor defects will vary between property types
- details of defects that would normally be categorised as wear and tear or which would normally be dealt with as a matter of routine maintenance.
- the report is not an asbestos inspection under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
- any advice on subjects that are not covered by the report. If you need further advice you must arrange for it to be provided separately.
- the condition of services (heating, plumbing, electrics, drains etc.) other than can be determined from a visual inspection and when checking them by operating them in normal everyday circumstances.



## 1.2 - How the survey is carried out

### General

The surveyor carefully and thoroughly carries out a visual and non-invasive inspection of the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction and defects (both major and minor) that are evident. This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as physically accessible. Where this is not possible an explanation is provided in the relevant sections of the report.

The surveyor does not force or open up the fabric, or take action where there is a risk of causing personal injury or damage. This includes taking up fitted carpets, fitted floor coverings or floorboards, moving heavy furniture, removing the contents of cupboards, wardrobes, and/or roof spaces, moving of personal possessions, removing secured panels and/or hatches or undoing electrical fittings. The under-floor areas are inspected only where there is safe and clear access.

If necessary, the surveyor carries out parts of the inspection when standing at ground level from adjoining public property where accessible. This means the extent of the inspection will depend on a range of individual circumstances at the time of inspection, and the surveyor judges each case on an individual basis.

The surveyor uses equipment such as a moisture meter, binoculars and a torch, and uses a ladder for flat roofs and for hatches no more than 3m above level ground (outside) or floor surfaces (inside) if it is safe to do so. The surveyor may also carries out additional research about matters affecting the property.

### Services

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. This means that only the visible parts of the available services can be inspected, and the surveyor does not carry out specialist tests other than through their normal operation in everyday use. The visual inspection cannot assess the efficiency or safety of electrical, gas or other energy sources; the plumbing, heating or drainage installations (or whether they meet current regulations); or the internal condition of any chimney, boiler or other flue. Intermittent faults of services may not be apparent on the day of inspection. If any services (such as the boiler or mains water) are turned off, they are not turned on for safety reasons and the report will state that to be the case.

### Outside

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 where access can reasonably be obtained. Where there are restrictions to access, these are reported and advice is given on any potential underlying risks that may require further investigation.

### Outbuildings

Buildings with swimming pools and sports facilities are treated as permanent outbuildings and therefore are inspected, but the surveyor does not report on the leisure facilities, such as the pool itself and associated equipment internally and externally, landscaping or other facilities (for example, tennis courts and temporary outbuildings).



## 1.2 - How the survey is carried out

### Flats

When inspecting flats, the surveyor assesses the general condition of outside surfaces of the building, as well as its access and communal areas (for example, shared hallways and staircases) and roof spaces, but only if they are accessible from within the property or communal areas. The surveyor also identifies drains, lifts, fire alarms and security systems, although the surveyor does not carry out any specialist tests other than through their normal operation in everyday use. For safety reasons, drainage inspection chambers in communal areas are not lifted.

### Hazardous substances, contamination and environmental issues

Unless otherwise expressly stated in the report, the surveyor assumed that no harmful or dangerous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property. However, the surveyor will advise in the Report if, in his view, there is a likelihood that harmful or dangerous materials have been used in the construction and specific enquiries should be made or tests should be carried out by a specialist.

The surveyor makes enquiries about contamination or other environmental dangers. If the surveyor suspects a problem, he/she recommends further investigation. See also section 3.3.

The Surveyor does not comment upon the possible existence of noxious substances, landfill or mineral extraction, or other forms of contamination other than in a general sense if information is available.

### Asbestos

The surveyor does not carry out an asbestos inspection and does not act as an asbestos inspector when inspecting properties that may fall within the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. With flats, the surveyor assumes that there is a 'dutyholder' (as defined in the regulations), and that in place are an asbestos register and an effective management plan which does not present a significant risk to health or need any immediate payment. The surveyor does not consult the dutyholder. See also section 3.2

### Consents, approvals and searches

The Surveyor is entitled to assume that the property is not subject to any unusual or onerous restrictions, obligations or covenants which apply to the Property or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the Property.

The Surveyor is entitled to assume that all planning, building regulations and other consents required in relation to the Property have been obtained. The Surveyor did not verify whether such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the client or the client's legal advisers prior to exchange of contracts. Drawings and specifications were not inspected by the Surveyor unless otherwise previously agreed.

The Surveyor is entitled to assume that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a Local Search and replies to the usual enquiries, or by a Statutory Notice, and that neither the Property, nor its condition, its use or its intended use, is or will be unlawful.

### Assumptions

Unless otherwise expressly agreed, the surveyor while preparing the report assumed that:

- a. the property (if for sale) is offered with vacant possession;
- b. the Property is connected to mains services with appropriate rights on a basis that is known and acceptable to the Client; and
- c. access to the Property is as of right upon terms known and acceptable to the Client.



## 1.2 - How the survey is carried out (contd)

### Legal matters

The surveyor does not act as 'the legal adviser' and does not comment on any legal documents. If, during the inspection, the surveyor identifies issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, the surveyor may refer to these in the report (for example, check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows).

The report has been prepared by the Surveyor, who has the skills, knowledge and experience to survey and report on the property.

The statements and opinions expressed in the report are expressed on behalf of the Surveyor, who accepts full responsibility for these.

The report is provided for the use of the client(s) named on the front of the report and the Surveyor cannot accept responsibility if it is used, or relied upon, by anyone else.

Nothing in these terms removes your right of cancellation under the Consumer Contracts Regulations 2013.

If the property is leasehold, the Surveyor gives you general advice and details of questions you should ask your legal advisers. This general advice is given towards the back of the report.



## 1.3 - Condition Ratings

The report applies 'condition ratings' to the major parts of the main building, associated habitable structures, and other structures present. The property is broken down into separate elements, and each element has been given a condition rating 1, 2, 3, HS or NI – see more on definitions below.

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

The condition ratings are described:-

### Condition Rating 1

Only minor or cosmetic repairs, or no repairs at all are currently needed. Normal maintenance must be carried out.

### Condition Rating 2

Repairs or replacements are needed but these are not considered to be serious or urgent.

### Condition Rating 3

These are defects which are either serious and/or require urgent repair or replacement or where it is felt that further investigation is required (for instance where there is reason to believe repair work is needed but an invasive investigation is required to confirm this). A serious defect is one which could lead to rapid deterioration in the property, or one where the building element has failed or where its imminent failure could lead to more serious structural damage. You should obtain quotes for additional work where a condition rating 3 is given, prior to exchange of contracts.

### Condition Rating **HS**

These are actual, or potential, health and safety related matters that require your immediate attention. **Failure to attend to these issues could result in serious injury or death** In many cases it will require specific testing of services such as electricity or gas to confirm that they are safe to use, but in other instances it may relate to actual, or perceived, risks of falls or other hazards.

It is recommended that that these matters are treated as urgent and should be attended to as soon as possible after receipt of this report and prior to any exchange of contracts.


### **NI**


Not inspected. Indicates an element of the property that could not be inspected due to some restriction of access or view.

### **NA**

Not applicable – this element is not present at the property or is included within another section of the report.



	<b>Section - 1.4/1.5 - Additional Information for this Survey</b>	
<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	A conflict of interest is anything that impedes or might be perceived to impede an individual's or firm's ability to act impartially and in the best interest of a client.	There are no known relevant conflicts of interest
	Areas which are excluded from the inspection and report by prior arrangement	There are no areas of the property excluded from the extent of the inspection at the request of the client

	<b>Section 2 Property information</b> <b>2.1 - About the property</b>
<b>Seller Information</b>	<p>The property owners were not present for any part of the survey. The keys were collected from the agents.</p>
<b>General Construction Information</b>	<p>The property is a detached bungalow which was probably built in the 1970's. It is of brick cavity wall construction and the roof is a traditional cut timber structure covered in plain concrete tiles. The windows are all uPVC double glazed units and the floor is of solid construction.</p> <p>A single storey extension and a conservatory have been added to the rear.</p> <p>The British Geological Website indicates that the bedrock geology is of Lewes nodular chalk.</p> <p>References in the report refer: The front of the property is deemed as road side. The left and right of the property are as standing outside facing the front door. Room names are referenced from the floorplan supplied.</p>
<b>Council Information</b>	<p>No specific information for this property was available on the public areas of the council planning website section.</p>
<b>Listing</b>	<p>According to Historic England the property is not listed.</p>
<b>Nature of the property when inspected</b>	<p>The property was vacant, habitable and unfurnished.</p> <p>All connected services were operational.</p>
<b>Summary of mains services</b>	<p>Gas – Connected to Mains  Electricity – Connected to Mains  Drainage – Connected to Mains  Water – Connected to Mains</p>
<b>Weather Conditions</b>	<p>At the time of survey there was light drizzle.</p>
<b>Local Authority</b>	<p>The property is within the area of Gravesham Borough Council</p>

<b>Conservation / AONB / National Parks</b>	No specific issue noted by surveyor
<b>Heating</b>	<p>A full central heating system is installed with a gas fired boiler supplying hot water to radiators throughout the property.</p> <p>The boiler was not inspected in detail and should be examined by a suitably qualified engineer in accordance with the manufacturers' guidance.</p>
<b>Outside facilities</b>	<p>A garage was attached to the side of the property.</p> <p>The gardens extend to the rear of the property. There is a patio area to the rear of the property.</p> <p>There is a timber shed in the rear garden.</p>
<b>Renewable Energy Services</b>	There are no renewable energy services installed at the property.
<b>Broadband Service</b>	I have not carried out an assessment of broadband speeds for this property. If this is important to you, it is essential you check with your preferred broadband provider or request a speed test at the property when you visit and certainly before you commit to the purchase.
<b>Tenure</b>	The property is understood to be of freehold tenure and with vacant possession but your conveyancer should confirm this to be the case.



## Section 2 Property information

### 2.2 - Summary and Issues

This section is a summary of matters that are of particular interest but you should consider ALL information contained in this report.

<b>General</b>	<p>No serious issues were presented at the time of the survey. There are a number of medium level issues that require attention together with some minor observations .</p> <p>It should be noted that in any property of this age there will be general unevenness of the surfaces and structures of walls, floors, ceilings, doors, windows and other elements. These have occurred due to settlement of the structure and general usage over an extended period. It is not possible to highlight each individual example of such distortions and only those felt to be of an unusual nature have been highlighted.</p> <p>The main overall observation is that there is a level of asbestos still present in the garage. This is typical of properties built post-war and care should be taken if any major intrusive updating works are planned.</p>
<b>Main Issues</b>	<p>1)Asbestos material in the garage roof</p> <p>2)Vertical cracks between the conservatory and the rear extension/main property.</p>
<b>Dampness Background Information</b>	<p>There is no evidence of any rising damp or excessive levels of cold bridging at the property. Condensation levels are within levels to be expected for a property of this type and age.</p>
<b>Structural</b>	<p>Some differential settlement between the conservatory and the rear extension/main property.</p>
<b>Health &amp; Safety related matters</b>	<p>There is no evidence of recent inspection of the electrical or heating systems, but certification may be available. See also 6.1 and 6.2.</p>



## 2.3 - External Photographs



Front Elevation




Front Elevation



Side Elevation



Rear Elevation

 <b>2.4 - Summary of Accommodation</b>									
	Reception Rooms	Bedrooms	Bath/ Shower	Sep WC	Kitchen	Utility	Conservatory / Sun room	Other	Integral Garage
Ground Floor	2	2	1		1		1		
The approximate living area of the property, excluding outbuildings, is 110.2m <sup>2</sup>									





## 2.5 - Floorplan



floorplan

Floorplan for illustrative purposes only. Not to scale. Not to be used for estimating or measuring purposes





## 2.6 - Energy Performance

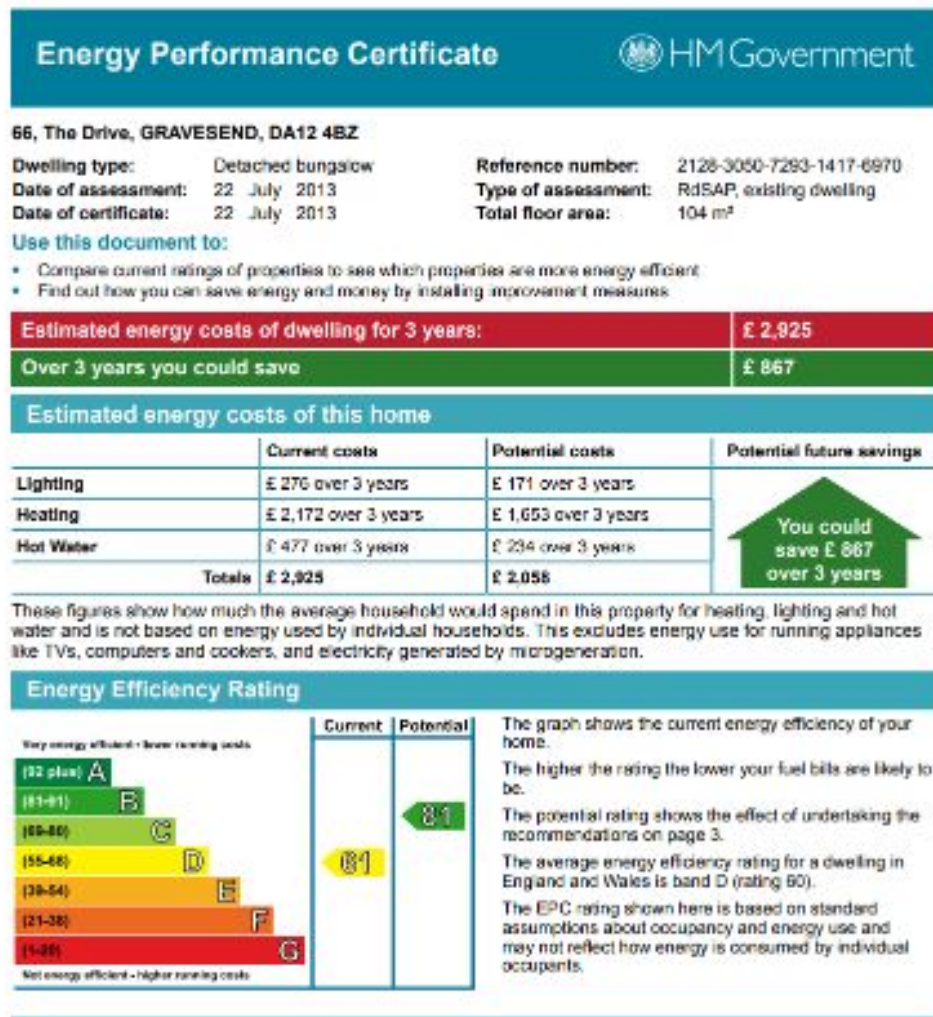
The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is obtained from the publicly accessible national database where one has been lodged. There is no requirement for an EPC to be prepared for some property types, for example, listed buildings. The surveyor considers the contents of the EPC and provides information about energy efficiency measures that could be implemented.

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for the property, which was not prepared by me, shows a current efficiency rating of 61, band D. The potential rating is given as 81, band B. The rating as provided for this property is around the UK average. We have obtained the complete 4-page EPC document should you wish to see a copy.

The property could benefit from increasing the depth of insulation to the roof space. Currently there is approximately 150mm of insulation installed. The recommended depth is 270mm. When installing loft insulation it is essential to ensure that good ventilation of the roof space is maintained.

Further improvements can be gained employing renewable energy sources such as Solar and PV panels for hot water and electricity generation.

Before commencing any work you should ensure that all statutory permissions have been obtained for any changes you wish to make to your property.



epc



## Section 3 - Conveyancing, Health & Safety and Environmental Matters

### 3.1 - Conveyancing Related Matters

<b>Extensions &amp; Alterations</b>	<p>Extensions: Single storey  Conservatory: To rear  Loft Conversion: None noted  New Boiler: A modern condensing boiler has been installed  Chimney / Breast Removals: Chimney breasts have been mostly removed  Wall Removal: To enable rear extension and conservatory  Post 2002 Windows: None noted  Log Burner Installation: None noted  Electrical Circuits: None noted  Renewables: None noted  Drainage: None Noted</p>
<b>Access &amp; Rights of way</b>	There are no shared vehicular access rights affecting the property
<b>Easements &amp; Wayleaves</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Property Let</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Tree Preservation Orders</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Party Wall Award</b>	None
<b>Drainage</b>	No issue noted by surveyor

<b>Boundaries and Title Deeds</b>	<p>The Land Registry holds a map, called the Title Plan, which is the Government's official register of the location of a property. Although it shows the boundaries of the property, normally in a red line, they are only an indication of the location of the boundaries and are not specific or highly accurate. The line drawn on the plan may be 1 mm wide at a scale of 1:1250, giving an accuracy of significantly less than 1 metre on the ground.</p> <p>In most cases this is the only official recognition of the boundaries of a property.</p> <p>As such, it is impossible to determine whether a fence or wall is in the correct place. However, during the course of the survey an inspection was conducted to identify any obvious features which could suggest that the boundaries are not consistent with the general line identified on the title plan.</p> <p>No detailed measurements were taken to establish the precise location of any boundary, and, if concerned, you should seek further advice from a boundary dispute specialist, particularly if planning to make alterations that might be immediately adjacent to, or affect, the boundaries.</p> <p>Determining the precise location of a boundary can be a very lengthy and expensive process, and can result in disputes arising between neighbours.</p> <p>Similarly, the Land Registry title documents rarely indicate who is responsible for the maintenance, repair or replacement of a particular boundary fence or wall. And although existing neighbours may believe that an arrangement is officially recorded, it is usually the case that no such information is given within the title plan or register, and that most boundary fences and walls are of shared responsibility.</p> <p>Observations No issue noted by surveyor but I have not checked the title plan against the actual house layout. We have just checked the indicative HMLR Mapsearch facility which shows no obvious anomalies.</p> <p>You should check the title deed as supplied by your legal advisor against the actual property layout on the ground.</p>
<b>Common and Shared Areas</b>	<p>No common or shared areas noted by surveyor</p>

3.2 - Health & Safety related matters	
<b>Fire Risk</b>	Although smoke alarms are fitted at the property they have not been tested. You should ensure that there are sufficient devices fitted at the property and that they are all in good working order.
<b>Safety Glass</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Lead Pipes</b>	A visual inspection was carried out, however pipes buried within walls or beneath the ground were not inspected. Legislation banning the use of lead in plumbing systems was introduced in 1970 and lead solder has not been used in water supply systems since the 1980s. Properties built prior to these dates are at risk and if the incoming supply is of lead it should be replaced for health and safety purposes.
<b>Risk of Falls</b>	Window Cill heights: No Issue Noted Unprotected Balconies: No Issue Noted Trip Hazards: No Issue Noted
<b>Unsafe Fittings</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Insect and Rodent Infestations</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Recent testing of services</b>	There is no evidence of recent inspection of the electrical or heating systems, but certification may be available. See also 6.1 and 6.2.

<b>Asbestos</b>	<p>This report is not an asbestos inspection under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and no specific testing to detect the presence of asbestos has been conducted.</p> <p>Based on a visual inspection only, the Surveyor noted that some ceiling coatings may contain asbestos. See also section 5.2. Some of the corrugated roof covering to the garage contains asbestos material.</p> <p>The following should be noted:- No specific tests have been carried out to confirm the presence or absence of asbestos in any materials, and so any references are an assumption based on of the type and age of material seen. None of the materials seen were in a condition that would give any cause for concern, even were they to contain any asbestos. Asbestos only poses a risk where airborne fibres are present and none of the materials seen were seen to be damaged in a way that would release fibres.</p> <p>Asbestos containing materials were commonly used in the construction, conversion and refurbishment of houses in the 1950's-70's, though the use of asbestos was not completely prohibited until the late 1990's. Many houses therefore include materials that contain asbestos and are lived in safely and without risk to health. However you should be aware that there are health risks when asbestos containing materials are drilled or sanded and you should consider this when carrying out any alterations, repairs or renovations.</p> <p>Any such materials should not be drilled or disturbed without prior advice from a licensed specialist. You can obtain further information from the Health &amp; Safety Executive asbestos site <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm</a></p>
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3.3 - Environmental Matters	
<b>Flood</b>	Please note that flooding can occur outside designated flood prone areas. The Environment Agency are constantly updating their data to reflect any new incidents of flooding or any increased risks of flooding. This publicly available information should be used to indicate a level of risk to the property. You should consult your legal advisor with regards to the options for carrying out a full environment search.
<b>Geology</b>	The British Geological website indicates the ground is of chalk which is a solid base and hence not liable to move adversely. See further comments in 4.4
<b>Radon</b>	<p>Every building contains radon but the levels are usually low. The chances of a higher level depend on the type of ground. Public Health England has published a map showing where high levels are more likely.</p> <p>In this case the risk of higher than normal radon levels is between 1% and 3%</p> <p>see  <a href="https://www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps">https://www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps</a>  for further information</p>
<b>Fracking</b>	<p>The Oil &amp; Gas Authority (OGA) operates a website that provides information about the location of oil and gas deposits, wells, and areas where licenses have been granted or offered for exploration purposes. This may include drilling for oil or gas, or the extraction of shale gas, commonly known as fracking.</p> <p>Further information is available from the website <a href="http://www.ogauthority.co.uk">www.ogauthority.co.uk</a></p>
<b>Landfill</b>	No issue noted by surveyor
<b>Invasive Species</b>	It should be noted that a full and detailed inspection for the presence of Japanese Knotweed cannot be carried out especially where the gardens are well stocked or have been recently cut and maintained. No evidence of the presence of Japanese Knotweed was seen during my inspection but you are advised to seek further advice if you believe it may be present or are aware that it is present in premises nearby.
<b>Mining</b>	No issue noted by surveyor



## Section 4 - Outside of the Property



### 4.1 Chimney Stacks

Condition  
rating

1

**Construction  
& Type and  
Limitations**

Both chimney stacks are brick built and the flashing at the base of each stack at the junction with the roof slopes is of lead.

The chimneys were examined from ground level for possible defects including undue movement, distortion, chemical or weather related damage, brickwork, render and pointing damage and other evidence of failure.

Due to limited viewing angles it is not possible to see all faces of the chimney stacks from ground level, and it is assumed that the condition of those faces not visible is similar to that of the visible faces.

**Condition**

All flashings, brickwork and pointing seen were in a fair condition.

The chimney stacks should be regularly monitored for any indications of damage, instability or other defects. Missing, loose or defective mortar should be re-pointed as necessary.





Chimney stack





Main chimney Stack

	4.2 Roof Coverings	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The main roof slopes are hipped and covered with plain concrete tiles and all ridge tiles are concrete.</p> <p>There is a flat roof section to the rear extension which is of built up layers of mineral felt.</p> <p>The roof pitches were examined from ground level for possible defects including sagging, collapse, broken/missing/damaged tiles, holes, and other evidence of failure.</p> <p>Only a limited inspection could be carried out to the flat roof.</p>		

<p><b>Condition</b></p>	<p><b>Pitched Sections</b> All tiles seen were in a fair condition with no evidence of any major failures or defects. The top line of ridge tiles is even with no evidence of any undue levels of flexing or bowing.</p> <p><b>Flat Sections</b> The flat roof appeared to be in a serviceable condition.</p> <p>Built up bitumen and felt flat roofs have a limited life expectancy generally not more than 15/20 years, and they can fail within a shorter time span. It is essential to monitor and maintain this roof carefully repairing any sections that start to show signs of blistering.</p> <p>Pitched Sections: Carry out normal maintenance including removal of moss build-up.</p> <p>Any slipped, missing or broken tiles on the roof pitches should be repaired and replaced. You should carry out a thorough visual inspection at least once a year, ideally in the Spring to identify and repair any damage that could have been caused by winter weather. Any missing mortar at the verges and beneath any hip or ridge tiles should be replaced. Any moss or other accumulated plant matter should be cleared</p> <p>Flat Sections: Ideally you should anticipate that it would require normal maintenance for the short to medium term but you should allow for recovering within 10years, although, there is no evidence of failure at present. The most likely areas where deterioration will occur are the joints between the flat roof and the parapets or to other upstands. When any recovering is undertaken, the supporting structure may also need some attention.</p>
	 <p>Side roof</p>





Front roof



Front roof



	<b>4.3 Rainwater and Above Ground Drainage Fittings</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The rainwater gutters and downpipes are uPVC throughout. The soil stack is cast iron.</p> <p>An inspection was carried out from ground level to look for possible areas of leakage, misalignment, overflow and other defects. The soil stacks and gulley were examined for any signs of damage, leakage, correct supports, cracking and evidence of significant wear.</p> <p>As it was dry at the time of survey only a limited assessment could be made as to the effectiveness of the rainwater fittings.</p> <p>No tests have been carried out to either trace or establish the structure or condition of any underground soakaways.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>The gutters are currently in fair condition and alignment. There were no significant leaks noted but all gutters require examining periodically and clearing of moss, leaves and silt which will inevitably accumulate.</p> <p>Cast iron fittings, such as the soil pipe, are of an older style and prone to sudden failure. Although no evidence of any failure was noted, it would be prudent to consider changing these fittings to a more modern uPVC alternative.</p> <p>The soil stack and associated plumbing is in a fair condition with no leakages noted.</p> <p>Gutters and downpipes should be cleaned and inspected regularly to ensure that they are free from blockages and leaks. If it is noted during any heavy rain, that gutters or downpipe joints are leaking, then these must be fixed as soon as possible to prevent water penetration to the property and damage to the foundations.</p>		

	<b>4.4 Walls</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The outside walls are brick-faced and of cavity construction. The damp proof course at ground level [waterproofing to prevent rising damp] is PVC.</p> <p>The outside walls were examined from ground level from vantage points within the grounds of the property and suitable public areas around. The walls were examined for signs of bowing or leaning, damaged brickwork and pointing, cracking, indications of subsidence and land failure and other defects.</p>		

<p><b>Condition</b></p>	<p>Stability and vertical alignment is generally satisfactory. Condition and alignment of the brickwork is fair. There is no evidence of any significant bulges or major structural cracks, although there are some vertical cracks between the conservatory and rear extension/main house that will need to be monitored carefully</p> <p>Most properties are subject to slight settling down over the years as sub-soil consolidates and adjusts to changes in ground condition. This will frequently result in limited differential movement, which is often expressed as minor cracking or distortion of window and door openings and is rarely of structural significance.</p> <p>Externally the brick window lintels and vertical mortar junctions are all complete with no evidence of any movement. These areas are mentioned specifically as any movement to the property would be noted at these points.</p> <p>In all external walls there should be a damp proof course (DPC) just above ground level. This is an impervious layer present to prevent dampness rising up the walls from the ground. In modern properties this is often a plastic membrane but in older properties other materials such as bitumen felt or slate are often found. Houses built before 1880, or so, usually have no provision to prevent dampness rising up, or penetrating through, the walls. In this case the DPC can be seen at the base of the walls.</p> <p>Wall ties are metal linking plates built into the wall at intervals to hold the inner and outer leaves of the cavity wall together. In older properties these may have been of wrought iron that has since corroded and failed. In later properties they may be of galvanised steel, stainless steel or plastic. In the worst case their failure can allow the outer leaf to fall away from the inner leaf of brickwork. No evidence was seen to indicate any failure of the wall ties and it is therefore assumed that they are in a stable condition.</p> <p>There is evidence that the wall cavities have been filled with insulation (cavity wall insulation), though the exact nature, quality, and quantity of insulation inserted can only be determined by an invasive examination with the use of cameras. No issues are noted or suspected at this time.</p> <p>Walls should be examined regularly to inspect for changes in the nature of any cracking or other defects that may become apparent.</p>
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Crack between conservatory and main property



Crack between conservatory and rear extension




Rear extension



	4.5 Windows and External Doors	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The front and rear doors are uPVC and all of the windows are double glazed with uPVC frames.</p> <p>All external doors were checked for normal operation and signs of failure or damage.</p> <p>Windows were examined for general signs of degradation and failure including blown double glazing units and worn seals. Opening was attempted to all windows and all checked for normal operation. The condensation levels in certain weather conditions can disguise evidence of blown double glazed units.</p>		



<b>Condition</b>	<p><b>Doors</b> No significant defects were noted, all doors operated effectively on opening and closure. All locks functioned correctly.</p> <p><b>Windows</b> uPVC frames can vary enormously in quality and an assessment of individual design is beyond the scope of this report. They are less suitable for piecemeal repairs whilst stay mechanisms and fixings can require occasional overhaul. The double-glazed units appear serviceable but will need routine maintenance. Double-glazing has a limited life and is prone to deterioration at edge seals. This can sometimes be recognised by moisture between the panes but its presence is dependent upon atmospheric conditions that are, of course variable. Such defects cannot always be diagnosed during a single inspection.</p> <p>Under normal circumstances sealed double glazed units can be expected to last around 20 years before the seals begin to fail. This can occur more quickly where windows are in exposed or vulnerable situations. It is estimated that most of the windows currently fitted are approximately 10-15 years old and there is no evidence of any imminent failures. The condensation levels in certain weather conditions can disguise evidence of blown double glazed units, but no issues were noted or suspected.</p> <p>Any future blown double glazing units require replacement. It should also be considered that, where some sealed units within a window have failed, others may also fail in due course.</p> <p>Normal maintenance of frames, hinges and locks is required.</p> <p>Be aware that previous owners may have distributed multiple sets of keys for the windows and doors to individuals not known to you. When purchasing a property, you should consider the cost of replacing all of the door and window locks as soon as possible after you take up occupation. When doing this you should consult your insurers to ensure that you meet their requirements for security, and obtain any discounts that may be available by improving the security of the property.</p>
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	<b>4.6 External Joinery and Finishes</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The soffits, fascias and bargeboards are all of uPVC construction.</p> <p>Soffits are the horizontal timbers joining the fascia boards to the house walls. Fascia boards are the vertical timbers to which the gutters are normally fixed. Barge boards are the diagonal boards at the roof edge on the gable end of the house. All such materials were examined from ground level for indications of poor maintenance, rot and other damage.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	All of these boards are reasonably sound, have been maintained and appear to be in a serviceable condition. There is no immediate requirement for any attention.		



	4.7 Conservatories and Porches	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>There is a conservatory to the rear of the property. It is of uPVC construction with glazed sections on three sides, a pitched polycarbonate roof and is on a brick dwarf wall.</p> <p>The conservatory structure was examined for indications of leaking, bowing, leaning, cracking and undue movement, failure or damage of the floor, walls and roof, separation from the main building, and other defects.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>Access to the conservatory is gained by an open wall section with no external quality doors between the two parts. As this is open, building regulation approval would have been required in addition to any planning approvals gained. Your Legal advisor should check these matters during the conveyancing process.</p> <p>There is no horizontal cross-bracing of the side walls present inside the conservatory. Such bracing is often present to prevent the walls from spreading outwards at the top, and takes the form of metal tubing attached between the top of opposing walls. No evidence of spreading of the walls was seen but you should be aware that this can occur, and may choose to install some bracing as a preventative measure.</p>		
			

Inside Conservatory



Inside Conservatory



## Section 5 - Inside the Property



### 5.1 Roof Spaces

Condition  
rating

2

#### Construction & Type and Limitations

The main roof is constructed using individual timbers in a traditional manner built in cut timber frame comprising rafters spanning from ridge to eaves supported by struts. The sarking felt [undercovering] is bitumen. The insulation is laid to a depth of about 150mm.

The roof space was accessed via a hatch from the landing. There is a loft ladder fitted.

The roof space was examined for signs of bowing, twisting, cracking and failure of roof timbers, signs of failure or damage to the roof covering, infestation including birds, insects, animals and beetles (woodworm), and other defects. The roof space was further investigated for any indications of lack of adequate ventilation or suitable fire walls.

Due to insulation material covering the joists that would normally serve as footfalls within the loft space, movement was limited to the area around the access hatch.

The structure of the flat roof is not accessible and cannot be assessed.

#### Condition

The roof structure is in a fair condition with reasonable quality timbers throughout. The rafters, purlins and strut timbers are complete with no evidence of any undue stress or cracking. The bitumen undercovering (secondary waterproof covering) is complete with no major tears or missing sections.

The roof space is laid with about 150mm of wool type insulation at joist level. Increasing the thickness to the current recommendation of 270mm is advised for maximum energy efficiency

Care should be taken when moving around, or storing heavy objects, in the roof space. The spaces between the floor joists will not support a persons weight, or that of large boxes etc. Where heavy items are to be stored it is important to distribute the weight evenly using fixed boards. Additional structural support may be required if you plan to store large quantities of heavy items in the roof space.



Roof Structure



Roof Structure








Roof Structure





Roof Structure

	5.2 Ceilings	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The ceilings are constructed from plasterboard.</p> <p>Ceilings were examined for signs of undue levels of bowing, cracking, staining and other defects. Moisture meter readings were taken at regular intervals.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>All internal ceilings have been maintained and all surfaces are presented in a fair decorative order.</p> <p>Advice: Some ceilings within the property have a textured finish. Some textured ceiling finishes can contain asbestos and hence should not be drilled, sanded or removed without protective equipment and/or specialist advice. See section 3.2.</p> <p>Any such materials that do contain asbestos are harmless unless airborne fibres are present. At the time of survey no areas of flaking, powdering or similarly damaged material were noted indicating that no specific risk currently exists. Painting or plaster skimming of textured surfaces normally ensures that any asbestos fibres are securely encapsulated and will not present any risk to health if undisturbed.</p> <p>Normal future maintenance is required, including filling and redecorating any cracks as necessary.</p>		

	5.3 Walls	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The internal walls are of both solid and timber stud construction.</p> <p>The inside faces of some of the external walls have been dry-lined.</p> <p>Internal walls were examined for indications of bowing, leaning, cracking and undue surface failure/damage. Moisture meter readings were taken at regular intervals where access and wall construction/location permitted.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>All internal walls and ceilings have been maintained and all surfaces are presented in a fair decorative order. Some general unevenness was noted. This is due to normal disturbance of the surface by decorations, minor repairs and fittings having been attached in the past.</p> <p>There was no dampness recorded to the internal walls on the day of inspection (see comment in 5.5 regarding the chimney breasts). Condensation levels noted were within normal limits expected for a property of this type and age.</p> <p>No significant defects were noted during my inspection and the internal walls were found to be structurally sound.</p> <p>Wall Removal: As part of the legal process, your legal adviser should contact building control at the local council and obtain any records of any notifiable works completed.</p> <p>Normal maintenance is required, including filling and redecorating cracks as necessary.</p>		


	<b>5.4 Floors</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The floors are of solid construction.</p> <p>Floors were examined for sagging, hogging, unevenness, undue springiness and other signs of failure or damage. Fixed floor coverings in most rooms prevented direct examination of the floor surfaces. Tiled floors were examined for any cracked tiles which could indicate movement of the structure.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	No defects were detected.		

	<b>5.5 Chimney Breasts, Fireplaces and Flues</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	There are no fireplaces or chimney breasts at the property.		



	<b>5.6 Built-In Fittings</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The kitchen fittings are modern .</p> <p>The kitchen units were examined for general condition. A selection of cupboards and drawers were checked for normal operation. Built in appliances were not checked for operation or safety.</p> <p>Fitted wardrobes (and walk-in cupboards) were checked for general condition and door operation.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No Significant Defects are Noted.</p> <p>Normal Maintenance is Required</p>		



Kitchen

	5.7 Internal Joinery	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The internal woodwork includes such items as: doors, frames and skirting's.</p> <p>The internal doors were checked for normal operation and other woodwork examined for a range of defects.</p> <p>Woodwork was also examined for evidence associated with movement of the structure of the property, woodworm and other infestations, and general condition. Moisture meter readings were taken at regular intervals.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No significant defects or damage was noted.</p> <p>Door hinges and locks should be regularly lubricated. Internal timbers should be inspected regularly for evidence of bowing or distortion, woodworm and other defects.</p>		



	<b>5.8 Bathroom and Sanitary Fittings</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The bathroom consists of a bath, shower enclosure, WC and basin.</p> <p>The fittings were checked for signs of damage, cracks, leaking pipes and other common defects. Sealant joints were checked for undue wear and failure. All fittings were checked for normal operation – WC's were all flushed at least twice to ensure correct drainage and flow.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No significant defects are noted, all fittings operated as required with water pressures at fair levels.</p> <p>Regular maintenance of all seals to the bath and shower to prevent water displacement.</p>		
	<div data-bbox="430 660 1422 1400">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Bathroom</p>		



## Section 6 - Services



### 6.1 Electricity

Condition  
rating

**HS**

**Construction  
& Type and  
Limitations**

There is an underground electrical supply and the meter and consumer unit [fuse box] are located in the garage.

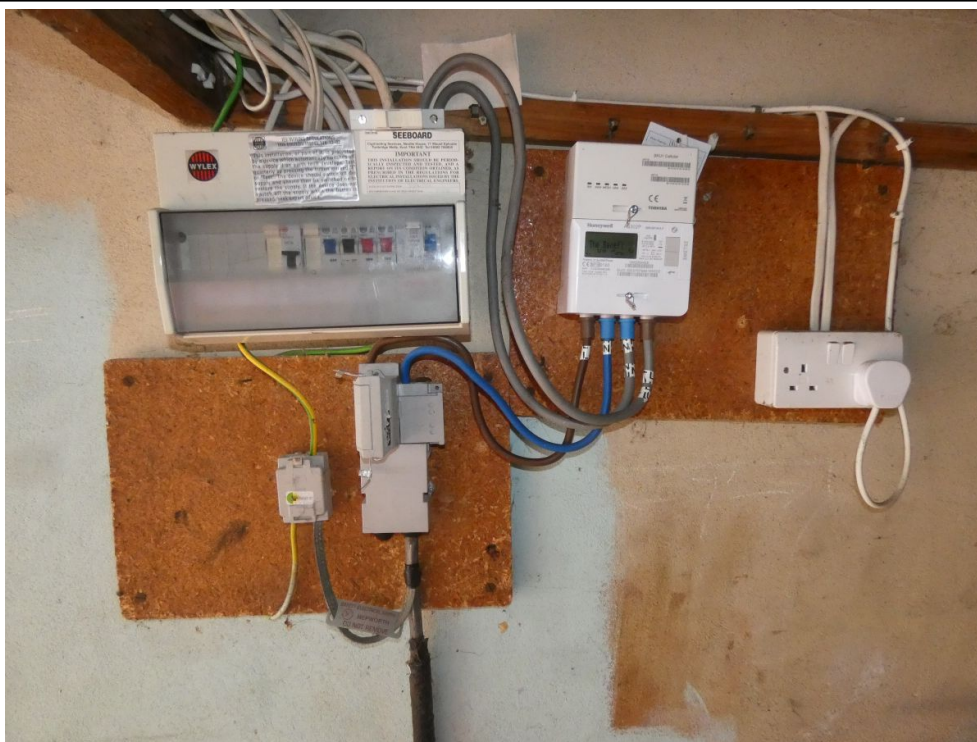
The consumer unit is a modern unit with MCB's (miniature circuit breakers) and also an RCD (Residual Current device).

It is not possible to fully assess the condition and safety of an electrical installation on the basis of a visual inspection only. Distribution wiring is largely concealed and therefore date and quality of installation cannot be verified within in the scope of this inspection.


**Condition**


In general the electrical circuits seen are in a fair condition. PVC cabling was observed at the property and the socket face plates and switch plates are of a suitable modern quality. However to some rooms there are an insufficient number of sockets for modern living standards, this means a level of new circuitry or rewiring may be required.


The NICEIC recommends that electrical installations are subjected to an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) by a suitably qualified engineer at least every 10 years.



Electric Meter and Consumer Unit


	6.2 Gas / Oil	Condition rating	HS
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>There is a mains gas supply and the meter and valve are located in an external cabinet to the side of the property.</p> <p>The system was inspected for any obvious signs of leakage and damage to the supply pipes where visible.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No significant defects were noted but see health and safety advice below.</p> <p>Advice: Gas Safe recommends that all gas appliances and boilers are inspected and serviced according to manufacturers' guidance, but at least once a year. At the time of survey, no documentation was seen to verify that an inspection or servicing has been carried out within the last 12 months but the vendor advised that the boiler is on an annual service schedule. From a health and safety perspective, it is recommended that you validate any available certification, or commission an inspection and servicing of the gas installation and ALL appliances (including the boiler, gas fire and gas hob) prior to occupation of the property.</p> <p>As the property is empty, parts of the system may not have been in use for a while. These observations increase the risk of any hidden issues. Further advice should be obtained as to the operational safety of the complete system.</p> <p>The Gas Safe website called 'Buying a new home', it states:          'Homebuyers cannot always be sure when the gas appliances in their new home were last safety checked and serviced. Ask your vendor for an annual gas safety record which shows that a Gas Safe registered engineer has checked the gas appliances. If your vendor cannot supply an up to date annual gas safety record, you should get a Gas Safe registered engineer to check the gas appliances before you move in. This check should include the gas boiler, oven, and hob and gas fire. The registered engineer will give the vendor a gas safety record, which they should handover to you before you move in. Better Gas Safe than sorry. Poorly maintained or badly fitted gas appliances can put you at risk from gas leaks, explosions, fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.'</p> <p>'Safety check' - As a minimum, this must check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Appliances are positioned in the right place;</li> <li>•Any flue or chimney serving appliances are safe and installed correctly;</li> <li>•There is a good supply of combustion air (ventilation) to appliances;</li> <li>•The appliances are on the right setting and are burning correctly; the appliances are operating correctly and are safe to use.</li> </ul>		


	6.3 Water	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>There is a mains water supply. The incoming mains pipework is copper and the stop valve is under the kitchen sink.</p> <p>The water installation is of the more modern unvented system style. This does not require a cold water storage tank; all the cold water draw-off points are fed directly off the mains supply. There are no water storage facilities (hot or cold) at the property.</p> <p>The visible parts of the system were checked for any obvious signs of leaking, damaged pipes, correct covering and insulation, and other evidence of defects. Water taps were operated to check for flow pressure and correct drainage.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No significant defects are noted, all fittings operated as required with water pressures at fair levels.</p> <p>Check the installation for evidence of leaks or other defects on a regular basis i.e. approximately every 6 months, or sooner. Leaks most often occur at pipe joints and where pipes are subject to movement or physical damage, such as airing cupboards, roof spaces and under sinks.</p>		

	6.4 Heating and Cooling	Condition rating	HS
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>The boiler is a Baxi Duo-Tec Combi 24HE A model. It provides heat to the property via the hot water radiator system. It also provides hot water on demand to the hot water taps. On the SEDBUK efficiency database this boiler is rated as 89% efficient and this particular model has been manufactured from 2008 – although this installed boiler is probably younger. As a guide, modern condensing boilers are around 90% efficient. Condensing boilers of this type are the most efficient type available at present.</p> <p>There are TRV's (thermostatic radiator valves) on most radiators for individual room temperature control. There is also a wall thermostat and a programmer unit.</p> <p>It is not possible to fully assess the condition and safety of a gas and heating installation on the basis of a visual inspection only. A visual inspection was carried out of the radiators, pipework and boiler to detect leaks, corrosion and other common defects.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>It is recommended that you establish the service history of the gas boiler prior to commitment to purchase, as only regular servicing by a competent person can ensure efficiency and safety. If these enquiries suggest that previous maintenance has been inadequate you should instruct a competent person to check the whole system prior to purchase.</p>		



Boiler

	6.5 Drainage	Condition rating	NI
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p><b>Foul drainage:</b> The property is connected to the main sewer, which I have assumed has been adopted and maintained at public expense. Your Legal Advisers should be able to confirm this. The soil vent pipe is located to the side of the property and is made of cast iron. This may require maintenance and possibly even replacement over the near term.</p> <p>It was not possible to inspect all of the manholes as not all could be accessed and much of the underground pipework could not be inspected at all. Only a comprehensive inspection by a specialist contractor can be relied upon to produce a detailed survey of the limitations or otherwise of the current system.</p> <p><b>Surface water drainage:</b> Rainwater from the downpipes is likely to drain to soakaways (usually pits filled with rubble) or a separate drainage system running parallel to the foul drainage. Without excavation, the layout could not be confirmed, but there were no signs of flooding or blockages at the time of the inspection.</p>		

	6.6 Other Services	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>There is a television aerial mounted to the chimney stack.</p> <p>The house also benefits from a burglar alarm.</p> <p>A visual inspection was made to locate television aerials and satellite dishes at the property.</p> <p>They were examined for general condition and security of fixing from ground level and with the aid of binoculars where necessary.</p> <p>No specific checks were made to confirm connections to/from the aerials or dishes or their effectiveness of providing a signal.</p> <p>I have not carried out an assessment of broadband speeds for this property. If this is important to you, it is essential you check with your preferred broadband provider or request a speed test at the property when you visit and certainly before you commit to the purchase.</p>		
<b>Condition</b>	<p>No significant defects were noted.</p> <p>Ensure TV and Radio reception is possible if these are desired services.</p> <p>Examine all fittings regularly to ensure that they are secure.</p>		





## Section 7 - External Elements



### 7.1 Garaging

Condition  
rating

2

**Construction  
& Type and  
Limitations**

The garage is of brick construction with a flat roof . The garage is accessed via a metal up-and-over door which is remotely operated and there is a door to the rear.

None

**Condition**

Some of the corrugated roof material contains asbestos.  
There are vertical cracks to the side of the internal walls which will need to be monitored carefully over time.



Garage



Garage



Asbestos sheet in garage






Garage interior

	<b>7.2 Outbuildings and Sheds</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	The garden sheds are of timber construction. None		
<b>Condition</b>	The sheds are in a fair condition. Normal maintenance, including regular retreatment of the walls, is required.		



Garden Shed

	7.3 Grounds	Condition rating	1
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	<p>There are gardens to the rear which are mostly lawned (artificial grass) with surrounding borders.</p> <p>There is a patio to the rear of the property</p> <p>The driveway is to the front of the property and is laid to paviors.</p> <p>The boundaries are defined by timber panel fencing.</p> <p>The grounds around the house were inspected for any indications of land failure or movement, or other defects that would have a material effect on the property as a whole.</p> <p>It should be noted that a full and detailed inspection for the presence of Japanese Knotweed cannot be carried out especially where the gardens are well stocked or have been recently cut and maintained. No evidence of the presence of Japanese Knotweed was seen during my inspection but you are advised to seek further advice if you believe it may be present or are aware that it is present in premises nearby.</p> <p>Some parts of the grounds are overgrown with foliage and could not, therefore, be examined in detail.</p>		

<b>Condition</b>	<p>There is no evidence of any damage from flooding.</p> <p>The gardens are both presented in a maintained condition.</p> <p>The driveway surface is in a serviceable condition and is reasonably level.</p> <p>The fencing is also presented in a fair condition.</p> <p>Normal Maintenance is Required.</p>
	 <p>Drive</p>





Front Garden



Rear Garden







Artificial grass



Rear patio

	<b>7.4 Common and Shared Areas</b>	<b>Condition rating</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Construction &amp; Type and Limitations</b>	There were no common or shared areas noted at the property.		

	<b>7.5 Neighbourly Matters</b>		
<b>Observations</b>	<p>A general unspecific overview of the immediate local area was carried out during the course of the survey, to identify issues that might affect the normal enjoyment of the property.</p> <p>No obvious causes of concern were noted however it cannot be known if issues are present at other times.</p> <p>You are advised to visit the property on a number of occasions at different times of the day and night to form an opinion of any factors that might be relevant</p>		



	<b>Section 8 Addendum</b> <b>8.1 - About your Surveyor</b>		
<b>Surveyor</b>	andrew martin		
<b>Address</b>	Domestic Property Surveys Ltd 100 High St Whitstable CT5 1AZ		
<b>Contact Details</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	01227 238970	
	<b>Mobile</b>	07500 929345	
	<b>Email</b>	housesurveys1@gmail.com	
<b>Signed (electronic signature)</b>		<b>Date Finalising Report</b>	27 Aug 2020



## 8.2 - Maintenance advice

Your home needs maintaining in the normal way, and this general advice may be useful when read together with your report. It is not specific to this property and does not include comprehensive details. Problems in construction may develop slowly over time.

### Outside

You should check the condition of your property at least once a year and after severe weather.

Routine redecoration of the outside of the property will also give you an opportunity to closely examine the building.

Chimney stacks: Check these occasionally for signs of cracked cement, split or broken pots, or loose and gaping joints in the brickwork or render. Storms may loosen aials or other fixings, including the flashings, the materials used to form the joints with the roof coverings.

Roof coverings: Check these occasionally for slipped, broken and missing tiles or slates, particularly after severe weather.

Flat roofing has a limited life, and is at risk of cracking and blistering. You should not walk on a flat roof. Where possible keep it free from debris. If it is covered with spar chippings, make sure the coverage is even, and replace chippings where necessary.

Rainwater pipes and gutters: Clear any debris at least once a year, and check for leaks when it is raining. You should also check for any loose downpipe connectors and broken fixings.

Main walls: Check main walls for cracks and any uneven bulging. Maintain the joints in brickwork and repair loose or broken rendering. Re-paint decorated walls regularly. Cut back or remove any plants that are harmful to mortar and render. Keep the soil level well below the level of any damp proof course (150mm minimum recommended) and make sure any ventilation bricks are kept clear. Check over cladding for broken, rotted or damaged areas that need repairing.

Windows and doors: Once a year check all frames for signs of rot in wood frames, for any splits in plastic or metal frames and for rusting to latches and hinges in metal frames. Maintain all decorated frames by repairing or redecorating at the first sign of any deterioration. In autumn check double glazing for condensation between the glazing, as this is a sign of a faulty unit. Have broken or cracked glass replaced by a qualified specialist. Check for broken sash cords on sliding sash windows, and sills and window boards for any damage.

Conservatories and porches: Keep all glass surfaces clean, and clear all rainwater gutters and down pipes. Look for broken glazing and for any leaks when it's raining. Arrange for repairs by a qualified specialist.

Other woodwork and finishes: Regularly redecorate all joinery, and check for rot and decay which you should repair at the same time.

### Grounds

Garages and outbuildings: Follow the maintenance advice given for the main building.

Other: Regularly prune trees, shrubs and hedges as necessary. Look out for any overhanging and unsafe branches, loose walls, fences and ornaments, particularly after severe weather. Clear leaves and other debris, moss and algae growth. Make sure all hard surfaces are stable and level, and not slippery or a trip hazard.



## 8.2 - Maintenance advice (contd)

### Inside the property

You can check the inside of your property regularly when cleaning, decorating and replacing carpets or floor coverings. You should also check the roof area occasionally.

Roof structure: When you access the roof area, check for signs of any leaks and the presence of vermin, rot or decay to timbers. Also look for tears to the under-felting of the roof, and check pipes, lagging and insulated areas.

Ceilings: If you have a leak in the roof the first sign is often damp on the ceiling beneath the roof. Be aware if your ceiling begins to look uneven as this may indicate a serious problem, particularly for older ceilings.

Walls and partitions: Look for cracking and impact damage, or damp areas which may be caused by plumbing faults or defects on the outside of the property.

Floors: Be alert for signs of unevenness when you are moving furniture, particularly with timber floors.

Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues: You should arrange for a qualified specialist to regularly sweep all used open chimneys. Also, make sure that bricked-up flues are ventilated.

Flues to gas appliances should be checked annually by a qualified gas technician.

Built-in fittings: Check for broken fittings.

### Services

Ensure all meters and control valves are easy to access and not hidden or covered over.

Arrange for a competent person to check and test all gas and oil services, boilers, heating systems and connected devices once a year.

Electrical installations should only be replaced or modified by a competent person and tested as specified by the Electrical Safety Council (recommended minimum of a ten year period if no alterations or additions are made, or on change of occupancy).

Monitor plumbing regularly during use. Look out for leakage and breakages, and check insulation is adequate particularly as winter approaches.

Lift drain covers annually to check for blockages and clean these as necessary. Check any private drainage systems annually, and arrange for a qualified contractor to clear these as necessary. Keep gullies free from debris.



## 8.2 - Maintenance advice (contd)

### Important information for purchasers of older, listed and historic properties

Modern properties, those built after 1900 or so, are essentially constructed as sealed boxes which are designed to keep all moisture out. This is achieved by the use of impermeable membranes at ground level (such as a damp proof course) to prevent moisture rising up from the ground below, and cavity walls which are designed to prevent moisture penetrating through the walls. Windows and doors are made to seal tightly, and most houses built today are constructed without any chimneys at all.

In this type of property, where dampness is found inside then it is generally due to some specific defect which will require repair.

Older properties, generally those built before 1850 or so, were constructed in a very different way, and one in which moisture will naturally enter the property. They do not have damp proof courses or cavity walls and are not intended to be a sealed unit.

However, these properties are designed to manage the movement of moisture in such a way as to prevent it becoming a hazard to health or to the structure of the building, and it is important to understand the mechanisms by which it does this in order to protect the structural elements of the building from becoming defective.

At the time that these properties were constructed it was the normal for them to have many openings where draughts could enter the building, such as multiple open fireplaces, ill-fitting doors and windows, and gaps in floorboards. As a result, ventilation levels were very high, allowing moisture to evaporate readily in the moving air, and to be carried away to the outside. So, for example, where moisture penetrated the walls, although the inside surfaces of those walls would be damp, the levels of moisture would achieve equilibrium as the rate of evaporation compensated for the rate of penetration.

Today, we try to minimise draughts by blocking fireplaces, adding secondary or double glazing, laying laminate floors and sealing the gaps around doors and windows. As a result moisture levels rise due to the decreased air movement that is a consequence of the reduced ventilation. This then leads to dampness becoming evident, particularly in areas of minimal air movement, such as behind large objects of furniture and within cupboards and wardrobes.

Many older homes were built at a time when lime mortar was the primary method of setting bricks and stones. Lime mortar is both flexible and porous, unlike the very hard, inflexible and nonporous cement mortars used in more modern construction. Lime mortar, therefore, allows the moisture evaporation process to continue by acting as a wick for moisture to leave the main walls between the bricks and/or stones that make up the bulk of the wall. This is a further step in the process of managing moisture within the property.

Today, we see many repairs carried out to older homes using cement mortar. This seals the gaps between the bricks and/or stones, trapping the moisture in the wall and forcing it into the surface of the bricks and stones, causing them to fail when that moisture freezes in the surface of those materials. And by reducing the amount of moisture that can evaporate through the wall to the outside, it increases dampness levels inside.

As a result of the actions described above, it is common, today, to find higher than average moisture levels in older properties. The consequences of this can cause significant defects within the property. In particular, high moisture levels, especially in roof spaces and cellars, can promote the development of wood boring insects such as Common Furniture Beetle, and Death Watch Beetle in structural timbers such as roof and floor joists. High levels of dampness in walls causes plaster to fail, decorations to become damaged, and in some properties, significant damage to the timber frame of the building.

To avoid these defects developing and becoming a serious threat to the building, it is important to be aware of the consequences of any actions which may have an impact on moisture management within the building. The following is a list of suggestions and recommendations that will help maintain the building in a good and sound condition. It is by no means an exhaustive list and it is recommended that all owners of listed, historic and older buildings inform themselves of the best way to protect such a property.

1. Consider ways to improve ventilation within the property. This may include the installation of mechanical extractors in kitchens and bathrooms, removing secondary glazing units, ensuring that windows can be opened easily and that they are used regularly, removing insulation from the eaves area of the roof where it may block ventilation, and not leaving the property closed up and unoccupied for extended periods.

2. Where repairs are necessary, ensure they are carried out by tradespeople who are knowledgeable and competent in traditional building methods and that materials are sympathetic to those used originally. In particular, where walls are to be repointed, then lime mortar (which is very different from cement mortar with some lime added!) should be used and any earlier cement mortar repairs removed and refinished.

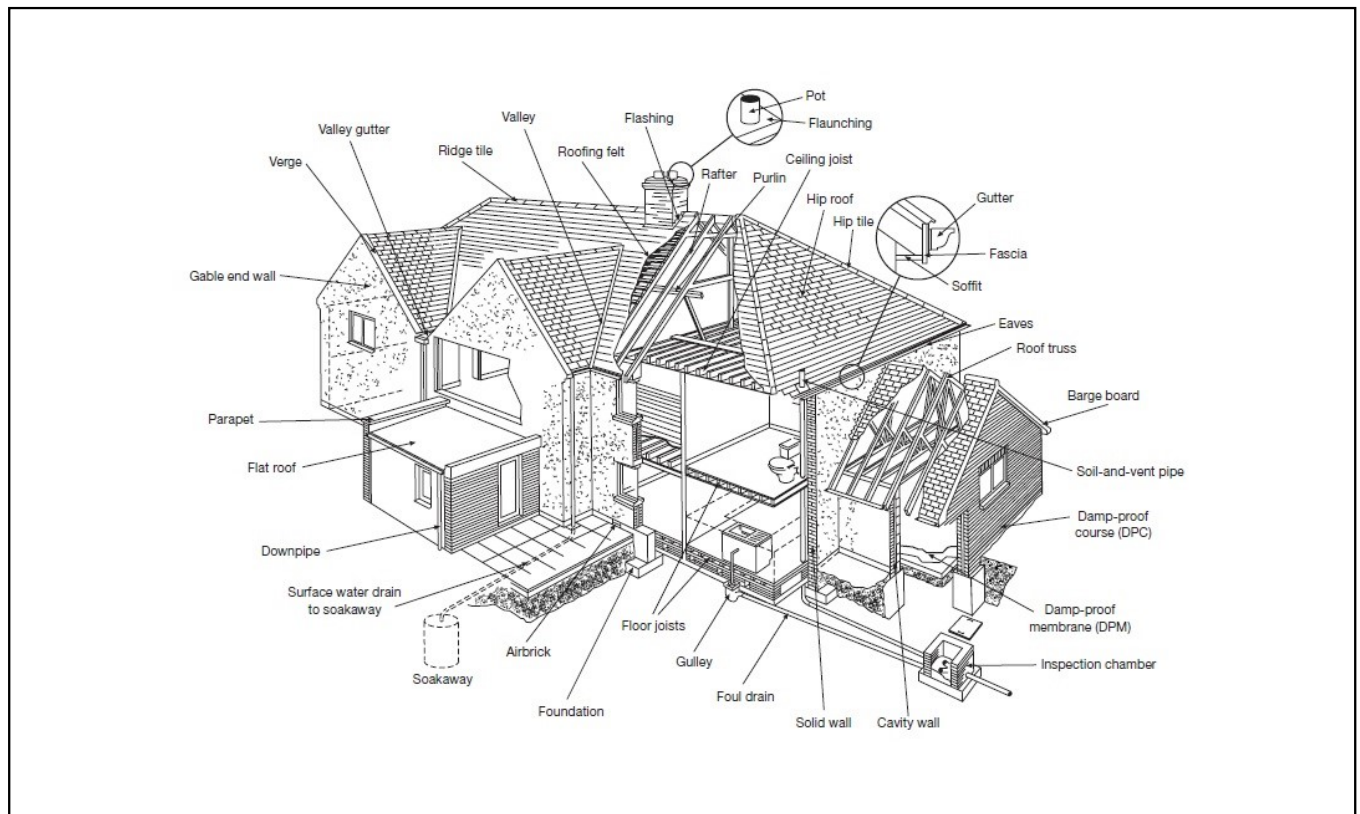
3. Ensure that the guttering and rainwater handling systems are in a well maintained and fully operative condition. Very significant damage can be caused in a very short period of time due to simple leaking gutters, downpipes, hoppers and other elements of the rainwater handling systems. It is therefore essential that these are inspected regularly, at least three or four times a year, and any damages or defects repaired as quickly as possible. In particular they should be cleared after autumn leaf fall to ensure they are as effective as possible during the winter.

4. Maintain a regular and vigilant inspection process. Unidentified or unrepaired defects can rapidly become more significant, and therefore more costly to repair. A regular process of inspection is more likely to ensure that defects identified at an early stage and can be rectified before further damage is caused. Such a process should include inspection of all the outside elements such as chimneys, roofs, walls, guttering and downpipes, windows and doors and roof edge timbers etc. Internal inspections should include a detailed examination of the roof timbers, moving of large objects of furniture to assess the wall condition behind, examination of floors, doors and timber fittings to identify signs of movement, and the condition of the heating and plumbing systems to ensure no leaks are present. This is in addition to a general and normal maintenance programme.

5. Avoid the introduction of unnecessary interventions. Many companies will recommend the use of chemical processes, such as spraying of timbers or injection of damp proof courses, as a means of rectifying the effects of dampness. In most cases, in respect of older properties, these processes are completely unnecessary, usually ineffective, and in many instances counter-productive. Attempting to prevent the passage of moisture through a wall which was always intended to be damp is unlikely to affect a cure. In fact, it is likely to push the problem elsewhere, and may cause even more significant damage.

Remember that, if the property is listed, any works you wish to carry out may require Listed Building Consent, and it is always best to check with the local authority Conservation Officer before undertaking any activities.

There are many useful resources of information available from, for instance English Heritage, and the Society of Protection of Ancient Buildings, which can help you in understanding how to manage an older property in a sympathetic and considered way. It is strongly recommended that you gain an understanding of the means and methods that they advocate in order to protect your investment.







## 8.3 – Customer Care

### Customer Care

At Domestic Property Surveys Ltd our aim is to provide the best level of service possible and we go to very great lengths to ensure that the survey report we have prepared for you is as accurate, informative and complete as possible.

It is possible, however, that for some reason we have not met your expectations in some way and that you wish to raise a concern. We will treat any concerns positively and recognise that they are a means of identifying improvements which can be made to our service delivery standards. We will deal with any concerns quickly and will take prompt action to resolve them.

### How to contact us

There are several ways you can contact us:

- You can call us by telephone - 01227 238970
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