



LEVEL 2

Your survey and valuation report

Property address

100 Smith Street, Oxfordshire, OX1 5DZ.

Client's name

Mrs Client.

Consultation date (if applicable)

Inspection date

July 2021.

Surveyor's RICS number

100000

2

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A

About the inspection and report

This Home survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service has been produced by a surveyor, who is a member of the RICS Valuer Registration scheme.

This surveyor has written this report for you to use. If you decide not to act on the advice in this report, you do so at your own risk.

A

About the inspection and report

As agreed, this report will contain the following:

- a physical inspection of the property (see *The Inspection* in section M) and
- a report based on the inspection (see *The report* in section M).

About the report

We aim to give you professional advice 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 into account any significant repairs or replacements the property needs, and
- consider what further advice you should take before committing to purchasing the property.

Any extra services we provide that are not covered by the terms and conditions of this report must be covered by a separate contract.

About the inspection

- We only carry out a visual inspection. Also, we do not remove secured panels or undo electrical fittings.
- We 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.
- We inspect the roof structure from inside the roof space if there is access (although we do not move or lift insulation material, stored goods or other contents). We examine floor surfaces and under-floor spaces so far as there is safe access to these (although we do not move or lift furniture, floor coverings or other contents). We do not remove the contents of cupboards. We are not able to assess the condition of the inside of any chimney, boiler or other flues. Also, we do not remove secured panels or undo electrical fittings.
- We note in our report if we are not able to check any parts of the property that the inspection would normally cover. If we are concerned about these parts, the report will tell you about any further investigations that are needed.
- We do 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 we suggest may be expensive.
- We inspect the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, but we do not force or open up the fabric of the building. We also inspect the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating and drainage services that can be seen, but we do not test them.
- To help describe the condition of the home, we give condition ratings to the main parts (the 'elements') of the building, garage and some parts outside. Some elements can be made up of several different parts.
- In the element boxes in sections D, E, F and G, we 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 in section B of this report. The report covers matters that, in the surveyor's opinion, need to be dealt with or may affect the value of the property.

 **Reminder**

Please refer to your **Terms and Conditions**, that were sent to you at the point you (the client) confirmed your instruction to us (the firm), for a full list of exclusions.



About the inspection

Surveyor's name

Surveyor MRICS

Surveyor's RICS number

100000.

Company name

Marshalls Chartered Surveyors.

Date of the inspection

July 2021.

Report reference number

X100000.

Related party disclosure

We confirm that there is no material conflict of interest or any current or previous material involvement with any related third parties.

Full address and postcode of the property

100 Smith Street, Oxfordshire, OX1 5DZ.

Weather conditions when the inspection took place

It was dry at the time of the inspection, following a period of generally dry weather.

Status of the property when the inspection took place

The property was unoccupied and fully furnished with floor coverings and finishes in the rooms.
Access was gained via a key from the estate agent and the vendor was not present at the time of our visit.

B

Overall opinion

This section provides our overall opinion of the property, and summarises the condition ratings of the different elements of the property. Individual elements of the property have been rated to indicate any defects, and have been grouped by the urgency of any required maintenance.

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.

Important note

To get a balanced impression of the property, we strongly recommend that you read all sections of the report, in particular section L, *What to do now*, and discuss this with us if required.

B

Summary of condition ratings

Overall opinion of property

The property was found to be structurally satisfactory with only minor repairs required. The various works outlined in the report are very typical and are not serious, although you must be prepared to accept the cost and inconvenience of dealing with the repairs and improvements required. These items are common in properties of this age and type, and provided that the necessary works are carried out to a satisfactory standard, no more than normal maintenance should be needed. There is usually reasonable demand for property of this type under normal market conditions and there are no significant problems or any special difficulties that should adversely affect resale. However, whilst the property is considered a reasonable proposition for purchase at a price of £400,000, you must be prepared to accept the cost and inconvenience of dealing with the various repair and improvement works outlined in the report. These items are common in properties of this age and type and provided that the necessary works are carried out to a satisfactory standard, there should be no special difficulty on resale in normal market conditions. Nevertheless, it is essential that the property is kept in good repair in order to maintain its value in relation to the market.

B

Condition ratings

To determine the condition of the property, we assess the main parts (the 'elements') of the building, garage and some outside areas. These elements are rated on the urgency of maintenance needed, ranging from 'very urgent' to 'no issues recorded'.



Documents we may suggest you request before you sign contracts

There are documents associated with the following elements. Check these documents have been supplied by your solicitor before exchanging contracts.

Element no.	Document name	Received



Elements that require urgent attention

These elements have defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently. Failure to do so could risk serious safety issues or severe long-term damage to your property.

Element no.	Element name
E5	Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues
F1	Electricity
F2	Gas/oil
F4	Heating



Elements that require attention but are not serious or urgent

These elements have defects that need repairing or replacing, but are not considered to be either serious or urgent, These elements must also be maintained in the normal way.

Element no.	Element name
D2	Roof coverings
D4	Main walls
D8	Other joinery and finishes
E1	Roof structure
E2	Ceilings
E3	Walls and partitions
E7	Woodwork
E9	Other
G1	Garage

B

Condition ratings



Elements with no current issues

No repair is currently needed. The elements list here must be maintained in the normal way.

Element no.	Element name
D1	Chimney stacks
D3	Rainwater pipes and gutters
D5	Windows
D6	Outside doors
E4	Floors
E6	Built-in fittings
E8	Bathroom fittings
F3	Water
F5	Water heating
F6	Drainage



Elements not inspected

We carry out a visual inspection, so a number of elements may not have been inspected. These are listed here.

Element no.	Element name
D7	Conservatory and porches
D9	Other
F7	Common services
G2	Permanent outbuildings

C

About the property

This section includes:

- About the property
- Energy efficiency
- Location and facilities



About the property

Type of property

The property comprises a two storey semi-detached house, which faces approximately northeast. All directions given in the report assume the reader is outside looking towards the front elevation of the property.

Approximate year the property was built

c.1955.

Approximate year the property was extended

Rear single story extension c. 2011.

Approximate year the property was converted

Not applicable.

Information relevant to flats and maisonettes

Not applicable.

Construction

The roof is covered with concrete tiles.
The main walls are constructed of cavity brick and blockwork. The extension walls are constructed of cavity brick and blockwork.
The floors are of concrete and suspended timber construction.

Accommodation

	Living rooms	Bedrooms	Bath or shower	Separate toilet	Kitchen	Utility room	Conser-vatory	Other
Lower ground								
Ground	2			1	1			
First		3	2					
Second								
Third								
Other								
Roof spaces								



Energy efficiency

We are advised that the property's current energy performance, as recorded in the EPC, is as stated below.

We have checked for any obvious discrepancies between the EPC and the subject property, and the implications are explained to you

Energy efficiency rating

C76.

Issues relating to the energy efficiency rating

N/A.

Mains services

A marked box shows that the relevant mains service is present.



Gas



Electric



Water



Drainage

Central heating



Gas



Electric



Solid fuel



Oil



None

Other services or energy sources (including feed-in tariffs)

None.

Other energy matters

None.

C

Location and facilities

Grounds

The property occupies a regular and fairly level plot with enclosed gardens to both the front and rear. The plot is of a typical size in comparison with other properties in the vicinity.

There is a single sized attached garage.

There are no permanent outbuildings.

Location

The property is situated in an established residential area.

Facilities

There is excellent access to all local facilities and amenities.

Local environment

There are no significant adverse factors regarding the location of the property, to our knowledge. However, there may be some nuisance from the nearby public house and you should ensure that this will not significantly affect your enjoyment of the property.

D

Outside the property

D

Outside the property

Limitations on the inspection

D1 Chimney stacks

1 2 3 NI

There is a single shared brick-built chimney stack, which is sealed to the roof coverings with lead flashings. The chimney has two flues which serve the fireplaces in the living room and dining room. The flues are fitted with clay pots bedded in mortar.

1

The stack is situated at an adequate height above the roof coverings.

The stack has bulged slightly. Condition Rating 1. This is very typical with an older stack and no urgent repairs are required.

The mortar pointing has weathered over the years. Condition Rating 1. This is very typical with an older stack and no urgent repairs are required at this stage. In the longer term, some patch re-pointing is likely to be needed. Any works are best undertaken when other repairs at height are being carried out, as this will help minimize costs.

Notes:

- The material cost of repairs to chimneys is usually minimal, but scaffold will be required for safe access and this can be expensive. Repair works are best carried out by a competent roofing contractor or builder.
- As the chimney stack is shared, any works are best undertaken in co-operation with neighbouring owners.
- Whilst there are no signs of any significant leakages, it should be noted that the lead flashings will tend to work loose over time due to thermal movement and occasional re-fixing may be needed to minimize the risks of dampness and timber deterioration. Repairs are best undertaken with a flexible sealer, rather than mortar, as it will allow for movement of the lead and will not corrode or stain the metal.

D

Outside the property

D2 Roof coverings

The roof is covered with interlocking clay tiles finished with half-round ridge tiles. The exposed roof edges (verges) are finished with mortar pointing set on tiled undercloaks. The inner edges of the coverings are sealed to the walls with lead flashings. The valley gutters are formed with lead. The roof slopes are lined internally with felt, which provides secondary protection against water and snow penetration.

2

There are a few slipped and missing tiles. Condition Rating 2. Whilst there are no signs of water penetration, repairs will be needed.

The mortar below a number of the tiles finishing the ridges has cracked and weathered. Condition Rating 1. No urgent repairs are required at this stage, as none of the tiles appear to be working loose. However, these tiles are often dislodged by high winds and for safety they should be periodically checked and re-fixed, as found necessary.

The bedding mortar to the verges has suffered from some cracking. Condition Rating 1. This is not serious and no urgent repairs are required at this stage, although occasional patch re-pointing is likely to be needed. Any works are best undertaken when other repairs at height are being carried out, as this will help minimize costs.

The linings are torn in a few places, exposing the undersides of the roof coverings. Condition Rating 1. At present, there are no signs of damp penetration, but occasional patching may be required.

Notes:

- It is essential that the roof coverings are kept in good order to minimize the risks of water penetration and timber deterioration. Roofs are often damaged during maintenance and aerial installation. Care should be taken. For safe access, scaffolding is required for most roof repairs and this can be expensive. Repair works involving over 25% of the area of a roof will need Building Regulation permission unless undertaken by a member of the 'Competent Person Scheme', such as a Competent Roofer.
- Whilst there are no signs of any problems at present, it should be noted that valley gutters are often a source of leakage due to blockages. Regular inspection and cleaning should be undertaken.
- As already mentioned under 'D1 Chimney Stacks', lead flashings tend to work loose over time due to thermal movement. Whilst there are no signs of any significant leakages, occasional re-fixing may be needed.

D

Outside the property

D3 Rainwater pipes and gutters

Stormwater from the roofs discharges into recently fitted plastic rainwater fittings. 1

The fittings are serviceable, but now in need of cleaning. Condition Rating 1.

Notes:

- For safe access, scaffolding or access equipment will be needed for most repairs and maintenance works to the rainwater fittings, which can be expensive. Repair works are best carried out by a competent roofing contractor or builder.
- Leaking rainwater fittings are one of the principal causes of dampness and decay. In view of this, it is essential that regular inspection and maintenance should be undertaken. With the nearby trees, the gutters will require more regular cleaning along with periodic re-sealing of joints.

D4 Main walls

The main walls are constructed of cavity brick and blockwork incorporating bitumen felt damp-proof courses. The extension walls are constructed of cavity brick and blockwork. These walls incorporate a plastic damp-proof course. 2

Openings in the walls are supported by steel and concrete lintels. The walls generally measure between 275mm and 300mm in thickness.

The pointing to the older walls has weathered. Condition Rating 2. Patch pointing will be needed to minimize the risks of damp penetration.

There is some mainly vertical cracking to the facings. Condition Rating 1. The cracking has been caused by thermal and shrinkage movement, which is very typical and not serious.

Ground levels around the property are high in areas, but there are no signs of damp internally. Condition Rating 1. However, it is good practice to maintain a 150mm (two bricks) clearance between external levels and the damp courses to prevent possible bridging and damp penetration. High ground levels also increase the possibility of surface water ingress, particularly to vulnerable areas such as door openings. Therefore, care should be taken not to increase external ground levels any further. If any new areas of hardstanding are laid around the property, they should be set at an appropriate level and the surfaces should also fall away from the walls, to ensure the efficient removal of surface water. The use of free draining materials, such as gravel, is good practice as this allows easy evaporation of moisture and helps to minimize the risks of dampness.

D

Outside the property

Notes:

- For safe access, scaffolding or access equipment will be needed for most repairs at height to the walls and this can be expensive. Repair works are best carried out by a competent building contractor.
- In order to minimize the risks of damp penetration and decay, it is essential to maintain the exterior of the property in good order at all times.
- Cavity walls are formed in two leaves, which are usually held together with metal wall ties. Older ties (those manufactured before 1981) are at an increased risk of corrosion, which if serious, can lead to cracking and in extreme cases, structural failure. The condition of the ties cannot be properly ascertained without opening up the structure, but externally, there are no signs to suggest any defects. Taking account the factors that increase the likelihood of failure, the risks are considered small and no further action is considered necessary at this stage.
- The cavity walls have been provided with insulation after construction. If possible, your Legal Advisers should confirm if there are any guarantees or Building Regulation permissions available (See section H2 – Guarantees).
- It is likely that the later extension walls incorporate insulation built-in during construction.

D5 Windows

The windows are timber framed units, fitted with double glazing. The opening windows are fitted with locks. 1

Some of the opening windows are slightly stiff and would benefit from adjustment and lubrication (silicone based lubricants are best for this). There is also the odd loose handle. Condition Rating 1.

Notes:

- Whilst there are no signs of failure, the seals around the edges of double glazed sealed units can fail allowing moisture to penetrate between the panes of glass, which results in misting and condensation (often only visible at certain times, typically in sunny weather). Whilst unsightly, this is not serious, although complete replacement of affected units is the only possible repair.
- Damp can easily penetrate around the edges of window (and door) frames. To minimize problems, it is essential that the frames are kept in repair and carefully sealed to the walls.
- Windows can suffer from high levels of condensation, particularly during cold weather. This can be difficult to manage, but is often minimized by good heating and ventilation. Any mould growth is best cleaned with dilute bleach.

D

Outside the property

- Any new or replacement window (and door) frames that were fitted after April 2002 should have either building regulation approval or have been installed by a member of a 'competent person scheme', such as FENSA, CERTASS etc. These are government approved trade associations whose members can self-certify that their installations meet the standards of the building regulations. You should ask your Legal Adviser to check whether these frames comply and whether there is a guarantee available (see section H2 – Guarantees).
- The window lock keys should be kept readily available to allow for emergency escape.

D6 Outside doors (including patio doors)

The front and rear doors is PVC-u and double glazed unit, fitted with multi-point locking. 1

Notes:

- The seals around the edges of double glazed sealed units often fail, allowing moisture to penetrate between the panes of glass, which results in misting and condensation. Whilst unsightly, this is not usually serious, although there is no means of repair and complete replacement of affected units is the only possible solution.
- Damp can easily penetrate around the edges of door frames. To minimize problems, it is essential that external ground levels are maintained at the correct height, the frames are properly sealed to the walls and also kept in good repair.
- The keys should be kept readily available to allow for emergency escape.
- The installation of new or replacement door (and window) frames that were installed after April 2002 should have either building regulation approval or have been installed by a member of a 'competent person scheme', such as FENSA, CERTASS etc. These are government approved trade associations whose members can self-certify that their installations meet the standards of the building regulations. You should ask your Legal Adviser to check whether these frames comply and whether there is a guarantee available (see section H2 – Guarantees).

D7 Conservatory and porches

None. (NI)

D

Outside the property

D8 Other joinery and finishes

The other areas of external joinery are formed with PVC-u. 2

A number of the PVC-u boards have distorted and worked loose. Condition Rating 2.

Notes:

- Due to the extensive use of PVC-u, little external decoration will be needed, but the plastic would benefit from occasional washing. Proprietary cleaners are available, which will give a better finish.

D9 Other

Access may be needed onto adjoining land in order to undertake maintenance. There are no other external matters affecting the main property. (NI)

E

Inside the property



Inside the property

Limitations on the inspection

E1 Roof structure

1 2 3 NI

Access to the roof space is gained via a hatch in the landing ceiling. There is a loft ladder and also a light. The roof is constructed of traditional 'cut' timber framing. There is a blockwork firewall between the roof void and adjoining property. 2

There are some significant holes and gaps in the firewall, which could allow the possible spread of fire. There are best filled with masonry or fireboard (See section I3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 2.

The roof structure has distorted slightly over the years, but this is very typical and not considered serious or progressive. Condition Rating 1. No strengthening is required and the performance of the coverings will not be affected.

There is wood boring insect (woodworm) attack to the timbers, but this appears old and inactive. Condition Rating 1. However, even with treatments, it is unrealistic to expect to completely eradicate all wood boring insects, but good heating and ventilation will help minimize infestation. Wood boring insects can live in timber for many years before emerging, even after treatments and there may be active infestation to areas currently hidden. If any active infestation is found in the future, localized treatment should be sufficient.

Notes:

- The loft provides useful storage, but it should never be overloaded as this can cause sagging of the joists and damage to the ceiling finishes. All stored items should be well protected.
- You should formally confirm with the vendor that the items currently remaining in the roof void will be removed, prior to sale.
- Upgrading of insulation levels should be considered to reduce heat losses and also minimize the risks of frost damage and plumbing leaks.

E

Inside the property

E2 Ceilings

The ceilings are constructed of plasterboard, finished with plaster.

2

The ceilings have cracked badly. Condition Rating 2.

Notes:

- The shrinkage and differential movement cracks that are visible, mainly at the corners and joints, are not serious, but some general filling and decoration will be required.

E3 Walls and partitions

The internal walls and partitions are constructed of masonry and studwork with plastered and boarded finishes. There is tiling to the 'wet' areas.

2

The plastered finishes are hollow and cracked in areas. Condition Rating 2. Patching will be needed, prior to redecoration.

Notes:

- No serious condensation problems were noted. However, condensation is present to a degree in all properties due to relatively warm, moist air from day to day activities, such as cooking and bathing coming into contact with cold surfaces, such as walls and glazing. The warmer air then cools and it is unable to hold as much moisture, resulting in the formation of water on the surface and subsequent dampness. Condensation can be a difficult problem to manage, but good insulation and sensible use of heating and ventilation will help. Care should be taken when storing perishable articles, such as books and clothes, as these may deteriorate.
- The general shrinkage and differential movement cracks, mainly visible at the corners and openings, are not of a structural nature, but some general filling and patching will be required, prior to redecoration.

E

Inside the property

E4 Floors

The first floors are of suspended timber construction with various finishes. The ground floors are of concrete and suspended timber construction with various finishes.

1

The concrete floors are slightly off level in areas, almost certainly due to consolidation of the supporting hardcore fill. Condition rating 1. This is not serious, although you may wish to consider some re-levelling, prior to re-covering.

Notes:

- Furniture, finishes and floor coverings prevented a detailed inspection.
- There are no signs of any active infestation by wood boring insects to the floor timbers (often called woodworm). However, it must be appreciated that a property of this age may have suffered from some infestation to areas currently hidden. If any active infestation is found in the future, localized treatment should be sufficient.
- The floorboards creak in areas and have been cut and slightly damaged over the years. Whilst not serious, some re-fixing and repairs will be needed, prior to re-covering.
- The extent and adequacy of insulation to the suspended floors and any concealed plumbing within the floor voids cannot be ascertained. If the floors are exposed in the future, the opportunity should be taken to lift a few boards and upgrade insulation, where possible.
- The concrete ground floor is likely to incorporate some insulation built-in during construction.



Inside the property

E5 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues

There is a solid fuel stove the living room.

3

For safety, solid fuel appliances need annual maintenance (See section I3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). If servicing has not been carried out within the last 12 months, then this must be undertaken by a member of a 'competent person scheme' such as a HETAS (www.hetas.co.uk) registered installer, prior to use. If possible, past service records should be obtained from the vendor (See section H2 – Guarantees).

Notes:

- For safety, logs or any other combustible materials should not be kept close to any fire or stove and should also be stored well away from buildings. Ash can stay hot for days and should be wetted and stored in a metal container that can be tightly closed with a metal lid (this helps minimize air flow and possible re-ignition). If wood is burnt, it should be dry and well-seasoned.

E6 Built-in fittings (built-in kitchen and other fittings, not including appliances)

There is a good range of recently fitted units in the kitchen. There is an extractor hood fitted over the hob. There are also some useful cupboards with reasonable fitted storage space within the property.

1

Notes:

- Your Legal Adviser should confirm what appliances (if any) are to be included in the sale.

E7 Woodwork (for example, staircase joinery)

The property is fitted with paneled doors. The stairs, skirting boards, door linings and other areas of joinery are mainly constructed of timber. Some of the doors are binding and in need of some general easing and adjustment to close properly. Condition Rating 2.

2

Notes:

- Lead paint may have been previously used to the older timbers. When this peels and flakes it can be harmful, particularly to pregnant women and children. Testing kits are readily available and if found, the paint should be removed carefully with appropriate precautionary measures taken (See section I3 – Risks to People).



Inside the property

E8 Bathroom fittings

There are modern sanitary fittings in the bathroom, shower room and cloakroom. There are extractor fans fitted. 1

There is no shower screen fitted to the bath. Condition Rating 1. A proper screen should be fitted to minimize water spillages.

Notes:

- Sanitary fittings, particularly showers, are often a source of water leakage and periodic attention, particularly to the edge seals, is likely to be needed to prevent possible problems. Repairs can be very disruptive.

E9 Other

Detectors

For safety, mains powered inter-linked smoke detectors should be installed and a heat detector fitted in the kitchen (See section I3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 2. 2

There are carbon monoxide detectors installed near the boiler and the solid fuel stove Condition Rating NI.

Sound Transmission

The property may suffer from some noise transmission from adjoining occupiers. Although no problems were noted, if this proves to be a serious problem, you may need to consider further sound insulation. Condition Rating NI.

Security Alarm

There is no burglar alarm and you may wish to consider having one installed to improve security. Condition Rating NI.

Asbestos

During inspection, no materials were found that are likely to contain asbestos (although this can only be definitely ascertained with laboratory testing). However, there may be asbestos containing materials, currently hidden. The presence of asbestos would not normally constitute a health hazard unless the material, which contains the asbestos, is disturbed, drilled or substantially damaged. Any materials are usually best left undisturbed. However, when maintenance work, building improvements or other alterations are undertaken, you should be mindful of the possibility of asbestos. If found, certain materials may need to be removed by a licensed contractor, which could be costly (see further information at www.hse.gov.uk).

F

Services

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. This means that we can only inspect the visible parts of the available services, and we do not carry out specialist tests. The visual inspection cannot assess the services to make sure they work efficiently and safely, and meet modern standards.

Limitations on the inspection

F1 Electricity

1 2 3 NI

Safety warning: *Electrical Safety First recommends that you should get a registered electrician to check the property and its electrical fittings at least every ten years, or on change of occupancy. All electrical installation work undertaken after 1 January 2005 should have appropriate certification. For more advice, contact Electrical Safety First.*

Mains electricity is connected via an underground supply with the meter situated in an outside box. The consumer unit is located in the hall. Short circuit protection is provided by circuit breakers. There are also RCD's (residual current devices providing additional protection). 3

The installation has been upgraded and appears to be generally satisfactory, although your Legal Adviser should ensure that there is adequate certification provided by a registered electrical contractor covering the entire installation (See section I3 – Risks to People). In any event, as the occupancy of the property is changing, it is recommended that an Electrical Installation Condition Report should be undertaken by a registered electrical contractor (<http://electricalcompetentperson.co.uk/>). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). The contractor should also provide appropriate certification upon the completion of any necessary works.

You should also carefully consider your own needs with regard to the installation, as improvement or alteration works can be disruptive and are best undertaken prior to redecoration. A registered electrical contractor should carry out any larger repair and alteration works, or they now require building regulation approval.

Notes:

- Electrical faults are a major cause of fires and it is essential that periodic safety inspections are undertaken by a registered electrician.

F2 Gas/oil

Safety warning: *All gas and oil appliances and equipment should be regularly inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' 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 with the meter located in an outside box. 3

The gas installation and all appliances should be inspected for safety annually by a member of a 'competent person scheme' such as a Gas Safe Registered engineer (See section I3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). This is best undertaken when the central heating system is serviced.

F3 Water

Mains water is connected to the property with the external stop tap located in the pavement. There is a meter fitted. The internal stop tap is located under the kitchen sink with the incoming service pipe run in copper. 1

The supply to all fittings is directly fed from the water main and there is no cold water storage tank. The service pipework is mainly plumbed in copper and plastic.

Notes:

- You should familiarize yourself with the location of the water stop taps, which should also be kept readily accessible to allow for emergency operation.
- The supply to all fittings is directly fed from the water main and there is no cold water storage tank. Whilst this gives good pressure to the outlets, no water will be available if the mains supply is interrupted.

F4 Heating

Central heating is provided by a newly installed Baxi gas-fired condensing combination boiler situated in the kitchen. There are radiators in most areas of the property. The system is pressurized and therefore there is no expansion tank. 3

The heating installation should be inspected annually for safety by a member of a 'competent person scheme' (See section I3 – Risks to People). If possible, service records should be obtained from the vendor and if recent servicing has not been carried out, a full service and appraisal of the system should be undertaken.

Condition Rating 3 (further inspection).

Notes:

- Whilst the boiler is relatively modern, the remainder of the installation is of some age and accordingly, it is likely to require increased maintenance.
- Pipes have been run within the structure and are not readily accessible. This is very common, but can be disruptive if leakages occur. Care should be taken when undertaking maintenance and repair as the pipes will be vulnerable to damage from nails and screws etc.

F5 Water heating

Hot water is provided directly on demand by the combination boiler and there is no stored supply. 1

The hot water service pipework is mainly plumbed in copper and plastic.

Notes:

- As the hot water is provided directly on demand by the combination boiler, there is no stored capacity. Whilst economical, the supply of water may be limited if a number of outlets are in use simultaneously.

F6 Drainage

Surface Water Drainage

1

Surface water from the downpipes is likely to drain to soakaways (usually pits filled with rubble). Whilst the layout of the system cannot be confirmed, there are no signs of flooding or blockages. Condition Rating 1.

Foul Drainage

It is assumed that the property is connected to the main sewer, which has been adopted and maintained at the expense of the local water company. However, your Legal Advisers should formally confirm this (See section H3 – Other Matters).

There are two inspection chambers visible within the plot. The covers were lifted to enable a visual inspection. The drainage channels were found to be reasonably clear with no serious blockages. Condition Rating 1. Nevertheless, there was some build-up of debris and, whilst not serious, the drains should be flushed through.

Notes:

- The drains run under the building. Whilst this is a very common arrangement, it can be disruptive and cause problems if serious blockages or collapse occurs.

F7 Common services

Not applicable.

(NI)

G

Grounds

(including shared areas for flats)



Grounds (including shared areas for flats)

Limitations on the inspection

G1 Garage

1 2 3 NI

There is a single sized attached garage constructed of brick under a tiled roof.
There is a metal up and over door to the front. There is power and lighting.

2

Repairs are needed to the joinery along with re-decoration. Attention is also required to the rainwater fittings. Condition Rating 2.

G2 Permanent outbuildings and other structures

There are no permanent outbuildings.

NI

G3 Other

The gardens are bounded by timber fences and brick walls, which are generally in serviceable condition. However, ongoing maintenance will be needed principally preservative treatment and occasional replacement of rotten posts and panels.

Most areas of hardstanding are laid with concrete pavings and gravel, which are cracked and uneven in places, but serviceable.

As already mentioned under 'E4 Main Walls', it is important to maintain the external ground levels at the correct height in order to minimize the risks of dampness and decay. If any new areas of hardstanding are laid around the property, they should be set at an appropriate level and fall away from the walls, to ensure the efficient removal of surface water. The use of free draining materials is also advised.

Notes:

- If possible, your Legal Advisers should confirm the extent and ownership of the boundaries (See section H3 – Other Matters). This is important as repairs can be costly. Doubts over the position of the boundaries can also cause neighbor disputes that can be unpleasant and expensive to resolve.
- There are no trees or large shrubs in and around the plot that are considered to be a significant threat to the property.



Grounds (including shared areas for flats)



Issues for your legal advisers

We do not act as a legal adviser and will not comment on any legal documents. However, if, during the inspection, we identify issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, we may refer to these in the report (for example, to state you should check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows). You should show your legal advisers this section of the report.



Issues for your legal advisers

H1 Regulation

Your Legal Adviser should check the following:

- That Local Authority notifications and approvals for the extension and alteration works were obtained and all necessary statutory inspections have been made. If regulations have been breached, it is possible that alteration works could be needed to ensure compliance.

H2 Guarantees

Your Legal Advisers should check for the existence, validity and transferability of any guarantees, certificates, warranties and service records. These should be made available to you before completion.

Likely items include:

- The cavity wall insulation.
- Installation of the replacement windows and doors.
- The solid fuel stove.
- The intruder alarm.
- The electrical installation.
- The replacement boiler.
- The central heating installation.

H3 Other matters

The property is assumed to be freehold.

Your Legal Adviser should also check the following:

- That the road is adopted (maintained at public expense) by The Local Authority.
- That the main sewer is adopted and is maintained at the expense of the local water company.
- The ownership and extent of the boundaries.

Risks

This section summarises defects and issues that present a risk to the building or grounds, or a safety risk to people. These may have been reported and condition-rated against more than one part of the property, or may be of a more general nature. They may have existed for some time and cannot reasonably be changed.



Risks

I1 Risks to the building

There are no significant risks to the building.

I2 Risks to the grounds

There are no significant risks to the grounds.

I3 Risks to people

The inadequate firewall (E1 – Roof Structure).
The possible presence of paint that may contain lead (E7 – Woodwork).
The solid fuel appliance (E5 – Fireplaces, Chimney Breasts and Flues).
The electrical installation (F1 – Electricity).
The gas installation (F2 – Gas/Oil).
The heating installation (F4 – Heating).

I4 Other risks or hazards

There are no other significant risks.

J

Property valuation



Property valuation

This valuation has been undertaken in accordance with *RICS Valuation – Global Standards* (Red Book Global Standards), which includes the *International Valuation Standards*.

In my opinion the market value on 01/07/21.

as inspected was:

£450,000 (four hundred and fifty thousand pounds).

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

£190,000 (one hundred and ninety thousand pounds).

Tenure

Freehold.

Area of property (sq m)

130m (Gross internal).

Arriving at my valuation, I made the following assumptions:

Regarding the materials, construction, services, fixtures and fittings, etc., I have assumed that:

- an inspection of the 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 into account any furnishings, removable fittings or sales incentives.

Regarding legal matters, I have assumed that:

- the property is sold with 'vacant possession' (your legal advisers 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, the property is not affected by problems that would be revealed by the usual legal enquiries, and all necessary planning permissions and Building Regulations consents (including consents for alterations) have been obtained and complied with, 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).

J

Property valuation



Reminder

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

Any additional assumptions relating to the valuation

None.

My opinion of the market value shown could be affected by the outcome of the enquiries by your legal advisers (section H) 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 the report.

Other considerations affecting value

None.

Note: You can find information about the assumptions I have made in calculating this reinstatement cost in the *Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service* provided in section M.

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 you will need for the property.

K

Surveyor's declaration



Surveyor's declaration

Surveyor's RICS number

1000000

Qualifications

MRICS

Company

Marshalls Chartered Surveyors

Address

Suite F1, The Kidlington Centre, Kidlington, OX5 2DL.

Phone number

01865 863020

Fax

Not applicable

Email

mail@marshallsgroup.com

Website

www.marshallsgroup.com

Property address

100 Smith Street, Oxfordshire, OX1 5DZ.

Client's name

Mrs Client.

Date this report was produced

July 2021.

I confirm that I have inspected the property and prepared this report.

Signature

Surveyor



What to do now



Further investigations and getting quotes

We have provided advice below on what to do next, now that you have an overview of any work to be carried out on the property. We recommend you make a note of any quotations you receive.

Getting quotations

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 quotations for all the repairs and further investigations the surveyor may have identified. You should get at least two quotations 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 will want them to do and
- get them to put their quotations in writing.

Some repairs will need contractors who have specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers, plumbers and so on). You may also need to get Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority for some work.

Further investigations and what they involve

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

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

When a further investigation is recommended, the following will be included in your report:

- a description of the affected element and why a further investigation is required
- when a further investigation should be carried out and
- a broad indication of who should carry out the further investigation.

Who you should use for further investigations

You should ask an appropriately qualified person, although it is not possible to tell you which one. Specialists belonging to 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.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement



Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

The service

The RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service includes:

- a physical **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 Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service aims to give you professional advice to help you to:

- make an 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 into account any repairs or replacements the property needs, and
- consider what further advice you should take before committing to purchasing the property.

Any extra services provided that are not covered by the terms and conditions of this service must be covered by a separate contract.

The inspection

The surveyor inspects the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction and significant visible defects that are evident. This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as is physically accessible. Where this is not possible, an explanation is provided in the 'Limitations on the inspection' box in the relevant section of the report.

The surveyor does not force or open up the fabric of the building. This includes taking up fitted carpets, fitted floor coverings or floorboards; moving heavy furniture; removing the contents of cupboards, roof spaces, etc.; removing secured panels and/or hatches; or undoing electrical fittings.

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 damp meter, binoculars and 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.

If it is safe and reasonable to do so, the surveyor will enter the roof space and visually inspect the roof structure with attention paid to those parts vulnerable to deterioration and damage. Although the surveyor does not move or lift insulation material, stored goods or other contents.

The surveyor also carries out a desk-top study and makes oral enquiries for information about matters affecting the property.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

Services to the property

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. The visual inspection cannot assess the efficiency or safety of electrical, gas or other energy sources; 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 where access can be obtained. Where there are restrictions to access (e.g. a creeper plant prevents closer inspection), these are reported and advice is given on any potential underlying risks that may require further investigation.

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

Flats

When inspecting flats, the surveyor assesses the general condition of the outside surfaces of the building, as well as its access areas (for example, shared hallways and staircases that lead directly to the subject flat) and roof spaces, but only if they are accessible from within and owned by the subject flat. The surveyor does not inspect drains, lifts, fire alarms and security systems.

External wall systems are not inspected. If the surveyor has specific concerns about these items, further investigation will be recommended before making a legal commitment to purchase. Until these investigations are completed, the surveyor may not be able to provide you with a market valuation figure.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

Dangerous materials, contamination and environmental issues

The surveyor does not make any enquiries about contamination or other environmental dangers. However, if the surveyor suspects a problem, they should recommend 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 such materials have been used, the surveyor must report this and ask for further instructions.

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 ('CAR 2012'). However, the report should properly emphasise the suspected presence of asbestos containing materials if the inspection identifies that possibility. With flats, the surveyor assumes that there is a 'dutyholder' (as defined in CAR 2012), and that there is an asbestos register and an effective management plan in place, which does not present a significant risk to health or need any immediate payment. The surveyor does not consult the dutyholder.

The report

The surveyor produces a report of the inspection results 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 addressed. The report objectively describes the condition of the elements and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems. Although it is concise, the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) report does include advice about repairs or any ongoing maintenance issues. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation should be made.

Condition ratings

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

- **R** – Documents we may suggest you request before you sign contracts.
- **Condition rating 3** – Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently. Failure to do so could risk serious safety issues or severe long-term damage to your property. Written quotations for repairs should be obtained prior to legal commitment to purchase.
- **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 1** – No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
- **NI** – Elements not inspected.

The surveyor notes in the report if it was not possible 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.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

Energy

The surveyor has not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as part of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service for the property. Where the EPC has not been made available by others, the most recent certificate will be obtained from the appropriate central registry where practicable. If the surveyor has seen the current EPC, they will review and state the relevant energy efficiency rating in this report. In addition, as part of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service, checks are made for any obvious discrepancies between the EPC and the subject property, and the implications are explained to you.

Issues for legal advisers

The surveyor does not act as a 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, to state you should check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows).

This report has been prepared by a surveyor merely in their capacity as an employee or agent of a firm, company or other business entity ('the Company'). The report is the product of the Company, not of the individual surveyor. All of the statements and opinions contained in this report are expressed entirely on behalf of the Company, which accepts sole responsibility for them. For their part, the individual surveyor assumes no personal financial responsibility or liability in respect of the report, and no reliance or inference to the contrary should be drawn.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may sign the report in their own name, unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader limited liability company.

Nothing in this report excludes or limits liability for death or personal injury (including disease and impairment of mental condition) resulting from negligence.

Risks

This section summarises significant defects and issues that present a risk to the building or grounds, or a safety risk to people. These may have been reported and condition rated against more than one part of the property, or may be of a more general nature. They may have existed for some time and cannot be reasonably changed. If the property is leasehold, the surveyor gives you general advice and details of questions you should ask your legal advisers. The RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) report will identify and list the risks, and explain the nature of these problems.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

The valuation

The surveyor gives an opinion on both the market value of the property and the reinstatement cost at the time of the inspection (see Reinstatement cost below).

Market value

Market value is the estimated amount for which an asset or liability should exchange on the valuation date between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's length transaction, after proper marketing 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 assumes that:

- an inspection of those parts that have not yet been inspected would not identify significant defects
- 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 into account any furnishings, removable fittings and sales incentives of any description.

Legal matters

The surveyor assumes that:

- the property is sold with 'vacant possession' (your legal advisers 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, the property is not affected by problems that would be revealed by the usual legal enquiries, and all necessary planning and Building Regulations permissions (including permission to make alterations) have been obtained and any works undertaken comply with such permissions, and
- the property has the right to use the mains services on normal terms, and 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 reports any more assumptions that have been made or found not to apply. If the property is leasehold, the general advice referred to earlier explains what other assumptions the surveyor has made.

M

Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

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 by acting 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 helps you decide on the amount of buildings insurance cover you will need for the property.

Standard terms of engagement

1 The service – The surveyor provides the standard RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service described in this section, unless you agree with the surveyor in writing before the inspection that the surveyor will provide extra services. Any extra service will require separate terms of engagement to be entered into with the surveyor. Examples of extra services include:

- costing of repairs
- schedules of works
- supervision of works
- re-inspection
- detailed specific issue reports and
- market valuation (after repairs).

2 The surveyor – The service will be provided by an AssocRICS, MRICS or FRICS member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) who has the skills, knowledge and experience to survey and report on the property. Where the surveyor is also providing a valuation of the property, they have the skills, knowledge and experience to provide such a valuation, and are a member of the RICS Valuer Registration scheme.

3 Before the inspection – Before the inspection, you should tell us if there is already an agreed or proposed price for the property, and if you have any particular concerns about the property (such as a crack noted above the bathroom window or any plans for extension).

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



Description of the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation) service and terms of engagement

5 Cancelling this contract – You should seek advice on your obligations under The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 ('the Regulations') and/or the Consumer Rights Act 2015, in accordance with section 2.6 of the current edition of the Home survey standard RICS professional statement.

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

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

This report is for use in the UK.

Complaints handling procedure

The surveyor will have a complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask for it. The surveyor is required to provide you with contact details, in writing, for their complaints department or the person responsible for dealing with client complaints. Where the surveyor is party to a redress scheme, those details should also be provided. If any of this information is not provided, please notify the surveyor and ask for it to be supplied.

N

Typical house diagram



RICS disclaimer

You should know ...

This report has been prepared by a surveyor merely in their capacity as an employee or agent of a firm, company or other business entity ('the Company'). The report is the product of the Company, not of the individual surveyor. All of the statements and opinions contained in this report are expressed entirely on behalf of the Company, which accepts sole responsibility for them. For their part, the individual surveyor assumes no personal financial responsibility or liability in respect of the report, and no reliance or inference to the contrary should be drawn.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may sign the report in their own name, unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader limited liability company.

Nothing in this report excludes or limits liability for death or personal injury (including disease and impairment of mental condition) resulting from negligence.

This document is issued in blank form by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and is available only to parties who have signed a licence agreement with RICS.

RICS gives no representations or warranties, express or implied, and no responsibility or liability is accepted for the accuracy or completeness of the information inserted into the document, or any other written or oral information given to any interested party or its advisers. Any such liability is expressly disclaimed.

What to do now

We have provided advice below on what to do next, now that you have an overview of any work to be carried out on the property. We recommend you make a note of any quotations you receive. This will allow you to check the amounts are in line with our estimates, if cost estimates have been provided.

Getting quotations

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 quotations for all the repairs and further investigations the surveyor may have identified. You should get at least two quotations 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 will want them to do and
- get them to put their quotations in writing.

Some repairs will need contractors who have specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers, plumbers and so on). You may also need to get Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority for some work.

Further investigations and what they involve

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

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

When a further investigation is recommended, the following will be included in your report:

- a description of the affected element and why a further investigation is required
- when a further investigation should be carried out and
- a broad indication of who should carry out the further investigation.

Who you should use for further investigations

You should ask an appropriately qualified person, although it is not possible to tell you which one. Specialists belonging to 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.

Maintenance tips

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. If you are concerned contact an RICS qualified surveyor for further advice.

Outside the property

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

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 aerials or other fixings, including 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 storms.

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 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.

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 an appropriately qualified technician to check and test all gas and oil services, boilers, heating systems and connected devices ones a year.
- Electrical installations should only be replaced or modified by a suitably qualified electrician 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 there as necessary. Keep gullies free from debris.

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 storms. 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.