

RICS  
**Building Survey** 

Property address

SAMPLE

Client's name

SAMPLE

Date of inspection

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

# Contents

---

- A Introduction to the report\*
  - B About the inspection
  - C Overall opinion and summary of the condition ratings
  - D About the property
  - E Outside the property
  - F Inside the property
  - G Services
  - H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)
  - I Issues for your legal advisers
  - J Risks
  - K Energy efficiency
  - L Surveyor's declaration
- What to do now  
Description of the RICS Building Survey Service  
Typical house diagram

\* Please read the entire report in order

RICS is the world's leading qualification when it comes to professional standards in land, property and construction.

In a world where more and more people, governments, banks and commercial organisations demand greater certainty of professional standards and ethics, attaining RICS status is the recognised mark of property professionalism.

Over 100,000 property professionals working in the major established and emerging economies of the world have already recognised the importance of securing RICS status by becoming members.

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

The RICS Building Survey is reproduced with the permission of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors who owns the copyright.

© 2012 RICS

---

# A Introduction to the report

---

This Building Survey is produced by an RICS surveyor who has written this report for you to use. If you decide not to act on the advice in this report, you do this at your own risk.

The Building Survey aims to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision when purchasing the property, or when planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrading of the property;
- provide detailed advice on condition;
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects;
- where practicable and agreed, provide an estimate of costs for identified repairs; and
- make recommendations as to any further actions or advice which need to be obtained before committing to purchase.

Section B gives an outline description of what the inspection covers. A more detailed description is contained in the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' at the end of this report.

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

After reading this report you may have comments or questions. If so, please contact the RICS surveyor who has written this report for you (contact details are given in section L).

If you want to complain about the service provided by the RICS surveyor, the surveyor will have an RICS-compliant complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask.

Property address

SAMPLE

Surveyor's name R Foulkes MRICS.

Surveyor's RICS  
number 0076355.

Company name Marshalls Chartered Surveyors.

Date of the inspection SAMPLE

Report reference number SAMPLE

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 SAMPLE

Weather conditions  
when the inspection  
took place It was dry at the time of the inspection. This followed a period of generally dry weather.

The status of the  
property when the  
inspection took place The property was occupied and fully furnished with floor coverings and finishes in the rooms.  
The vendor, SAMPLE was present at the time of our visit.

Property address SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

We inspect the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings. We also inspect the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating, drainage and other services that can be seen, but these are not tested other than through their normal operation in everyday use.

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 parts E, F, G and H we describe the part that has the worst condition rating first and then outline the condition of the other parts. The condition ratings are described as follows.

<b>3</b>	Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.
<b>2</b>	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.
<b>1</b>	No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
<b>NI</b>	Not inspected (see 'Important note' below).

**Important note:** We carry out a desk-top study and make oral enquiries for information about matters affecting the property.

We carefully and thoroughly inspect the property using our best endeavours to see as much of it as is physically accessible. Where this is not possible an explanation will be provided.

We visually 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. Flat roofs no more than 3m above ground level are inspected using a ladder where it is safe to do so.

We inspect the roof structure from inside the roof space if there is safe access. We examine floor surfaces and under-floor spaces so far as there is safe access and permission from the owner. We are not able to assess the condition of the inside of any chimney, boiler or other flues. We do not lift fitted carpets or coverings without the owner's consent. Intermittent faults of services may not be apparent on the day of inspection.

If we are concerned about parts of the property that the inspection cannot cover, the report will tell you about any further investigations that are needed.

Where practicable and agreed we report on the cost of any work for identified repairs and make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out. Some maintenance and repairs that we suggest may be expensive. Purely cosmetic and minor maintenance defects that have no effect on performance might not be reported. The report that we provide is not a warranty.



Please read the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' (at the end of this report) for details of what is, and is not, inspected.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

This section provides our overall opinion of the property, highlighting areas of concern, and summarises the condition ratings of different elements of the property (with only the worst rating per element being inputted in the tables). It also provides a summary of repairs (and cost guidance where agreed) and recommendations for further investigations.

To make sure you get a balanced impression of the property, we strongly recommend that you read all sections of the report, in particular the 'What to do now' section, and discuss in detail with us.

## Overall opinion

The property was found to be structurally satisfactory with no major repairs required. The various fairly minor 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 various repair 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.

3

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property	N/A	There are no elements with this condition rating.
F: Inside the property	F5	Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues.
G: Services	G1	Electricity.
	G2	Gas/oil.
	G4	Heating.
H: Grounds (part)	N/A	There are no elements with this condition rating.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

2

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property	E1	Chimney stacks.
	E2	Roof coverings.
	E3	Rainwater pipes and gutters.
	E8	Other joinery and finishes.
F: Inside the property	N/A	There are no elements with this condition rating.
G: Services	G3	Water.
	G8	Other services/features.
H: Grounds (part)	H1	Garage(s).

1

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property	E4	Main walls.
	E5	Windows.
	E6	Outside doors (including patio doors).
F: Inside the property	F1	Roof structure.
	F2	Ceilings.
	F3	Walls and partitions.
	F4	Floors.
	F6	Built-in fittings.
	F7	Woodwork.
	F8	Bathroom and kitchen fittings.
	G: Services	G5
	G6	Drainage.
H: Grounds (part)	N/A	There are no elements with this condition rating.

Property address

SAMPLE



RICS

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
Building Survey...

**Summary of repairs**

Formal quotations should be obtained prior to legal commitment to purchase the property

**Repairs**

There are no major repairs outstanding.

**Further investigations**

Further investigations should be obtained prior to legal commitment to purchase the property  
(see 'What to do now')

Further inspection of the electrical installation (See G1 Electricity).

In the absence of adequate certification, a further inspection of the gas installation and central heating system (See G2 Gas/Oil & G4 Heating).

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

Type of property

The property comprises a semi-detached two storey house, which faces approximately south.

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. 1979.

Approximate year the property was extended

Not applicable.

Approximate year the property was converted

Not applicable.

Information relevant to flats and maisonettes

Not applicable.

### Accommodation

#### Ground Floor

Entrance hall, sitting/dining room, kitchen, cloakroom with WC.

#### First Floor

Landing, three bedrooms, bathroom with WC.

### Construction

The main and secondary dormer roofs are covered with plain clay tiles.

The walls are constructed of cavity blockwork, mainly rendered with stone facing to the front and brick detailing elsewhere.

The floors are of concrete and suspended timber construction.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

### Means of escape

Emergency escape from the living accommodation is gained via the external doors and windows. This arrangement is satisfactory for a two storey property of this type.

To ensure easy emergency escape, all keys should be kept readily available. Good smoke and heat detection is also essential to give early warning of a fire and allow for emergency exit (See section G8 Other services/features).

### Security

There is no burglar alarm and you may wish to consider having one installed.

The windows incorporate locking handles. The front door lock is only basic, but there is a bolt. The multi-point rear door locks are satisfactory. To ensure security, it is advisable to change the locks when taking up occupation.

The gardens are enclosed and also slightly overlooked by neighbours, which improves security. You should consider additional external lighting, as this is a good deterrent. CCTV is also now very cost effective.

### Energy

We have not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). If we have seen the EPC, then we will report the 'Current' rating here. We have not checked this rating and so cannot comment on its accuracy. We are advised that the property's current energy performance, as recorded in the EPC, is:

### Energy Efficiency Rating

E54.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## About the property (continued)

---

### Services

#### Gas

Mains  Other

#### Electricity

Mains  Other

#### Water

Mains  Other

#### Drainage

Mains  Other

*Please see section K for more information about the energy efficiency of the property*

### Central heating

Gas  Electric  Solid fuel  Oil  None

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

None.

### Grounds

The property occupies a regular and fairly level plot with mainly enclosed gardens to both the front and rear. Vehicular access is via a shared driveway.

There is a single sized garage situated in a block of two.

There are no other permanent outbuildings.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## About the property (continued)

---

### Location

The property is situated in SAMPLE.

### Facilities

There is reasonable access to all local facilities and amenities, including the M40.

### Local environment

There are no planning or highway matters that are likely to adversely affect the property, although no enquiries have been made to the Local Authority.

The property is not situated in an area that The Environment Agency (<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk>) has indicated could be at an increased risk from flooding. To our knowledge, neither the property nor the immediate area has flooded in recent times.

Public Health England has identified the local area as one in which the levels of radon gas entering the property may be such that remedial action is recommended (See section H3 General and section J3 – Risks to People).

### Other local factors

There are no significant adverse factors regarding the location of the property, to our knowledge, although the old chapel to the front and the farm building to the rear may be developed at some stage.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Limitations to inspection

--

E1 Chimney stacks	<p>There is a single shared brick built chimney stack, which is sealed to the roof coverings with lead flashings.</p> <p>The chimney has a single flue, which serves the fireplace in the sitting/dining room. The flue is fitted with a concrete pot bedded in mortar.</p> <p>The mortar pointing has weathered over the years and there is some slight cracking to the benching securing the pot. Condition Rating 2. Patch re-pointing is needed and possibly rebidding of the top courses. This work is not urgent.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Any works on shared chimney stacks are best undertaken in co-operation with neighbouring owners.</li> <li>- Lead flashings tend to work loose over time due to thermal movement and occasional re-fixing may be needed to minimise 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.</li> </ul>	<span style="color: green;">1</span> <span style="color: orange;">2</span> <span style="color: red;">3</span> NI	<span style="border: 1px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">2</span>			

E2 Roof coverings	<p>The roofs are covered with plain clay tiles finished with half-round ridge tiles bedded in mortar. There are four timber framed and rendered dormers with tiled roofs sealed to the main coverings with tiled valley gutters.</p> <p>The exposed roof edges (verges) are finished with mortar pointing set on tiled undercloaks.</p> <p>The roof slopes are lined internally with felt, which provides secondary protection against water and snow penetration.</p>	<span style="border: 1px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">2</span>			
----------------------	--	--	--	--	--

Property address

SAMPLE



RICS

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

There is the odd broken tile, most likely from 'foot' damage. Condition Rating 2. Whilst not ideal, urgent replacement is not essential.

The roof slopes are slightly uneven, but this is very typical with dormer roofs and is not serious. Condition Rating 1.

The mortar below a number of the tiles finishing the ridges has cracked and weathered over the years. 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 shrinkage cracking. Condition Rating 1. This is not serious and no repairs are required at this stage.

There is some light moss and lichen growth to the roof slopes, but this is not serious, although occasional removal may be needed. Condition Rating 1. When any works are undertaken, care should be taken as some damage to the coverings may occur.

The felt linings projecting externally along the eaves (bottom of the roof) have perished and are not properly dressed into the guttering. Condition Rating 1. This could lead to water penetration and repairs should be undertaken. This is best achieved with strips of new felt, or damp course, dressed under the eaves and lapped into the gutters where the linings are defective. The work is not urgent and best combined with gutter maintenance.

Notes:

- It is essential that the roof coverings are kept in good order to minimise 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.
- Valley gutters are often a source of leakage due to blockages and regular inspection/cleaning should be undertaken.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

E3  
Rainwater pipes  
and gutters

Stormwater from the main roof slopes discharges into white plastic 'squareline' type rainwater fittings. 2

The gutters require some cleaning and minor re-alignment. There is a stop-end missing to the front right side guttering. Condition Rating 2.

There are no gutters to the dormer roofs. However, this is not serious as significant problems with splashing and damp are unlikely. Condition Rating 1. However, surface water is causing some staining and improvements could be considered.

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.
- In view of the nearby trees, the gutters will require more regular cleaning along with re-sealing of joints.

E4  
Main walls

The walls are constructed of cavity blockwork, mainly rendered with stone facing to the front and brick detailing elsewhere. The walls incorporate bitumen felt damp-proof courses. 1

Openings in the walls are supported by both steel and concrete lintels.

The walls generally measure around 275mm in thickness, although thicker to the front.

The rendering to the walls has cracked in places due to shrinkage and thermal movement. Condition Rating 1. This is not serious, but ongoing patching will be needed as the cracks are likely to regularly re-open. The render has been decorated, which will help mask any repairs.

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 minimise the risks of damp penetration and decay, it is essential to maintain the exterior of the property in good order at all times.

Property address

SAMPLE

- The cavity walls are formed in two leaves, which are usually held together with metal wall ties. Ties manufactured before 1981 are at an increased risk of corrosion, which if serious, can lead to structural failure. The condition of these ties cannot be properly ascertained without opening up the structure, but externally, there are no signs of any defects. When taking account of the factors which make structures susceptible to wall tie corrosion, the risks with this property are small and no further action is considered necessary at this stage.
- There is good ground clearance around the house, but if any new areas of hardstanding are laid around the property, they should be set at an appropriate level (usually 150mm below damp proof course or internal floor level). 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 minimise the risks of dampness.
- There is no evidence of insulation to the cavity walls, although this may have been built-in during construction (See section K1 – Insulation).
- The creepers growing against walls are attractive, but it is important that they are regularly cut back as they can cause damage, particularly if allowed to grow into the roof coverings.

E5  
Windows

The windows are relatively new PVC-u framed units with double glazing and draught proofing. The opening windows have locking handles.

1

Some of the opening windows are slightly stiff and would benefit from adjustment and lubrication. There is also the odd loose handle. Condition Rating 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 window (and door) frames. To minimise problems, it is essential that the frames are kept in repair and carefully sealed to the walls.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

- Windows can suffer from high levels of condensation, particularly during cold weather. This can be difficult to manage, but is often minimised by good heating and ventilation. Any mould growth is best cleaned with dilute bleach.
- The windows were apparently fitted around ten years ago. 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 I2 – Guarantees).
- All window lock keys should be kept readily available to allow for emergency escape.

E6  
Outside doors  
(including patio doors)

The front door to the house is an older timber ledged and braced door with only a basic lock and bolt.

1

The rear door is a newer PVC-u framed unit with good multi-point locking.

The front door is serviceable, although slightly ill-fitting. Condition Rating 1.

Notes:

- You should consider upgrading the front door locks to improve security.
- When taking up occupation, it is advisable to change the locks. All door keys should be kept readily available to allow for emergency escape.

E7  
Conservatory  
and porches

None.

NI

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

E8 Other joinery and finishes	<p>The other areas of external joinery are formed with timber. The soffits (the horizontal boards between the walls and the vertical fascia boards) are formed with fibre reinforced cement boarding. <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid orange; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px; font-weight: bold;">2</span></p> <p>The external decorations are wearing and would benefit from renewal. Condition Rating 2. If possible. This work should be undertaken, prior to winter.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Regular renewal of the decorations will be required to prevent deterioration and help to maintain the visual appearance of the property. When redecoration is undertaken, the edges of the window and door frames should be carefully inspected and re-sealed as necessary in order to minimise the risks of damp penetration. For safety, proper access equipment should be used.</li><li>- 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.</li><li>- The cement boarding is unlikely to contain any asbestos.</li></ul>
E9 Other	<p>Access may be needed onto adjoining land in order to undertake maintenance. Reciprocal access could also be needed by the neighbouring owners. <span style="float: right; font-weight: bold;">NI</span></p> <p>There are no other external matters affecting the main property.</p>

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Limitations to inspection

F1  
Roof structure

1 2 3 NI

Access to the roof space is gained via a good sized hatch in the landing ceiling. There is no loft ladder, but there is a light.

1

The roof is constructed of traditional 'cut' timber framing with 100mm x 50mm common rafters laid at various centres, but generally 350mm. The effective span of the rafters is reduced by 200mm steel beams laid at ceiling level.

There is a blockwork firewall between the roof void and adjoining property.

There are droppings from nesting mice in the roof. Condition Rating 1. As electrical cabling, stored items and insulation could be harmed, poison should be carefully laid in covered bait boxes. Mice often enter buildings during autumn, as the cold weather approaches and periodic treatments are likely to be needed.

## Notes:

- The loft is partly boarded and 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 (See section K1 – Insulation).
- There are some old and inactive wasps' nests. Old nests are often found in lofts, but there is no need for removal, as they will cause no damage. Wasps do not re-use old nests, but sometimes build new ones in the same area. Active nests can usually be easily treated at minimal cost.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

F2 Ceilings	<p>The ceilings are constructed of plasterboard. All areas are finished with plaster with 'mock' timber beams in the sitting/dining room.</p> <p>There is reasonable head height throughout most areas of the property, although this is restricted under the sloping ceilings.</p> <p>The decorations are worn in areas and would benefit from renewal. Condition Rating 1.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The shrinkage and differential movement cracks that are visible, mainly at the corners and joints, are not serious and only minor filling and decoration will be required.</li><li>- The sloping ceilings are likely to contain minimal insulation (See section K1 – Insulation).</li></ul>
----------------	--

F3 Walls and partitions	<p>The internal walls and partitions are constructed of masonry and studwork with plastered finishes. There is tiling to the 'wet' areas.</p> <p>There has been some past leakage, most likely from the cloakroom. Condition Rating 1. All areas appeared dry, but the area should be monitored. There has been some slight damage to plaster and rusting of the nails fixing the skirting boards. Minor repairs will be needed during decoration.</p> <p>The decorations are worn and would benefit from renewal. Condition Rating 1.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The general shrinkage and differential movement cracks, mainly visible at the corners and openings, are not of a structural nature and only minor filling will be required, prior to redecoration.</li><li>- The edge seals to tiled areas, particularly around sanitary fittings, are often a source of water leakage and potential rot. Periodic inspections should be undertaken.</li><li>- The stud walls on the first floor are likely to contain minimal insulation (See section K1 – Insulation).</li></ul>
----------------------------	---

Property address

SAMPLE

<p>F4 Floors</p>	<p>The ground floors are of concrete construction with ceramic tiled finishes in the kitchen. The other floors are cork tiles and carpeted. <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">1</span></p> <p>The upper floors are of suspended timber construction with boarded finishes, which are carpeted.</p> <p>The cork tiling will have been damaged by the carpet grippers, but is unlikely to be exposed. Condition Rating 1.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Furniture, finishes and floor coverings prevented a detailed inspection.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- The concrete ground floor is unlikely to incorporate any insulation (See section K1 – Insulation).</li> </ul>
<p>F5 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues</p>	<p>There is an open fireplace in the sitting/dining room, which appears to have been regularly used. The surround is constructed in brickwork. <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">3</span></p> <p>The visible part of the flue is very sooty and there is soot staining to the fire surround, which may indicate a poor draw. To minimise the risks of fire, it is important that the flue should be swept and checked, prior to use. Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). For safety, a properly fitted fireguard should also be used. (See section J3 – Risks to People).</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flue linings inevitably deteriorate over the years and re-lining may be needed. This is always a requirement if high performance appliances are to be installed.</li> </ul>
<p>F6 Built-in fittings (e.g. wardrobes)</p>	<p>There are some useful fitted cupboards and wardrobes, but storage space is fairly limited. <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px;">1</span></p>
<p>Property address</p>	<p>SAMPLE</p>



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

<p>F7 Woodwork (e.g. staircase and joinery)</p>	<p>The property is fitted with panelled doors. The stairs, skirting boards, door linings and other areas of joinery are constructed of timber, ply and MDF. <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">1</span></p> <p>The decorations are worn in areas and would benefit from renewal. Condition Rating 1.</p>
<p>F8 Bathroom and kitchen fittings</p>	<p><u>The Bathroom Fittings</u> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">1</span></p> <p>There are reasonable quality white sanitary fittings in the bathroom and cloakroom.</p> <p>There are no extractor fans fitted. Condition Rating 1. Improvements should be undertaken as this will help minimise condensation and smells.</p> <p><u>The Kitchen Fittings</u></p> <p>There is a good range of basic modern units in the kitchen with a cooker hood over the hob.</p> <p>The units show some general wear and a number of the drawers and doors to the units would benefit from some adjustment to close correctly. Condition Rating 1.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sanitary fittings 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.</li> <li>- Your Legal Adviser should confirm what appliances (if any) are to be included in the sale.</li> </ul>

Property address

SAMPLE



RICS

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

F9 Other	<p data-bbox="395 286 507 315"><u>Asbestos</u></p> <p data-bbox="395 331 1310 680">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. According to the Institute for Environment and Health, 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 <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk">www.hse.gov.uk</a>)</p>	NI
-------------	---	----

Property address

SAMPLE

**RICS**the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwideRICS  
**Building Survey**...

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, or meet modern standards.

### Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

G1 Electricity *Safety warning: The Electrical Safety Council 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 the Electrical Safety Council.*

Mains electricity is connected via an underground supply with the meter situated in an outside box. The consumer unit is located in the hall cupboard with short circuit protection provided by older fuses. There is also a RCD (a residual current device providing additional protection).

3

There is an electric shower in the bathroom.

The installation appears largely original and some upgrading will be needed to bring it up to latest standards (See section J3 – Risks to People). An Electrical Installation Condition Report should be undertaken by a registered electrical contractor who is a member of The Electrical Safety Register ([www.electricalsafetyregister.com](http://www.electricalsafetyregister.com)). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). The contractor should also provide appropriate certification upon the completion of any necessary works.

The Electrical Safety Council recommends that you should get a registered electrical contractor to carry out an Electrical Installation Condition Report on the property and its electrical fittings at least every ten years, or on change of occupancy. All electrical installation work that has been undertaken after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 should also have appropriate certification.

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.

Property address SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

- G2 *Safety warning: All gas and oil appliances and equipment should regularly be inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' and in line with the manufacturer's instructions. This is important to make sure that the equipment is working correctly, to limit the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning, and to prevent carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from leaking into the air. For more advice contact the Gas Safe Register for gas installations, and OFTEC for oil installations.*

Gas/oil

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 J3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection). This is best undertaken when the central heating system is serviced.

G3  
Water

Mains water is assumed to be connected to the property, but the external stop tap could not be located and has most likely been buried over the years. The vendor was unsure of its location, although Thames Water may be able to help.

2

The internal stop tap is located in the cloakroom with the incoming service pipe run in plastic. There is a meter fitted.

Water is stored in a fibreglass tank situated in the loft. The service pipework is plumbed in copper.

There is no insulation fitted to the water storage tank and pipework and there is a risk of freezing and water damage (See section J1 – Risks to the Building and section K1 – Insulation). Condition Rating 2.

The overflow pipe is poorly supported and also shared with the central heating expansion tank and there is a small risk that this could lead to cross contamination (See section J3 – Risks to People). Separate pipes should be provided. Condition Rating 2.

Notes:

- If possible, you should familiarise yourself with the location of the water stop taps, which should also be kept readily accessible to allow for emergency operation.
- The tank is supported directly off the ceiling joists, which is typical, although not good practice. Whilst no visible damage has occurred, if the tank is drained in the future, a proper support platform should be constructed (although a direct fed system could be considered).
- To prevent possible freezing and leakage, it is essential to maintain good insulation to all vulnerable areas of plumbing (See section K1 – Insulation).

Property address

SAMPLE



RICS

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

G4  
Heating

Central heating is provided by a Potterton gas-fired boiler situated in the kitchen. There are older radiators in most areas of the property.

3

There is an uninsulated plastic expansion tank situated in the loft.

The system was not in operation, and whilst the system will not be particularly efficient, there is no reason why it should not be reasonably effective in heating the property.

The heating installation should be inspected annually for safety by a member of a 'competent person scheme' (See section J3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 3 (further inspection).

The expansion tank and pipes are uninsulated (See section J1 Risks to the Building). Condition Rating 2. Insulation should be provided to minimise the risk of frost damage and leakage.

Notes:

- For safety, all gas appliances need annual maintenance by a member of a 'competent person scheme' such as a Gas Safe Registered engineer. If possible, service records should be obtained from the vendor.
- The installation is of some age and accordingly, it is likely to require increased maintenance. You should budget for replacement of the boiler in due course.
- Some of the pipes are buried in the floor screed (the top concrete surface of the solid floor). Chemicals in concrete can attack the pipes causing leakages into the floor, which can be very disruptive (See section J1 – Risks to the Building). Without exposure works, it cannot be confirmed that the pipes have been well protected, but there are no signs of any leakages at present. Care should be taken when undertaking maintenance and repair as the pipes will be vulnerable to damage from nails and screws etc.
- It is essential to obtain a Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate if the property is to be let.
- Where possible, exposed pipes should be lagged to minimise heat losses (See section K2 – Heating).
- If the system is drained in the future, you should consider the fitting of thermostatic radiator valves (See section K2 – Heating).

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

G5 Water heating	<p>Hot water is provided by the central heating boiler and is stored in a copper foam lagged cylinder located in the airing cupboard. There is also an electric immersion heater for alternative provision.</p> <p>The hot water service pipework is plumbed in copper.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hot water cylinders can fail suddenly in this hard water area.</li> <li>- Where possible, exposed hot water pipes should be lagged to minimise heat losses (See section K1 – Insulation).</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
---------------------	---	----------

G6 Drainage	<p><u>Surface Water Drainage</u></p> <p>Surface water from the downpipes is likely to drain to soakaways (usually pits filled with rubble).</p> <p>Without excavation, the layout of the system cannot be confirmed, but there are no signs of flooding or blockages. Condition Rating 1.</p> <p><u>Foul Drainage</u></p> <p>It is assumed that the property is connected to the main sewer, which has been adopted and is maintained at the public expense. However, your Legal Advisers should formally confirm this (See section I3 – Other Matters). The drains are shared.</p> <p>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. There is some standing water in the rear chamber. This is not unusual or serious with pre-formed plastic chambers of this type, which often get disturbed on site during construction. However, there will be a slightly increased risk of blockages.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The rainwater downpipes discharge directly into the ground and there are no rodding eyes. Whilst this method of construction is typical, the clearance of blockages can be difficult and usually requires some excavation. However, to alter this arrangement would be disruptive and is not essential at this stage.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
----------------	---	----------

Property address

SAMPLE

**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

---



G7 Common services	Not applicable.	NI
-----------------------	-----------------	----

G8 Other services/features	<p><u>Detectors</u></p> <p>A heat detector should be installed in the kitchen and a carbon monoxide detector should also be fitted near the boiler (See section J3 – Risks to People). Condition Rating 2.</p> <p>Battery powered smoke detectors have been installed. Condition Rating 1. Ideally, these should be upgraded with mains powered, inter-linked units.</p> <p><u>Security Alarm</u></p> <p>There is no burglar alarm and you may wish to consider having one installed to improve security. Condition Rating 1.</p>	2
-------------------------------	---	---

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Grounds (including shared areas for flats)

### Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

H1  
Garage(s)

There is a single sized garage constructed of brick and rendered blockwork with a tiled roof. There is a metal up and over door.

2

The garage is in need of a general overhaul. Condition Rating 2. Repairs are needed to the joinery along with re-decoration. Attention is also required to the rainwater fittings.

Notes:

- The building is not completely secure or vermin proof and therefore, will only be suitable for limited storage.
- The garage is likely to be too small for some vehicles.

H2  
Permanent outbuildings  
and other structures

There are no permanent outbuildings.

NI

H3  
Other

The plot is bounded by mainly timber fences and block walls, which are generally in serviceable condition. However, ongoing maintenance will be needed, particularly to the more basic panel fences (although most areas are overgrown). The block wall has suffered from some expansion cracking, but it appears stable and this should not be significant.

Most areas of hardstanding are laid with concrete pavings, which are cracked and uneven in places, but serviceable. The gravelled areas will need periodic re-dressing and weed treatment.

As already mentioned under 'E4 Main Walls', it is important to maintain the external ground levels at the correct height in order to minimise 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.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Grounds (including shared areas for flats)

### Notes:

- If possible, your Legal Advisers should confirm the extent and ownership of the boundaries (See section I3 – Other Matters). This is important as repairs can be costly. Doubts over the position of the boundaries can also cause neighbour disputes that can be unpleasant and expensive to resolve.
- The garden pond is potentially unsafe for smaller children and protection should be provided (See section J3 – Risks to People).
- The drive is shared and your Legal Adviser should check your rights and responsibilities (See section I3 – Other Matters).
- The driveway is fairly narrow and access will be difficult for larger vehicles. Due to the slope at the front of the driveway, access may also be difficult during freezing conditions.
- The various trees and shrubs growing in and around the plot are not considered to be a significant threat to the property. However, there will be the usual nuisance from falling leaves and branches etc. The Walnut at the front of the plot is apparently within the ownership of the property. The tree is growing very close to the old chapel and may cause damage – some crown lifting, or possibly removal, should be considered.
- Public Health England has identified the local area as one in which the levels of radon gas entering the property may be such that remedial action is recommended (See section J3 – Risks to People). It is not possible in the course of our inspection to determine whether radon gas is present in any given building, as the gas is colourless and odourless. However, tests can be carried out to assess the level of radon in a building with test instruments available from Public Health England and other approved laboratories at a small cost. The minimum testing period is 3 months (Public Health England strongly advises against using shorter-term instruments as they can give misleading results). If tests have not been previously carried out, they are recommended. It has been the experience of Public Health England that it is not usually expensive, in proportion to the value of the property, to undertake any recommended remedial measures required. In view of the age and construction of the house, the risks are very low.
- There are low cables crossing the plot (See section J3 – Risks to People). Great care should be taken during maintenance, particularly when using ladders.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

We do not act as the 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, these will be listed and explained in this section (for example, check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows). You should show your legal advisers this section of the report.

11  
Regulations

There are no regulatory matters affecting the property to our knowledge, although your Legal Adviser should confirm this.

12  
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:

- Installation of the replacement windows and rear door.
- The central heating installation.

13  
Other matters

The property is assumed to be freehold. You should ask your Legal Advisers to confirm this and explain the implications.

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 (maintained at public expense) by The Local Authority.
- Your rights and responsibilities to maintain the shared private drains (the parts of the system between the property and the main sewer).
- The ownership of the boundaries.
- Your rights and liabilities in respect of the shared drive.
- That the property is free of possible chancel charges.
- Whether testing for the presence of Radon gas has been previously undertaken. If not, a Radon bond should be negotiated with the vendor.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

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, having existed for some time and which cannot reasonably be changed.

J1 Risks to the building	Inadequate insulation (G3 – Water). Pipes run in the floor screed (G4 – Heating). Inadequate insulation (G5 – Water Heating).
J2 Risks to the grounds	There are no significant risks to the grounds.
J3 Risks to people	The working fireplace (F5 – Fireplaces, Chimney Breasts and Flues). The electrical installation (G1 – Electricity). The gas installation (G2 – Gas/Oil). Possible water contamination (G3 – Water). The heating installation (G4 – Heating). Inadequate detectors (G8 – Other Services). The unprotected pond (H3 – Other). The low cables (H3 – Other). The location of the property in an area possibly affected by Radon gas (D – Local Environment).
J4 Other risks or hazards	There are no other significant risks.

Property address SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

This section describes energy related matters for the property as a whole. It takes account of a broad range of energy related features and issues already identified in the previous sections of this report, and discusses how they may be affected by the condition of the property.

This is not a formal energy assessment of the building but part of the report that will help you get a broader view of this topic. Although this may use information obtained from an available EPC, it does not check the certificate's validity or accuracy.

K1  
Insulation

### Roofs

The roof space is insulated with around 100mm of mineral quilt, much of which is laid beneath the storage boards. Upgrading should be considered to minimise heat losses. Ideally, insulation should be laid to provide the equivalent of a 270mm layer of mineral quilt laid both between and over the ceiling joists to minimise gaps. The access hatch should be insulated and draught proofed.

The dormers, stud walls, eaves areas and sloping ceilings are likely to contain only minimal insulation. However, upgrading will be difficult without considerable exposure work.

It should be noted that mineral quilt insulation is an irritant and sensible precautions, such as wearing a mask and gloves, should be taken when undertaking any maintenance.

### Walls

The main walls are of cavity construction and it is likely that they were insulated during construction. There are no signs of insulation having been added after construction.

### Windows

The windows are double glazed and draught proofed.

### Floors

Bearing in mind the age of the house, the concrete ground floors are unlikely to incorporate any insulation.

### Plumbing

The tanks and pipework in the loft are unlagged good insulation should be fitted to minimise the risks of possible freezing and leakage.

Where possible, exposed hot water pipes should be lagged to minimise heat losses.

It should be ensured that the outside tap is lagged, or isolated, during cold weather to prevent freezing and leakage.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

Noise transmission

The property is semi-detached and 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 some sound insulation.

K2  
Heating

The boiler is an older model and will not be as efficient as a condensing boiler, which recovers heat from the flue gases.

If the system is drained in the future, you should consider the fitting of thermostatic radiator valves. Where possible, exposed heating pipes should be lagged to minimise heat losses.

K3  
Lighting

There is reasonable provision of both natural and artificial lighting.

Energy efficient light bulbs (compact fluorescent lamps) have been fitted. It should be noted that these bulbs contain mercury and although the accidental breakage of a lamp is most unlikely to cause any health problems, it's good practice to minimise any unnecessary exposure to mercury, as well as risk of cuts from glass fragments. Sensible precautions should be taken in the event of breakages. These bulbs are classed as hazardous waste and should not be disposed of with general rubbish. Further advice is available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk>.

You should consider installing LED bulbs as these are very efficient and long lasting.

You should consider the provision of good external lighting, as this will improve both security and safety.

K4  
Ventilation

Condensation is the most common type of dampness found in property and is 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 very difficult problem to manage, but adequate ventilation is essential combined with sensible use of heating and good levels of insulation.

Ventilation to the accessible roof timbers is limited, but condensation levels were low at the time of our inspection. Ideally, ventilation should be upgraded to reduce possible damp and decay, but this work is not essential.

Property address

SAMPLE

It is advisable to consider the fitting (and use) of extractor fans in the bathroom and cloakroom. This will help to reduce condensation and smells. There is a cooker hood in the kitchen.

K5  
General

The Walnut tree in the front garden area near the garage could damage the old chapel building.

Property address

SAMPLE



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

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

Signature

Surveyor's RICS number  Qualifications

For and on behalf of

Company

Address

Town  County

Postcode  Phone number

Website  Fax number

Email

Property address

Client's name  Date this report was produced

### RICS Disclaimers

1. This report has been prepared by a surveyor ('the Employee') on behalf of a firm or company of surveyors ('the Employer'). The statements and opinions expressed in this report are expressed on behalf of the Employer, who accepts full responsibility for these.

Without prejudice and separately to the above, the Employee will have no personal liability in respect of any statements and opinions contained in this report, which shall at all times remain the sole responsibility of the Employer to the exclusion of the Employee.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may produce the report in his or her own name unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader limited liability company.

To the extent that any part of this notification is a restriction of liability within the meaning of the *Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977* it does not apply to death or personal injury resulting from negligence.

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



Please read the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' (at the end of this report) for details of what is, and is not, inspected.

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

If you are a prospective or current home owner who has chosen an RICS Home Survey you should carefully consider the findings, condition ratings and risks stated in this report.

## Getting quotations

You should obtain reports and at least two quotations for all the repairs and further investigations that the surveyor has identified. These should come 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 the contractors to put the quotations in writing.

Some repairs will need contractors with specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers or plumbers). Some work may also need you to get Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority. Your surveyor may be able to help.

## Further investigations

If the surveyor is concerned about the condition of a hidden part of the building, could only see part of a defect or does not have the specialist knowledge to assess part of the property fully, the surveyor may have recommended that further investigations should be carried out (for example, by structural engineers or arboriculturists) to discover the true extent of the problem.

## Who you should use for these further investigations

Specialists belonging to different types of organisation 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 your surveyor.

## What the further investigations will involve

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

This guidance does not claim to provide legal advice. You should consult your legal advisers before entering into any binding contract or purchase.

### The service

#### The RICS Building Survey Service includes:

- a thorough inspection of the property (see 'The inspection'); and
- a detailed report based on the inspection (see 'The report').

#### The surveyor who provides the RICS Building Survey Service aims to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision when purchasing the property, or when planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrading the property;
- provide detailed advice on condition;
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects;
- where practicable and agreed, provide an estimate of costs for identified repairs; and
- make recommendations as to any further actions or advice which need to be obtained before committing to purchase.

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

### The inspection

The surveyor carefully and thoroughly inspects 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 'Limitations to inspection' box in the relevant sections of the report.

The surveyor does not force or open up the fabric without owner consent, or if 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, roof spaces, etc., removing secured panels and/or hatches or undoing electrical fittings. The under-floor areas are inspected where there is safe 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 damp-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 also carries out a desk-top study and makes oral enquiries for information about matters affecting the property.

#### 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 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.

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

### 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 inspects (within the identifiable boundary of the flat) 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.

#### Dangerous materials, contamination and environmental issues

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

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

The surveyor 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.

### The report

The surveyor produces a report of the results of inspection for you to use, but cannot accept any liability if it is used by anyone else. If you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do this at your own risk. The report is aimed at providing you with a detailed understanding of the condition of the property to allow you to make an informed decision on serious or urgent repairs, and on maintenance of a wide range of issues reported. Purely cosmetic and minor maintenance defects that have no effect on performance might not be reported. The report is not a warranty.

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

- A Introduction to the report
- B About the inspection
- C Overall assessment and summary of the condition ratings
- D About the property
- E Outside the property
- F Inside the property
- G Services
- H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)
- I Issues for your legal advisers
- J Risks
- K Energy efficiency
- L Surveyor's declaration
  - What to do now
  - Description of the RICS Building Survey Service
  - Typical house diagram

#### 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:

**Condition rating 3** – defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

**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** – not inspected.

Continued...



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**

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.

The surveyor may report on the cost of any work to put right defects (where agreed), but does not make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out. However, there is general advice in the 'What to do now' section at the end of the report.

#### Energy

The surveyor has not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as part of the RICS Building Survey Service for the property. If the surveyor has seen the current EPC, he or she will provide the Energy Efficiency Rating in this report, but will not check the rating and so cannot comment on its accuracy. Where possible and appropriate, the surveyor will include additional commentary on energy related matters for the property as a whole in the K Energy efficiency section of the report, but this is not a formal energy assessment of the building.

#### Issues for legal advisers

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 a surveyor ('the Employee') on behalf of a firm or company of surveyors ('the Employer'). The statements and opinions expressed in the report are expressed on behalf of the Employer, who accepts full responsibility for these.

Without prejudice and separately to the above, the Employee will have no personal liability in respect of any statements and opinions contained in this report, which shall at all times remain the sole responsibility of the Employer to the exclusion of the Employee.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may produce the report in his or her own name unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader limited liability company.

To the extent that any part of this notification is a restriction of liability within the meaning of the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977 it does not apply to death or personal injury resulting from negligence.

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 in the 'Leasehold properties advice' document.

#### 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, having existed for some time and which cannot reasonably be changed.

#### Standard terms of engagement

**1 The service** – the surveyor provides only the standard RICS Building Survey Service ('the service') described here, unless you and the surveyor agree 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:

- plan drawing;
- schedules of works;
- re-inspection;
- detailed specific issue reports;
- market valuation and re-instatement cost; and
- negotiation.

**2 The surveyor** – the service is to be provided by an AssocRICS, MRICS or FRICS member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, who has the skills, knowledge and experience to survey and report on the property.

**3 Before the inspection** – this period forms an important part of the relationship between you and the surveyor. The surveyor will use reasonable endeavours to contact you regarding your particular concerns about the property and explain (where necessary) the extent and/or limitations of the inspection and report. The surveyor also carries out a desk-top study to understand the property better

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

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

- (a) he or she lacks enough specialist knowledge of the method of construction used to build the property; or
- (b) it would be in your best interests to have an RICS HomeBuyer Report or an RICS Condition Report, rather than the RICS Building Survey.

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

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

#### Complaints handling procedure

The surveyor will have an RICS-compliant complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask.

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



# 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. Your 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 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 joinery and finishes:** Regularly redecorate all joinery, and check for rot and decay which you should repair at the same time.
- 



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

**RICS**  
**Home**  
Surveys ●●●

## Maintenance tips

---

### 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:** Check these when you are cleaning or redecorating. 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 cleaning or 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, woodwork and joinery:** 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 once 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 and when you are cleaning. 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.

### 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.
- 



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

**RICS**  
**Home**  
Surveys ●●●