

Home Condition Survey

The Home Condition Survey is designed for use on any property, regardless of condition or style. Every property is inspected in the level of detail required based on its individual attributes, and all findings are fully reported. As part of the service, you have an initial conversation with me so I can learn more about you and your intended use for the property. Once you have had time to digest the report, you can book a video call to discuss my findings and ensure you fully understand what is being reported to you. The Home Condition Survey complies with the RICS Home Survey Standard.

Concealed areas normally opened or used by the occupiers are inspected if it is safe to do so (typical examples include roof spaces, basements, and cellars).

The report objectively describes the condition of the different elements and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems.

Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigations should be made.

Whilst we do not offer different 'levels' of service, the surveyor has a duty to inform you if the property is outside of their area of expertise, or they lack knowledge for that particular type of property. Examples would include certain non-standard types of construction, or some complex listed buildings.

Home Condition Survey

The **Home Condition Survey** service includes:

- a physical **inspection** of the property (see 'The inspection' below)
- a report based on the inspection (see The report below) and
- a post-survey consultation via video or phone call

The surveyor who provides Survey Report service aims to give you professional advice to:

- make an informed decision on whether to go ahead with buying the property
- help you make reasoned and informed decisions regarding planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrades to the property
- describe the identifiable risks or hidden defects, where reasonable and practical
- propose the most probable cause(s) of the defects based upon the evidence at the time of inspection
- 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 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. Where weather conditions permit, the surveyor will use a camera pole to photograph the chimney and roof. The pole is limited to 9m and its use is restricted by high winds and obstruction such as projections from the property/nearby property, tree branches or electricity cables. The surveyor will make every endeavour to use the camera pole but if it is not deemed safe or practical to do so, photos will be taken from ground level only.

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 thermal insulation is not moved, small corners should be lifted so its thickness and type, and the nature of underlying ceiling can be identified (if the surveyor considers it safe to do). The surveyor does not move 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.

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. It also does not investigate the plumbing, heating, or drainage installations (or whether they meet current regulations), or the internal condition of any chimney, boiler, or other flue.

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 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 and 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.

The surveyor also inspects (within the identifiable boundary of the subject flat, and where the surveyor reasonably believes it directly affects the subject flat) drains, lifts, fire alarms and security systems, although the surveyor does not carry out any specialist tests other than their normal operation in everyday use, where possible (i.e. the surveyor will not test fire alarms or security systems where it could impact other residents, or result in a fault to the system), and where it is deemed safe to do so.

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.

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 'duty holder' (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 duty holder.

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 objectively describes the condition of the elements and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems.

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. 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. A three rating is also given where there is a significant health and safety risk, or where further investigations are called for.
- 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
- N/A – Not Applicable

Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation will be made.

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.

Energy

The surveyor has not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as part of the Home Condition Survey 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. Where possible and appropriate, the surveyor will include additional commentary on energy-related matters for the property as a whole in the energy efficiency section of the report, but this is not a formal energy assessment of the building. Checks will be made for any obvious discrepancies between the EPC and the subject property, and the implications will be explained to you. As part of the Home Condition Survey service, the surveyor will advise on the appropriateness of any energy improvements recommended by the EPC where possible.

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 the 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 the report excludes or limits liability for death or personal injury (including disease and impairment of mental condition) resulting from negligence.

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 be reasonably changed.

The Home Condition Survey report will identify risks, explain the nature of the problems and explain how the client may resolve or reduce the risk, where possible.

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

Standard terms of engagement

1. The service – the surveyor provides the standard Home Condition Survey 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 and reinstatement costs.

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.

3. 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). This period forms an important part of the relationship between you and the surveyor. The surveyor will use reasonable endeavours to contact you to discuss your particular concerns regarding the property, and explain (where necessary) the extent and/or limitations of the inspection and report. The surveyor also carries out a desktop study to understand the property better.

4. Terms of payment – You agree to pay our fee and any other charges agreed in writing.

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. Our policy on cancellation is detailed in the terms of engagement.

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 complaint 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.

