



PROPERTY SURVEYING SERVICES

PROPERTY DAMP INFRARED ASBESTOS HOMEBUYERS ROOF CONDENSATION
THE SURVEYING SPECIALIST



Customer Detail	
Clients Name	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Address	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Survey Type	Damp
Report Reference	GL380007
Inspection Date	12/03/2020
Surveyor Name	Graham Eaton
Conditions	Dry/Overcast

This report is for the sole use of XXXX for whom the survey was undertaken and can only be relied upon for 90 days from the survey date. Unless expressly stated otherwise in this report, nothing in this report confers or is intended to confer any rights on any third party pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.

Thank you for instructing us to carry out a damp and timber survey of the ground floor. We understand that you own the house and that your buyer's Homebuyers Report highlighted potential areas of damp. Please inform us if we have misunderstanding your instructions.

OVERALL OPINION

Overall, the house is in good condition, very minor damp concerns, less than is normal for a property of this age. Every property suffers from dampness to some degree. You will mitigate the risk of damp if you follow all our recommendations. The cost of following these recommendations is less than the average annual costs of maintaining any property. This report is intended to be read in full. Observations and opinions must not be taken in isolation.



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Like any building, you need to be aware of the risks of damp arising in the future and plan a programme of prevention and maintenance accordingly. We recommend you spend time understanding our advice in this report, which we would be happy to discuss in person. We would also be delighted to revisit at any time for a modest survey update fee and likewise before you eventually decide to sell the property.

INDEPENDENCE AND METHODOLOGY

Our only income is through survey fees. Our motivation is integrity and practical, durable solutions. There is no conflict of interest as we are independent of contractors and never profit from remedial work. We use chemical analysis to identify damp within walls if need be.

SURVEYOR'S DECLARATION

I confirm that I inspected the above property on 12/03/2020 and that the property is not affected by rising damp

Graham Eaton, BDMA ,BTEC Advanced Dip surveying & estimating, AISSE (Institute of Specialist Surveyors & Engineers) ICT Level 1 Thermographer, Senior surveyor/project manager, 40 years in trade and building management.

The Institute of Specialist Surveyors and Engineers



Better Standards, Better Health

Contents

About damp surveys	
The property	
Understanding damp	
Conditions during the survey	
Illustrations	
Conclusions	
Recommendations	
Limitations	
Terms of engagement	

BUYING OR SELLING A PROPERTY

Buying or selling a property can be stressful, especially when a Homebuyer's surveyor reports that there are elevated damp meter readings, and recommends you instruct a damp specialist to look for damp and timber defects. If a buyer or seller is unsure of, or takes issue with this report, please call the number below. We will happily discuss our findings in detail.



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There tell-tale signs that a chemical damp proof course is already in place. The round ridges highlighted in the photo above, cover drill holes used to inject chemicals. Chemical damp proof courses rarely address the cause of damp. In this case the cause of marginal dampness deep within the wall is inexpensive to fix.

About property surveying services

Property surveying services are an independent specialist damp surveying company and follows the development of analytical technology employed to rapidly and accurately differentiate types of damp. Independence is key to understanding how we operate and why we provide a unique service quite different to any other company. Many contractors, looking for chemical damp work, offer low cost, or sometimes “free” surveys. We do not and never will benefit financially from any recommended remediation. We are motivated to recommend optimal treatment to protect the property now and into the future. Your peace of mind is our goal, for you to be satisfied that the property will be properly protected against damp and for you to recommend us in person.

Page |
3

THE PROPERTY

The property is a Victorian terraced house built around 1900. It comprises 3 bedrooms, an open plan reception with kitchen opening onto the rear garden and a bathroom. The walls are constructed of 9” solid brickwork. The floor to the front bedroom is suspended timber over a vented sub-floor void, the remainder is built on solid flooring. The front door faces South. All references to location are taken as if standing on the road looking at the front door. The building has an elevation of 41M above sea level, in a low flood risk area.

Changes to the property’s original design

The property has been modified over the years. The layout of the timber floor has probably changed. Chemical damp proofing has been applied to the property.

UNDERSTANDING DAMP

Excess damp found in properties is largely as a result of changes from the original design, location or use. Properties are built to absorb rain and evaporate moisture without excessive damp inside. Lifestyles have changed over the years, such as taking showers more often. The resultant raised humidity means most properties are at increased risks of condensation.

Damp is not inherently dangerous. However, it can spoil decoration and encourage rot, mould and insect infestation. Rot is omnipresent and starts when wood cells rupture above 28% moisture content with a constant source of water. Brown rots, such as dry rot proliferates in unvented damp voids.

Wood boring beetles are attracted to humid wood. Mould requires humidity on the surface of over 85% relative humidity (RH) to grow. Rising damp can spoil decorative surfaces. However, there is insufficient moisture to cause rot. Ground water contains nitrates, that inhibit mould growth. Rising damp needs a constant source of water, such as a high water-table within a meter of the ground.

Stop the source of water and rising damp will dissipate. According to Thames Water, London’s water table is low, below the lowest tube-line. Rising damp results from the high relative force of attraction of silicone (found in sand, bricks, glass etc.), a phenomenon unhelpfully described as capillarity.



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The attractive force of silicone spreads water through connected pores in all directions. Plaster can be particularly absorbent. Water spreads downwards first through the additional force of gravity, until lower pores become saturated.

Condensation is caused by moist air condensing on cold surfaces, condensation starts when a wall's temperature falls below the "dew point". The dew point increases as humidity rises. There is often a line within a wall where the temperature is below the dew point, this is called the dew point line. Walls are designed to absorb and evaporate moisture daily.

Damp is often cumulative. For example, condensation is more likely to form near a wall that is damp from penetrating rainwater. Likewise, rain will not evaporate as quickly if the wall surface is already humid through condensation. Furthermore, wet external walls are poor thermal insulators. North, North-Eastern and North-Western walls receive minimal warmth from the winter sun. Some damp only occurs infrequently, once every few years, resulting from persistent rain and wind. Damp detection can depend on conditions during the survey.

Page |
4

OBSERVATIONS

Conditions during the survey

Occupancy	Occupied
Weather	Overcast
Weather past 24hr	Wet
External humidity	85%
External Temperature	12c
Internal Humidity	72%
Internal Temperature	20.8c
Lowest temperature of inside wall	16c

- The chimneys (uncapped), flashing and roofs appeared to be functioning correctly.
- Rainwater goods looked to be in good order, however it was not raining.
- The damp proof course (DPC) was obscured with impermeable mortar. The ventilation grills to the front were less than 150mm above the ground. Although there are concerns about insufficient sub-floor ventilation, there was no evidence of sub-floor damp or sub-floor rot.

Internal measurements

A Protimeter MMS2 was used to detect potential damp in "search mode" across all walls and up chimney breasts, and where elevated readings noted, the area was checked more accurately in "conductance" mode. Conductance mode measures the passage of electrolytes (mainly salts) in water, across two pins. The meter is designed for wood. A measurement in wood exceeding 18% Wood Moisture Equivalent (WME), needs further investigation, but rot does not start until greater than 28% WME.

Surface timbers were sampled in conductance mode. No timber was found to be above 18%WME, except where noted. No rot was found except where noted.

Although meters are a useful tool for identifying areas of potential damp in masonry, the meters can give very misleading information, mainly because some substrates are very high in salts, such as the most common form of plaster, gypsum, made of calcium sulphate salt.



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Surveyors should only use damp meters as a qualitative tool, not quantitative, that is the reading should only be used to identify areas of high and low relative readings. The value itself is not important for readings taken from any material other than wood. For masonry, damp meter readings in conductance mode above 25% WME, need further investigation, see floorplan for details.

CONCLUSIONS

The property is unusually dry for a Victorian property. There is no evidence of rising damp, indeed the elevation and low flood risk suggests the property is far from a source of ground water, a necessary component of rising damp.

The dampness measured in the front bedroom and rear reception wall is mild, barely detectable with the most sensitive devices. The cost of the works detailed in the recommendations are miniscule in the context of normal annual maintenance costs of a period property. You must follow our recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with every property, we recommend ongoing observation, repair and a periodic programme of maintenance, including annual clearing of gutters, repainting, repointing and noting of perimeter ground level and water-table fluctuations. We are happy to return and update the survey. We recommend you clear the blocked gully to the front and unblock the paint from subfloor ventilation, also to the front.

LIMITATIONS

Damp Surveys Ltd reports are designed to provide you with an informed independent expert opinion as to the condition of the property together with any recommendations for further investigation or remedial work. We do not warrant any findings in this report unless we enter into a separate warrantee agreement with you.

The survey was conducted during daylight hours. Damp will be more noticeable at night and when the weather is colder and more humid. Gutters are more likely to fail when full of leaves and during periods of prolonged rain and adverse wind. We make best endeavours but cannot guarantee being able to identify all forms of damp, rot and insect infestation affecting the property. The survey represents a snapshot in time. Damp is often progressive only becoming visible after the survey. We are happy to return and update our observations and advice at any time.

We carried out a careful and thorough inspection of as much of the property as was accessible. However, when it is not possible to make a full inspection, we make a professional judgement about the likelihood of a defect being present. In certain circumstances, this may lead to a recommendation for further action to open up an area for further investigation. We are unable to see the whole roof, all the guttering and some of the drains. We were unable to inspect woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible, and are therefore unable to report that such parts of the property are free from defect. There were no obvious signs of damp resulting from these limitations.

APPENDIX - STANDARD TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

Terms of Engagement

1) You may cancel this contract with Damp Surveys Ltd at any time 24 hours before the time and day of the pre-arranged inspection.



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2) We may cancel this contract at any time including the day of the inspection if we determine after arriving on site, that it is unsafe or that we do not have sufficient skills to complete the exercise for you. In such a case, we will refund full payment less our travel expenses.

3) You are engaging Damp Surveys Ltd, to undertake an inspection of the property in question at a pre-arranged time and the production of a report in a timely fashion thereafter. We will carefully and thoroughly inspect both the inside and outside of the property but NOT any outbuildings unless specifically requested to do so in writing.

4) Before the inspection, but after the appointment has been made, we will undertake a desk top analysis of the property by checking various different websites and other information sources for details about the property and its location.

5) Terms of Payment – we only accept instructions after advance payment.

6) Liability – our report is provided for your use only and may only be relied upon for 90 days from the survey date. Unless expressly stated otherwise in this report, nothing in this report confers or is intended to confer any rights on any third party pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999.

7) We are unable to inspect parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible, including lofts, without written permission to do so, and are therefore unable to report that such parts are free from defect. We may express a professional opinion as to the likelihood of damp. 8) No disruptions will be made to the building's fabric save for a few pin sized holes, left by a measuring device. Access hatches and inspection chamber lids will only be lifted where it is easily possible to do so. Floor coverings and furniture cannot be moved, unless we have the prior written consent of the property owner. Floor voids will only be inspected if access panels permit. If there is a covered area you particularly wish us to investigate, please ensure that the owner of the property gives us prior written permission to uncover it.

Insurance For peace of mind, Damp Surveys Ltd have Public Liability insurance of £1,000,000 and Professional Indemnity insurance of £250,000 (annual aggregate) both through Hiscox.

Quotations We recommend obtaining three quotes for any significant remedial work. We are happy to review your quotes, but always remain independent of contractors.