

DE VILLIERS CONDITION SURVEY REPORT ON:

Smith Street, London W1



PREPARED FOR: Mr & Mrs Smith

PREPARED BY:



SURVEYOR'S NAME AND QUALIFICATIONS

J Perris, BSc MRICS

DATE OF REPORT:

Smith Street, London W1

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The Report

1. GENERAL

1.1 Instructions

To inspect the above property in order to advise on the structural condition and state of repair. This inspection has been carried out in accordance with the Conditions of Engagement signed by our client:

Unless specifically requested this report does not include an assessment of the market value of the property or any other valuation other than a re-building assessment for building insurance purposes.

1.2 Limitations

This report is provided for the private and confidential use of the client and their professional advisers. The Surveyor accepts responsibility to the client alone that the report is prepared with the skill, care and diligence to be expected of a competent surveyor but accepts no responsibility whatsoever to any other person or persons other than the client. Any such persons rely upon the report at their own risk. This report shall not be reproduced in part or in whole or relied upon by third parties without the prior written consent of James Perris MRICS Chartered Surveyor.

The report is based on the condition of the building at the time of our inspection and no liability can be accepted for any deterioration in its condition after this date. All measurements and dimensions mentioned are approximate or nominal only, and are stated in metres or millimetres unless stated otherwise and should not be relied upon where accuracy is required.

1.3 Extent of Report

This report should be construed as a comment upon the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure. It is not an inventory of every single defect some of which would not significantly affect the value of the property.

We should explain that we have restricted our examination to those parts of the structure which were accessible, exposed or uncovered at the time of the inspection. Our inspection was also limited to those parts that could be seen from ground level within the boundaries of the property, from the public highway or rights of way and from opening windows.

Except where stated to the contrary we have therefore not opened up any concealed surfaces by removing plaster, timber panelling, removing furniture or raising fitted carpets or floor coverings. We are therefore unable to report that any unexposed or inaccessible parts of the property are free from defect.

The limitations of this report are more particularly set-out in the Conditions of Engagement referred to earlier. In particular we would confirm that services have only been commented upon following a visual inspection.

Standards and adequacy of installation can only be ascertained as a result of a test by an appropriate specialist. We are not qualified electrical or heating engineers. We will advise in any situations where we consider that a specialist report is essential, but for absolute certainty a specialist report for services as appropriate should always be considered.

Where defects are described in this report, in many cases the extent can only be fully obtained upon further investigation or by carrying out repairs. Further investigation of defects may be necessary before costings can be produced. Also it is possible that concealed defects may become apparent at this stage. Consequently, it is recommended that where possible any further investigation be undertaken before legal commitment to purchase. The vendors express written consent would be necessary in respect of any such further investigation works carried out prior to purchase and allowance should be made for all necessary making good repair works should you not proceed.

You should be aware that defects could develop in the property after the date of inspection.

2. ASSUMPTIONS

In making the report the following assumptions have been made:

- a) that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used and that it is impractical to comment on the state of any wall ties;
- b) that there is no contamination or Japanese Knotweed on, in or from this or neighbouring ground and it is not landfilled ground;
- c) that the property is not subject to any unusual or especially onerous restrictions, encumbrances or outgoings and that good title can be shown;
- d) that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a local search and replies to the usual enquiries, or by any statutory notice and that neither the property nor its condition nor its use nor its intended use is or will be unlawful;
- e) that the inspection of those parts which have not been inspected would neither reveal material defects nor cause the surveyor to alter the report materially.

The Surveyor will be under no duty to verify these assumptions.

3.0 DATE OF INSPECTION AND WEATHER

The property was inspected on the2018

The weather was clear with no rain.

4.0 THE PROPERTY

The property comprises a converted second floor two bedroom flat.

4.1 Description and Age

The property lies on the second floor of a five storey end terrace building originally constructed as mixed use with likely retail/commercial to the ground floor which has now been converted to residential use.

The building appears to have been reconstructed and the mansard floor added possibly sometime in the 1970s.

Internally the property provides two bedrooms, one double and one single with an open plan reception room and kitchen with separate bathroom and WC.

The gross internal floor area is approximately 500 sq ft.

4.2 Situation and Orientation

The property is situated on Milson Road, albeit with access from Ceylon Road, which comprises a mixture of commercial and residential land uses as well as converted flats and housing in the Brook Green district between Shepherds Bush and Hammersmith within West London.

Transport amenities are provided at Kensington Olympia, both mainline and underground.

The property faces in a Northerly direction.

4.3 Access

Access was arranged via Marsh & Parsons Estate Agents with keys picked up from their offices. The tenant was not present at the time of our inspection.

5.0 ACCOMMODATION

Second Floor

Entrance hall, open plan reception room and kitchen, bathroom and WC, 2 bedrooms.

6.0 TENURE AND OCCUPATION

The property is understood to be tenanted. Your Legal Advisers must ensure vacant possession can be obtained.

The property is understood to be held on a lease with 91 years remaining at a nominal ground rent.

7.0 LEGISLATION

No adverse planning proposals or environmental matters known to the surveyor but your solicitor should carry out the usual local searches and enquires.

The building has been reconstructed since it was built and converted to its current use as flats. This is most likely to have been carried out over thirty years ago although it would still be worth your Legal Advisers confirming that all works were carried out in accordance with the appropriate consents and regulations.

The flat originally was likely to have a separate kitchen and reception room with the wall removed to create an open plan reception room and kitchen. Legal Advisers should confirm when these works

were carried out and that they were undertaken in accordance with the relevant freeholder's consents.

8.0 REINSTATEMENT COST

We recommend that the property is insured for rebuilding purposes for a minimum of £100,000. The property should be insured on a block policy basis. This should be index linked and reviewed every five years.

9.0 EXTERNAL CONSTRUCTION AND CONDITION

9.1 Chimney Stacks and Flashings

None. We assume the original chimneys were removed.

9.2 Roofs and Valleys

The main roof is of mansard design. The roof is not fully visible from our ground level inspection. It appears to be of imitation slate to the roof slopes and we assume under a flat roof crown.

Flat roofs are generally considered to have a relatively limited lifespan usually in the region of 10 to 20 years dependent on the material used.

In view of the limitations of our inspection it would be worth enquiring of the managing agents/freeholders to establish what works, if any, have been carried out on the main roof in more recent times. This should provide an idea as to the age of the covering and perceived future costs.

It should be appreciated that most flat roofs do require periodical maintenance particularly around more vulnerable areas such as parapet walls to ensure watertightness.



9.3 Gutters and Downpipes

The property is provided with pvc gutters and downpipes.

Whilst the lack of heavy rainfall prevented a thorough evaluation no major problems were evident.

9.4 Main Walls.

The main walls appear of solid brick construction with an external render finish in part.

The building has been predominantly reconstructed and this is illustrated by the course of original brickwork along the line of the party wall to the rear which is no longer flush where the wall was rebuilt straight.



Where possible all areas were checked for signs of cracking and movement. There is some minor infilled cracks internally, movement around doorheads internally and some cracking is evident along the line of the party wall to the front. This movement is not considered of serious structural significance with no evidence of recent problems.



The detailing between the brick wall and lower levels of render has been patch repaired using a temporary “flashband”. These areas are generally vulnerable to water ingress as rainwater is trapped between the render and brickwork. Flashband is only a temporary measure and this should be properly dressed by a roofing contractor using lead.



There is evidence of cracking and crazing to the rendered finish to the mansard floor. This render appears to have failed and will need renewing as part of routine maintenance. Parapet walls are prone to problems although the coping stones to the top of the wall will help to reduce water ingress and subsequent damage occurring.



Overall walls are satisfactory.

9.5 Foundations

Foundations were not inspected as to do so would involve the digging of trial holes around the building.

With the exception of the areas mentioned above there is no evidence of significant structural movement to the building which would suggest that the foundations are currently adequate.

9.6 Damp Proof Course

The base of the main walls would originally have been provided with a slate damp proof course and we assume this has been upgraded when the property was rebuilt/converted.

Dampness usually manifests itself within the ground/lower ground floor flats who dependent on the terms of the lease will usually be responsible for repairs.

9.7 Sub-Floor Ventilation

No sub floor ventilation was evident.

9.8 Windows, Doors and External Joinery

Windows are replacement UPVC double glazed design.

Generally these units were in reasonably good condition although we did note that there is evidence of condensation between the glass panels within the bedroom and kitchen. Double glazing usually has guarantees between 10 to 20 years and we would recommend the installers of these windows are called to further investigate to see which sealed units need replacement. If there are no such guarantees in place then estimates should be obtained from a window contractor.



9.9 External Decorations

Localised external redecoration is now required. Enquiries should be made of the managing agents/freeholders to establish if a sinking fund has been put in place for external redecoration.



Redecoration should be undertaken at least every five or so years to ensure external building materials are fully protected.

9.10 Communal Areas

Communal areas are in fair order although will require some cosmetic improvement in the near future. The smoke alarm was also noted to be dated and should be upgraded to a mains connected system. See section under electrics.



10.0 INTERNAL CONSTRUCTION AND CONDITION

The fitted floor coverings throughout the property restricted our inspection of the floors. The property was fully furnished and no items of furniture were moved as part of our survey.

10.1 Roof Spaces

None.

10.2 Ceilings

Ceilings are predominantly of plasterboard construction. With the exception of localised cracking which is not considered of serious structural significance overall ceilings were satisfactory.

Where a cable has been run through the ceiling within the bedroom cupboard this has been poorly finished and you may wish to have this repaired.



10.3 Walls

Walls are predominantly of plastered masonry and timber partitioning. Some localised cracking and unevenness to plasterwork was evident and some replastering will be required as part of general maintenance and to provide an even finish.



10.4 Floors

The floors are of suspended timber construction. No significant deflection was noted and overall floors are satisfactory.

A timber floor finish has been provided to the hallway and reception room. These can often be prevented under the terms of a lease as a courtesy to the flat below. Legal Advisers should establish whether such flooring is allowed under the terms of the lease. It must be appreciated if there is no such restriction there is the increased risk of noise to the subject flat from the property above if they also adopt a wooden floor.



10.5 Fireplaces, Flues and Chimney Breasts

None.

10.6 Internal Joinery

Kitchen units comprise a range of wall and base fittings. Whilst in fair order there is evidence of localised wear and tear as well as deterioration and water damage to the worktop not uncommon with these solid oak finishes.

The property is provided with a range of built in cupboards. Generally internal joinery, including internal doors, were now slightly dated and you may wish to carry out some upgrading.



10.7 Rising and Penetrating Dampness and Condensation.

An electronic damp meter was inserted into walls (and floors where appropriate) at regular intervals.

High damp meter readings were recorded below the window within the reception room. This would appear to be penetrative damp around the window and brickwork externally. There is no obvious cause of this from my inspection to the rear and we would recommend the matter is passed to the managing agents/freeholders to ensure localised pointing and sealing is carried out around the window detailing to prevent any further damp occurring.

Further similar damp was noted directly above the kitchen window we assume caused by a similar problem of window detailing.



10.8 Woodworm, Dry Rot and Other Timber Defects

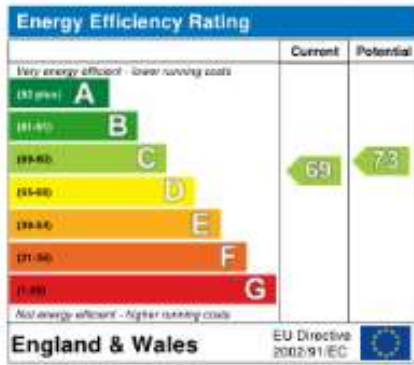
Where possible all areas were checked for signs of woodworm, dry rot and other timber defects but none were noted.

10.9 Insulation

The provision of the double glazing will help to reduce heat loss.

Flats are provided both above and below the subject property which will also help insulation.

We reiterate that unless sound proof flooring has been provided, which is unlikely for a property of this age, then you must expect some noise to be experienced from the adjoining flats.



10.10 Internal Decorations

You may wish to upgrade to your own taste in time.

10.11 General

No other comments.

11.0 SERVICES

11.1 Electricity

The property is connected to mains electricity with a consumer unit situated within the kitchen and the meter within the communal ground floor area. The consumer unit was dated with several older style fittings, no mains smoke alarms and an inadequate amount of outlets by today's standards. General rewiring works are now considered necessary and estimates must be obtained from an NICEIC registered electrician.



11.2 Gas

Mains gas is connected feeding the gas boiler.

11.2 Oil

None.

11.3 Water, Plumbing and Sanitary Fittings

Pipework where visible is run in copper sections.

The sanitary amenities appear satisfactory although some of the tiling was noted to be below standard with the fittings to the bath beginning to seize slightly.



An overflow was leaking to one of the water tanks (it may not be the subject) resulting in water adjacent to the front door. This is usually caused by a failure of the ball valve to the tank and will eventually cause damp issues within the subject flat and should be repaired. Enquires should be made of the managing agents.



11.4 Hot Water and Central Heating

Gas radiator and central heating is provided by a gas boiler situated within the bedroom. Hot water is situated within an insulated tank directly below the boiler. Cold water is stored within a tank in the communal area. Areas of the fitting were dated including the thermostat, radiators and the hot and cold water tanks with corrosion evident around a valve around the boiler. On our inspection it was also noted that the second smaller bedroom window was open with the heating on full. This could potentially indicate the inability to control the temperature.

We would anticipate the need for upgrading of the system possibly with the exception of the boiler although most flats of this size would have a combination system to do away with the water tanks. In addition the radiators should be replaced and new radiators installed with thermostatic valves to control temperature.

Externally the boiler flue has not been properly sealed.

Estimates for upgrading the heating must be obtained from a Corgi engineer.



11.6 Drainage

Foul Drainage

Waste is carried away from the property via an internal soil and vent pipe. There is no evidence of flooding or blockages on site.

12.0 OUTBUILDINGS

None.

13.0 THE SITE AND BOUNDARIES

The property is provided with a small external area to the front which would benefit from localised landscaping although some of it may be the responsibility of the local authority.



14.0 OTHER MATTERS

14.1 Security

The property is provided with an entry phone system. This is somewhat dated and likely to require replacement in the near future. This is a cost which should be shared with the other occupiers of the building.

There appears to be a Nest security system in place. We assume this will be transferred to yourself and we would recommend you obtain details in relation to its operation.



This report is not intended to be a full security appraisal and does not cover security aspects in detail. Accordingly, it is recommended that the local Crime Prevention Officer be consulted, not only with regard to the security of the premises, but also on such matters as security lighting.

14.2 Fire Precautions

You must ensure mains connected smoke alarms are installed.

The self closing mechanisms on the internal doors have been removed and a fire officer would recommend these are reinstated.

15.0 MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO YOUR SOLICITOR

Your Legal Advisers should check for the existence, validity and transferability of any guarantees particularly in relation to the double glazed units which have failed and the company must be recalled to undertake repairs.

Your Legal Advisers must confirm that wooden floors can be used under the terms of a lease.

Your Legal Advisers should also establish in the pre-contract enquiries the existence and validity of any service agreements or engineer's certificates for the central heating system. The date of original installations, the name of the service company and when testing/servicing was last carried out, should also be determined. However we would anticipate that both the heating and wiring systems now require replacement/upgrading.

Obtain information with regard to the nest security system.

To ensure there are no unusual or onerous lease clauses and that the appropriate arrangements exist in respect of maintenance.

To ensure the building is adequately insured for structural defect under a single policy.

To establish the existence of a sinking fund and to ensure a proper management/maintenance system is in place for the block which does require localised repairs and redecoration.

Your rights and responsibilities for the drainage system and that it complies with public health legislation.

To ensure the reconstruction of the building was carried out in accordance with all consents and recommendations (records may not be available).

Ensure the freeholders will investigate the damp issues.

It appears a wall has been removed to create an open plan kitchen and reception room. Ensure freeholders consent was obtained.

16.0 CONCLUSIONS

Obtain estimates on the following works prior to a legal commitment to purchase is made:

Although not an exhaustive list and in no particular order of importance the more pertinent defects/repairs are as follows: -

- 1. Upgrade heating systems.**
- 2. Upgrade electrical systems.**
- 3. Replace failed double glazed units.**
- 4. Investigate damp to walls.**
- 5. Localised upgrading to kitchen and bathroom fittings.**
- 6. Upgrading to internal joinery.**
- 7. External redecoration.**

OTHER WORKS AND ADVICE

It is understood the remaining lease term is 91 years. It must be appreciated that when the property gets closer to 80 years value will start to be affected. You may wish to give consideration to having the lease extended prior to this time to avoid costs mounting.

It should be appreciated that materials containing asbestos are often present in buildings of this age, often enclosed and unexposed. There are potential health risks stemming from the inhalation of asbestos fibres and from working with this material. Further advice is available from the local authority or the Health & Safety Executive. Specialist advice should be sought before carrying out any work to these components. The cost of removal may be high.

There is evidence of an asbestolux panel for the meters within the communal hallway. Whilst this is not believed to contain asbestos it would still be prudent that if it was removed or damaged that specialist advice is requested.



We would recommend that you obtain full cost estimates and reports on all the items detailed in the report, prior to entering into a legal commitment to purchase, so that you are fully aware of your potential liabilities, should you proceed with the purchase of this property.

The report is based on the condition of the building at the time of our inspection and no liability can be accepted for any deterioration in its condition after this date.

Any adverse discovery may have serious effect on the resale potential of the property and a possible detrimental effect upon its value. It may therefore be important for you to refer any such matter back to us before you proceed to a legal commitment to purchase the property.

You should immediately forward a copy of this report to your Legal Advisers with the request that they check all legal matters.

Signed

Surveyor....., BSc MRICS

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Date Signed:

APPENDIX I GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Airbrick	A perforated brick built into a wall for the purpose of providing air for ventilation purposes. Used for instance, to ventilate the underside of a wooden floor or a roof space.
Apron	A strip of (usually) lead built into a wall and dressed down to cover adjoining roofing.
Architrave	A wood or metal moulding around a doorway or window opening. It usually covers the joints between the frame and the wall finish, thus hiding any shrinkage gaps which may occur.
Asbestos	Material utilized in the past for many different purposes. Can sometimes be a health hazard – specialist advice should be sought if asbestos (especially blue asbestos) is found.
Asbestos Cement	Cement mixed with 15% asbestos fibre as reinforcement. Fragile – will not usually bear heavy weights. Hazardous fibres may be released if cut or drilled.
Ashlar	Squared and faced (usually) limestone stones for high quality/expensive finish.
Asphalt	Black, tar-like substance, impervious to moisture. Used on flat roofs, floors and walls.
Balanced Flue	Common metal device normally serving gas appliances which allows air to be drawn into the appliance whilst also allowing fumes to escape.
Baluster	A vertical support to the handrail of a staircase.
Balustrade	A row of balusters joined to a horizontal handrail, for instance at the side of a landing.
Bargeboard	A wide, normally timber, board, fitted below tiles or slates at the edge of a pitched roof.
Batten	Timbers to which slates or tiles are affixed.
Beetle Infestation	(Wood boring insects eg woodworm) Larvae of various species of beetle can tunnel into timber causing damage. Specialist treatment normally required. Can also affect furniture.
Benching	Shaped concrete slope beside drainage channel within an inspection chamber. Also known as “haunching” Intended to direct material into the channels and pipes.

Bitumen	Black, sticky substance, similar to asphalt. Used in sealants, mineral felts and damp proof courses.
Bond	The regular arrangements of bricks or stones in a wall so that the units may be joined together. The principal types of "bond" used in domestic construction being English, Flemish, header, stretcher, diagonal or garden wall bond.
Bonded guarantee	A specialist company may guarantee its own work but the guarantee will prove worthless if the company fails. For a small additional payment insurance is available which will pay for any necessary treatment in this event.
Braced door	A door with diagonal timbers making the door rigid.
Breeze Block	Originally made from clinker cinders or ("breeze") – the term now commonly used for various types of concrete and cement building blocks.
British Wood Preserving and Damp proofing Association	The former national body overseeing this type of specialist damp and timber treatment in domestic property.
Buttress	An additional support to a wall, designed to resist outward thrust and add stability.
Carbonation	A natural process affecting the outer layer of concrete. Metal reinforcement within that layer is liable to early corrosion, with consequent fracturing of the concrete in some cases.
Cavity Insulation	Insulation, either of "dry" fibres or wet injected foam, within a cavity wall. In exposed positions the insulating material may bridge the cavity and allow damp into the building.
Cavity Wall	A main external wall built of one or both leaves of brick, stone or block, and a space in between. Load bearing and the function of the outer leaf is to protect the inner leaf from the weather; the two are linked by metal ties. A cavity wall is usually more resistant to damp penetration than a solid wall, and has greater thermal insulation.
Cavity Wall Tie	A piece of metal or similar material bedded into the inner and outer leaves of cavity walls intended to strengthen the wall. Failure due to corrosion can occur resulting in the wall becoming unstable – special replacement ties are then required to be installed by a specialist.
Cesspool	A watertight holding tank to collect sewage effluent. It needs emptying at intervals. Not the same as a septic tank.
Chase	A groove in plaster, brickwork, etc, to receive cables or pipes.
Chimney breast	The part of a chimney below roof level normally projecting into rooms.
Chipboard	Often referred to as "particle board". Chips of wood compressed and glued into sheet form. Cheap method of decking to flat roofs, floors and (with Formica or melamine surface) furniture, especially kitchen units.
Cill	The horizontal piece at the bottom of a window or door.
Cleaning Eye	Sometimes known as an "access eye" or "rodding eye". An opening in a drain or ventilation pipe covered by a plate, the removal of which allows the drain to be rodded to clear blockages.
Closed-end or stopped-end	The end of a gutter.

Cob	Walling of damp earth sometimes mixed with cement, rammed without reinforcement into a formwork. This cheap method of walling has in the past been practiced mainly in East Anglia and the West of England.
Collar	a) a roof timber tying two rafters, to prevent them spreading or b) the wider end of a pipe, into which another pipe fits
Combination Boiler	Modern form of gas boiler which activates on demand usually within a pressurized system. With this form of boiler there is no need for water storage tanks, hot water cylinders etc.
Coping/Coping Stone	The top of an exposed external wall made with a row of stones or engineering bricks, the purpose of which is to protect the top courses of brickwork, rain, frost and general weather damage.
Corbel	Projection of stone, brick, timber or metal jutting out from a wall, often to support a weight.
Cornice	A moulding at the junction between an inside wall and a ceiling. Can also include a moulding at the top of an outside wall designed to project and throw raindrops clear of the wall.
Dado	Typically the lower 1m (3ft) of a wall.
Dado Rail	A wooden moulding fixed to the wall or capping panelling and forming the top most part of a dado. Originally designed to avoid damage to the wall where people or furniture brushed against it.
Damp proof Course (or DPC)	Layer of impervious material (mineral felt, pvc etc) incorporated into a wall and designed to prevent dampness rising up the wall or lateral dampness around windows, doors etc. Various proprietary methods are available for retrospectively damp-proofing existing walls including "electro-osmosis" and chemical injection.
Damp proof membrane (or DPM)	A sheet of DPC underneath a solid floor to keep the surface dry.
Death-watch Beetle	<i>(Xestobium Rufovillosum)</i> Extremely serious insect pest which attacks structural timbers. Usually affects old hardwoods with fungal decay already present.
Dormer window	A window projecting from a roof slope.
Double Glazing	A method of thermal insulation usually either: Sealed unit : Two panes of glass fixed and hermetically sealed together : or Secondary: In effect a second "window" positioned inside the original window.
Double Hung Window	A window in which the opening lights slide vertically within a cased frame, counter balanced by weights supported on sash cords or chain which pass over pulleys in the frame.
Dressing	The process of working lead to shape.
Dry Rot	<i>(Serpula Lacrymans)</i> A very serious form of brown rot which attacks structural and joinery timbers, often with devastating results. Can flourish in moist, unventilated areas.
Eaves	The lower edge of a roof adjacent to guttering.
Efflorescence	Crystallized salts brought to the surface when moisture evaporates from the surface of brickwork or plaster.

English Bond	A brick wall built with alternative courses of headers and stretchers.
Fanlight	A window over a door or casement, normally opening.
Fascia	A vertical board at eaves level, often with guttering attached.
Fibreboard	Cheap, lightweight board material of little strength, used in ceilings or as insulation to attics.
Firring	Tapered timbers laid on the joists of a flat roof to provide a fall to gutters.
Flashing	A strip of material (usually lead) fixed to waterproof a joint, eg between a roof and a wall, or at the base of a chimney stack.
Flaunching	A cement mortar weathering on the top of a chimney stack surrounding the base of the chimney pots to throw off the rain and thus prevent it from saturating the top of the stack.
Flemish bond	Brickwork with alternate headers and stretchers in each course.
Flue	A smoke duct in a chimney, or a proprietary pipe, serving a heat producing appliance such as central heating boiler.
Flue lining	Metal (usually stainless steel) tube within a flue – essential for high output gas appliances such as boilers. May also be manufactured from clay and built into the flue. Other proprietary flue liners are also available.
Footings	Foundations for walls.
Foundations	Normally concrete, laid underground as a structural base to a wall. In older buildings these may be brick or stone, or non existent.
Frame and braced door	A door made of rails, stiles, battens, and diagonal braces.
Furniture	Handles, locks etc fitted to doors, windows and cupboards.
Gable	The top triangular part of a wall below two slopes.
Garden wall bond	Brickwork of three courses of stretchers and one of headers.
Gauged arch	An arch formed by bricks cut to shape or rubbed smooth on a stone or brick and laid with fine joints.
Granolithic	A hard wearing floor finish of a thin topping of cement, granite chippings and sand laid over a concrete floor slab.
Ground Heave	Swelling of shrinkable sub-soil due to the presence of moisture which can cause an upward movement of foundations in extreme cases.
Galley	An opening into which rain and waste water are collected before entering the drain.
Gutter	A channel along the edge of a roof or the edge of a path for the removal of rainwater.
Hanger	A vertical timber fixed between rafters and ceiling timbers to provide extra support to a ceiling.

Hardcore	Broken bricks or stone which, consolidated forms a base for other material.
Haunching	See “Benching”. Also term used to describe the support to a drain underground.
Herringbone bond	Feature brickwork bonded in diagonal lines.
Hip	The external junction between two intersecting roof slopes.
Hip Tile	A saddle shaped or angular tile fitting over the intersection of those roofing tiles which meet at a hip.
Hopper head	A funnel-shaped head to collect water from one or more pipes, connected to downpipe below.
Inspection chamber	Commonly called the “manhole”: access point to a drain comprising a chamber (of brick, concrete or plastic) with the drainage channel at its base and a removable cover at ground level.
Interlocking tiles	Roof tiles designed to lock together to prevent water driving in.
Jamb	The side of a door or window opening.
Key	A roughened surface to ensure adhesion (eg) cement rendering.
King post	A central post of timber roof truss.
Land drain	A drain laid with open joints, in a trench filled with gravel, to dispose of surface water.
Landslip	Downhill movement of unstable earth, clay, rock etc often following prolonged heavy rain or coastal erosion, but sometimes due to sub-soil having poor cohesion.
Lath	Thin strip of wood used in the fixing of roof tiles or slates, or as backing to plaster.
Lath and plaster	Thin timber laths providing a key for plaster. A labour-intensive and out-of-date construction, now superseded by plasterboard.
Lean-to	An addition abutting a higher wall.
Lintel	A beam, normally of timber, concrete, steel, or stone, spanning an opening. Lintels can be hidden or exposed.
Longhorn Beetle	<i>(Heliotrope Bajulus)</i> A serious insect pest mainly confined to the extreme south-east of England, which can totally destroy the structural strength of wood.
Louvres	Slats fixed at an angle or pivoting to allow ventilation.
Mansard roof	A roof with two slopes, steep to the lower and flatter to the upper part. This is a way of providing additional accommodation in a roof space.
Masonry	Brickwork, stonework or blockwork.
Mastic	A generic term used for flexible sealant, eg around window openings.
Mezzanine	A floor between main floors.
Mortar	Mixture of sand, cement, water and sometimes lime used to join stones or bricks.

Mullion	A vertical division in a window opening.
Newel	Post supporting a staircase handrail at top and bottom. Also, the central pillar of a winding spiral staircase.
Nogging	a) Short horizontal timbers cut to fit between vertical studs of a framed partition to increase stiffness. Alternatively, short infilling timbers between joists providing a fixing to support the ends of plasterboard ceiling sheets. b) Brick or block infill between columns.
Pantile	A curved roofing tile which fits over adjoining tiles.
Property Care Association	The national body overseeing this type of specialist damp and timber treatment. Property Care Association (www.property-care.org/)
Septic tank	A tank sunk in the ground to dispose of sewage by purifying it, unlike a cesspool which is only for collection. It usually comprises two or three chambers to allow bacteria to purify the liquor, and an overflow to a land drain or soakaway.
Settlement	Structural movement caused by compression of the ground beneath the building.
Shakes	Naturally occurring cracks in timber. In building timbers shakes can appear quite dramatic, but strength is not always impaired.
Shingles	Small rectangular slabs of wood used on roofs instead of tiles, slates etc.
Silicone treatment	Weathering and frost damage of masonry can be reduced by spraying with silicone-based liquid.
Sleeper wall	A low wall beneath a suspended ground floor providing interim support to floor joists.
Soakaway	A pit, filled with broken stones etc below ground to take drainage from rainwater pipes or land drains and allow it to disperse.
Soaker	Piece of metal fitted to interlock with slates or tiles and make a water tight joint between a wall and a roof or at hip or valley. Stepped flashings are used to cover the soakers at a joint against a wall.
Soffit	The underside of an arch, beam, staircase, eaves or other feature of a building.
Soil pipe/Soil stack	A vertical pipe conveying sewage to the drains.
Solid fuel	Heating fuel, normally wood, coal or one of a variety of proprietary fuels.
Spandrel	Space above and to the sides of an arch, also the space below a staircase.
Stretcher	The side of a brick.
String	The sloping board up the side of a staircase.
String course	A projecting or feature course of masonry.
Stucco	A type of external decorative plasterwork.
Stud partition	Lightweight, sometimes load bearing wall construction comprising a framework of timber, faced with plaster, plasterboard or other material.
Subsidence	Downward movement of ground supporting the foundations which causes damage to the building above.

Sub-soil	Soil lying immediately below the top-soil.
Sulphate attack	Chemical reaction, activated by water, between tricalcium aluminate and soluble sulphates which can cause deterioration to brick walls and concrete floors.
Terracotta	Earthenware components made of baked clay.
Throat	The widening of a flue above the fireplace.
Tie	The inner and outer leaves of a cavity wall are tied together for stability at intervals.
Tie bar	A metal rod inserted to restrain usually outward movement of walls.
Tilting fillet	A timber fillet inserted to raise the edge of the bottom course of slates or tiles.
Tingles	Metal strips used to secure flashings or loose slates.
Tongued and grooved boarding	Timber boarding with a projecting lip fitting into a groove in the adjoining board.
Torching	Pointing on the underside of slates to prevent water penetration.
Transom	Horizontal bar of wood or stone across a window or top of door.
Tread	The horizontal part of a step or stair.
Truss	A triangulated structure, usually timber, designed to support the weight of a roof.
Trussed Rafters	Method of roof construction utilizing prefabricated triangular framework of timbers. Now widely used in domestic construction.
Underpinning	Method of strengthening weak foundations whereby a new, stronger foundation is placed beneath the original.
Valley	The internal angle where two roof pitches intersect.
Valley Gutter	Horizontal or sloping gutter, usually lead or tile lined, at the internal intersection between two roof slopes.
Vapour barrier	An impermeable layer, often of polythene, fixed to prevent condensation and possible rot within a timber structure.
Ventilation	Necessary in all buildings to disperse moisture resulting from bathing, cooking, breathing etc, and to assist in prevention of condensation. Floors: Necessary to avoid rot, especially dry rot: achieved by airbricks near to the ground level. Roofs: Necessary to disperse condensation within roof spaces: achieved either by airbricks in gables or ducts at the eaves.
Verge	The edge of a roof.
Wall plate	A timber along a wall top, to carry floor joists or rafters.
Wall tie	See "cavity wall tie".
Waste Pipe	A pipe from a wash hand basin, sink or bath to carry away the waste water into the drains.
Weather board	A board fixed at the bottom of a door, or door opening, to prevent rainwater driving in.



Weepholes	Small holes left in a wall to allow moisture to drain out.
Wet Rot	(Coniophora Puteana) Decay of timber due to damp conditions. Not to be confused with the more serious dry rot.
Woodworm	Colloquial term for beetle infestation: usually intended to mean Common Furniture Beetle (<i>Anobium Punctatum</i>) by far the most frequently encountered insect attack in structural and joinery timbers.
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