

# Do I need a Home Survey?



Home Surveys | Building Surveys | Party Walls

Design Specification | Maintenance Plans

Project Management | Defect Diagnosis | Dilapidations

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Chartered Surveyors



# What survey?

There are three survey types commonly known as:

- Level 1 - Condition Report
- Level 2 - Homebuyers Report
- Level 3 - Building Survey (previously called 'The Structural Survey')

## Homebuyers Survey:

This covers urgent and significant defects, areas of concern and recommended improvements to the property. Each element is given a condition rating:



### **Serious/Urgent defect**

repair, replace or investigate before exchanging.



### **Moderate defect**

repairs or replacements not serious or urgent.



### **No repair required**

maintain in the normal way.

The Homebuyers Survey will report upon elements of the building externally and internally. These areas may differ slightly so check with your surveyor. Where safe access is possible the surveyor will enter the roof space and conduct a room by room inspection. This is non-intrusive and no floor coverings would be lifted.

## Building Survey:

Similar to the Homebuyers Survey the Building Survey reports on the same elements of the building but will provide more detail on the possible causes of a defect and the remedy. If it is possible to lift the floor without causing damage then this will be carried out.

This type of survey is better suited to older, larger or properties in a poor state of repair. In addition this survey includes further sections such as on ventilation, thermal efficiency and security.

### What to check with the surveyor?

Surveys do not always come with a valuation or rebuild cost unless you request this. They do not test the electrics, gas or services but a visual inspection only is undertaken.

Check the areas the surveyor will cover and ensure you sign some terms and conditions or conditions of engagement before instructing them to proceed.

### What Surveyor?

Is your Surveyor suitably qualified? Check if their website contain the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Logo as shown below:



# What to look out for?

This is a list of suggested items to look out for. It is not exhaustive, but informative.

## Outside the Property:

**Chimney Stacks** – are the mortar joints wearing? Is the chimney leaning?

**Roof coverings** – are there any chipped, delaminated, loose or slipped tiles/slates?

**Rainwater pipes and gutters** – are there any stains beneath the gutter joints or bowing gutters?

**Main walls** – are the walls cavity, solid or timber frame and are there any cracks, especially around window and door openings?

**Windows** – do these open and close. Is there condensation between the panes?

**Outside Doors** – are these secure and operable?

**Conservatory and porches** – are these separated by an external quality door?

**Other joinery and finishes** – are there any glazed doors with non-safety glazing?

**Garage** – cement roof sheets could be asbestos?

**Outside Doors** – are these secure and operable?

**Conservatory and porches** – are these separated by an external quality door?

**Other joinery and finishes** – are there any glazed doors with non-safety glazing?

**Garage** – cement roof sheets could contain asbestos.

## Inside the Property:

**Roof Structure** – check for beetle infestations, dampness, insulation and firm structure.

**Ceilings** – are these unkeyed and is there any textured finishes?

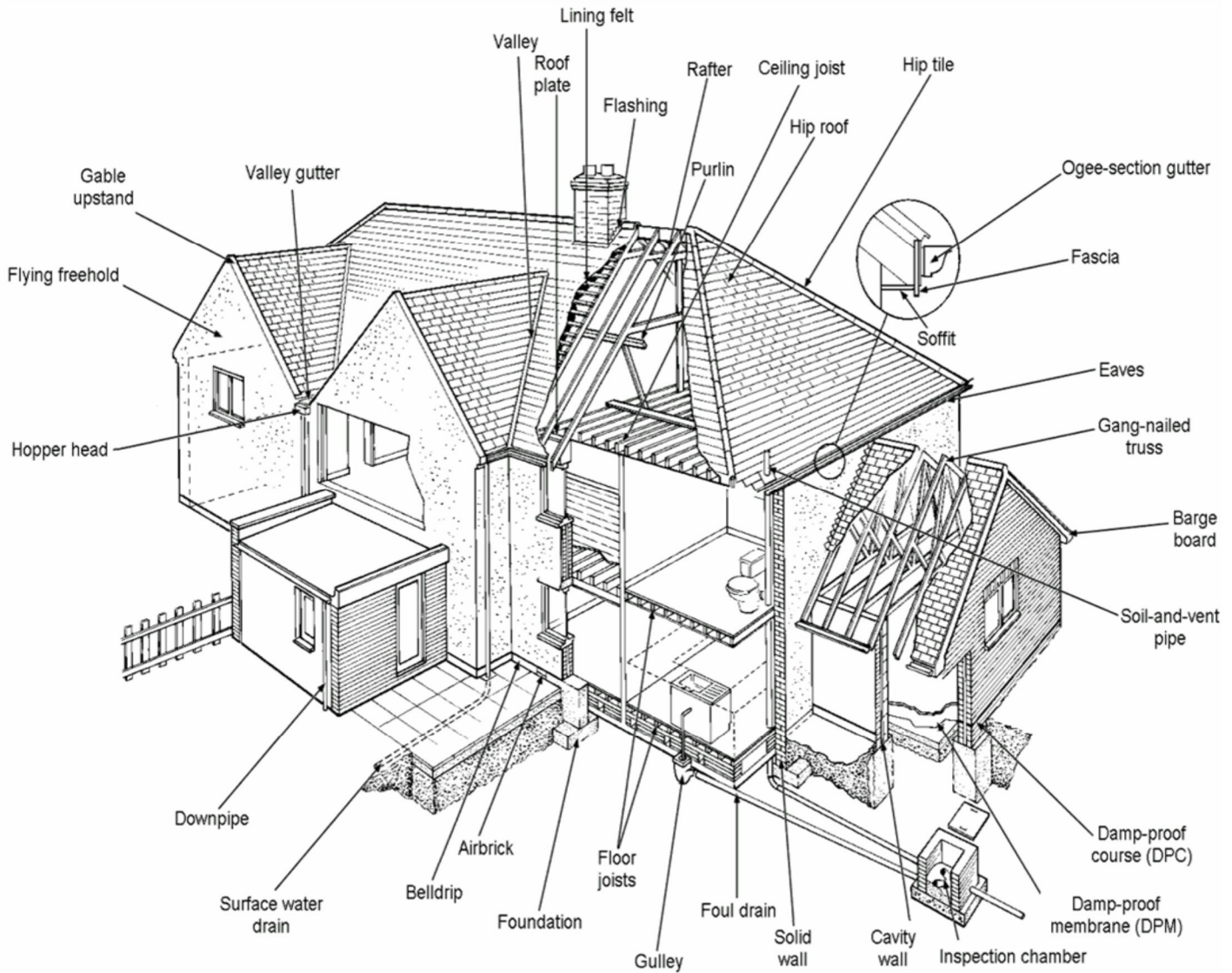
**Walls and partitions** – are there any cracks or hollow areas?

**Floors** – are these solid or suspended and of timber or concrete? Are these level?

**Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues** – is there signs of dampness and adequate flues?

**Gas & Electrics** - have these been tested?

# House Diagram



This diagram gives an idea of some of the terms used in both a Homebuyers and Building Survey Report.

# What do all these words mean?

## Brief descriptions:

**Airbrick** - a brick or plastic grate with holes found in walls.

**Cavity walls** – two walls separated by a gap. These walls are tied together and may contain insulation.

**Combination boiler** - a boiler providing both hot water and heating on demand.

**Damp proof course** - waterproof barrier at low level to an external wall preventing moisture ingress.

**Eaves** – area including the fascia and soffit.

**Fascia** – the board usually behind the gutter.

**Flashing** – a waterproof covering found at the edges of roofs usually between a pitched or flat roof and wall junction.

**Gable wall** - a triangular shaped part of the wall stretching up towards the ridge.

**Gulley** - a channel or hole where water is discharged.

**Hip** – join between two pitched roofs forming a peak.

**Hot water cylinder** - rounded tank storing hot water.

**Immersion heater** - electric heating element usually found on the top of a hot water cylinder.

**Interstitial condensation** – condensation between failed double glazing panes.

**Purlin** – a horizontal timber supporting the middle of rafters.

**Rafter** – sloping timber used to support the roof covering.

**Ridge** – highest joint between two pitched roof slopes.

**Soffit** – the horizontal board usually found beneath the fascia.

**Soil & Vent Pipe** – vertical pipe where toilet, sink and other waste water runs away into the mains drain.

**Strut** - timber support usually found beneath purlins.

**Suspended floor** – floor laid on beams leaving a void below.

**Timber frame** – wall construction where timber is used as the main structure and covered with other materials.

**Tingles** - usually made from zinc these are clips found on slate roofs, used to insert a slate where it has slipped.

**Valley** - join between two pitched roofs forming a trough.

### Other useful links:

[flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk](http://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk)

[rics.org/homesurveys](http://rics.org/homesurveys)

[mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain](http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain)

[nethouseprices.co.uk](http://nethouseprices.co.uk)

[reportfinder.landmark.co.uk](http://reportfinder.landmark.co.uk)

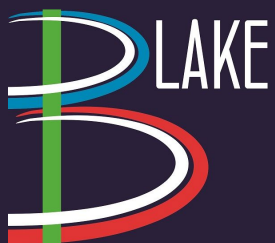
*Note: we do not take responsibility for external links which may change.*

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### Andrew Blake Doggrell BSc(Hons) MRICS



- 15 years experience
- professional
- approachable
- inspection to report within 4 working days



Chartered Surveyors

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