

# RICS Home Surveys Information Sheet

## Helping you choose the right survey

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Why do you need an RICS Home Survey? Because forewarned is forearmed. Choosing the right survey will help highlight any serious problems and advise you of the specific risks before you commit to the process of buying or selling a property.

RICS has three different types of survey (outlined overleaf). These can only be conducted by qualified surveyors. Reliable and cost effective, these reports carry the full weight of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors – the industry's most respected authority on surveying.

### Buying a home

It's important to remember that your mortgage lender's valuation report is not a survey. It merely tells your lender whether or not the property is reasonable security for your

loan. An RICS survey will tell you the actual condition of the property. That's vital information that can be invaluable during price negotiations, and will also help you avoid expensive surprises after you've moved in.

### Selling a home

An RICS home survey can help you prepare for selling your property. It will show you any problems that may delay your sale or cause price reductions later in the process.

### Staying at home

A survey of the current condition of your home will warn you of defects and help you avoid escalating repair and maintenance costs in the future. It will also be extremely useful if you're thinking of remortgaging.

The image shows a collage of RICS Home Survey report pages. The pages are overlapping and show various sections of a survey report. The 'Overall opinion and summary of the condition ratings' page shows a summary of the property's condition, with a table of element numbers and names. The 'Outside the property' page shows details of the roof, gutters, and chimneys. The 'Valuation' page shows the market value and reinstatement cost. The 'What to do now' page provides advice on repairs and further investigations.

**C Overall opinion and summary of the condition ratings**

This section provides our overall opinion of the property, and summarises the condition ratings of the different elements of the property.

If an element is made up of a number of different parts (for example, a pitched roof to the main building and a flat roof to an extension), only the part in the worst condition is shown here.

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.

Our overall opinion of the property

This property is a reasonable proposition for purchase at a price of £135 000

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property	E3	Rainwater pipes and gutters
F: Inside the property	F1	Floor structure
G: Services	G1	Electricity
H: Grounds (part)	H1	Garage advice

**E Outside the property**

Roofing to inspection

Waterproofing between the chimney stack and the roof covering (the flashing) is loose.

Waterproofing around the edge is damaged.

Roof over the rear utility room is covered with roofing felt, waterproofing around the edge is damaged.

Leak of a rainwater pipe to the utility room is causing dampness to the ceiling below and you should provide one now.

Outside walls have a barrier against dampness rising from the ground (a damp proof course or DPC) consisting of two rows of dense blue bricks.

Windows are replacement double glazing in PVC frames.

Door to the door is unlikely to be safety glass and will be a safety risk for anyone who falls against it. You should resolve this now.

There is an open porch to the front entrance.

Bricks around the main roof and rear flat roof are partly rotten, deteriorations to most surfaces are beginning to flake off.

Not applicable.

Sample Road, Sample Town, County, AB12 3CD

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**K Valuation**

Initial Market Value on 25/10/2010 as inspected was: £100,000 One hundred and thirty thousand pounds (amount in words)

Freehold Area of property (sq m) 124

Initial current reinstatement cost of the property (see note below) is: £100,000 One hundred and twenty thousand pounds (amount in words)

I, as my valuation, I made the following assumptions.

As to the materials, construction, services, fixtures and fittings, and so on, I have assumed that the condition of those parts that I could not inspect would not identify significant defects or so as to alter the valuation.

Agencies or changing materials or building techniques have been used in the property.

I do not consider that there is any contamination on or from the ground, and the ground has not been used as landfill, or for any other purpose, and has the right to use, the rights mentioned in the report, and I do not take account of any furnishings, removable fittings or sales incentives.

As to legal matters I have assumed that:

- any party said with vacant possession (your legal advisers can give you more information on this term);
- the property, or the purpose the property is or will be used for, does not break any laws;
- statutory restrictions or unusual restrictions apply to the property, that the property is affected by problems which would be revealed by the usual legal enquiries, and that all necessary permissions and building regulations consents (including consents for alterations) have been obtained and complied with; and
- you have the right to use the mains services on normal terms, and that the sewers, mains gas and roads giving access to the property have been adopted (that is, they are local authority, not private, control).

Initial assumptions relating to the valuation

Advisers, and other people who carry out property conveyancing, should be familiar with these provisions and are responsible for checking those concerning legal matters.

If the Market Value shown here could be affected by the outcome of the enquiries by your legal adviser (I) and/or any further investigations and enquiries for repairs or replacements, then assume that your legal advisers will receive satisfactory replies to their enquiries about matters in the report.

Reinstatement affecting value

Get first information about the assumptions I have made in calculating the reinstatement cost in the RICS Home Survey Service provided. The reinstatement cost is the cost of rebuilding an average 4 storey and style residential property in a similar location using modern materials and techniques, and by acting in good building regulations and other legal requirements. This will help you decide on the amount of buildings cover you will need for the property.

Sample Road, Sample Town, County, AB12 3CD

**What to do now**

Quotations

Repairs may influence the amount you are prepared to pay for the property. Before you make a legal commitment to buy the property, you should get reports and quotations for all repairs and further investigations the surveyor may have identified.

Get at least two quotations from experienced contractors who are properly insured.

Also:

- ask for references from people they have worked for;
- ask in writing exactly what you will want them to do; and
- ask contractors to put the quotations in writing.

Repairs will need contractors with specialist skills and who are members of regulated bodies (for example, electricians, gas engineers, plumbers and so on). Some work may also need Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority.

Investigations

Surveyor is concerned about the condition of a hidden part of the building, could only be detected or does not have the specialist knowledge to assess part of the property. Surveyor may have recommended that further investigations should be carried out to the true extent of the problem.

What should you do for these further investigations?

Get an appropriately qualified person, though it is not possible to tell you which organisations belonging to different types of organisations will be able to do this. For qualified electricians can belong to five different government-approved schemes. If further advice, please contact the surveyor.

Further investigations will involve

Depend on the type of problem, but to do this property, parts of the home may have to be lifted and so you should discuss this matter with the current owner. In some cases, the investigation may be high.

Do the work

Reinstatement ratings help describe the urgency of the repair and replacement work. The summary may help you decide when to do the work.

Reinstatement rating 2 – repairs should be done soon. Usually when will depend on the type of work, but it usually does not have to be done right away. Many repairs could wait weeks or months, giving you time to organise suitable reports and quotations.

Reinstatement rating 3 – repairs should be done as soon as possible. The speed of your work will depend on the nature of the problem. For example, repairs to a badly leaking or dangerous gas boiler need to be carried out within a matter of hours, while other important critical repairs could wait for a few days.

Repairs of elements with a condition rating 2 are not considered urgent. If they are not of them may develop into defects needing more serious repairs. Flat roofs and gutters are examples. These can quickly get worse without warning and result in serious leaks. As you should regularly check elements with a condition rating 2 to make sure they stay working.

## Buying or selling? Survey your options

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### The RICS Condition Report

Choose this report if you're buying or selling a conventional house, flat or bungalow built from common building materials and in reasonable condition. It focuses purely on the condition of the property by setting out the following:

- clear 'traffic light' ratings of the condition of different parts of the building, services, garage and outbuildings, showing problems that require varying degrees of attention;
- a summary of the risks to the condition of the building; and
- other matters including guarantees, planning and building control issues for your legal advisers.

An RICS Condition Report does not include a valuation, but your surveyor may be able to provide this as a separate extra service.

Ask your surveyor for a detailed 'Description of the RICS Condition Report Service' leaflet.

### The RICS HomeBuyer Report

Choose this report if you would like more extensive information whilst buying or selling a conventional house, flat or bungalow, built from common building materials and in reasonable condition. It costs more than the Condition Report but includes:

- all of the features in the Condition Report plus a more extensive inspection;
- the surveyor's professional opinion on the 'Market Value' of the property;
- an insurance reinstatement figure for the property;
- a list of problems that the surveyor considers may affect the value of the property;
- advice on repairs and ongoing maintenance;

- issues that need to be investigated to prevent serious damage or dangerous conditions;
- legal issues that need to be addressed before completing your conveyancing; and
- information on location, local environment and the recorded energy efficiency (where available).

Ask your surveyor for a detailed 'Description of the RICS Homebuyer Service' leaflet.

### The building survey

Formerly called a structural survey, you could choose the building survey if you're dealing with a large, older or run-down property, a building that is unusual or altered, or if you're planning major works. It costs more than the other RICS reports because it gives detailed information about the structure and fabric of the property. It includes:

- a thorough inspection and detailed report on a wider range of issues;
- a description of visible defects and potential problems caused by hidden flaws;
- an outline of repair options and the likely consequences of inactivity; and
- advice for your legal advisers and details of serious risks and dangerous conditions.

A building survey does not include a valuation, but your surveyor may be able to provide this as a separate extra service.



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## At-a-glance survey comparisons

This table will help you choose the most appropriate survey, but if you have any particular requirements, remember to discuss them with your surveyor before the inspection of the property. The surveyor may be able to provide you with extra services, under separate contracts.

Service features	RICS Condition Report Service	RICS HomeBuyer Service	Building survey
Describes the construction and condition of the property on the date of the inspection.	✓	✓	✓
Aims to identify any problems that need urgent attention or are serious.	✓	✓	✓
Aims to identify things that need to be investigated further to prevent serious damage.	✓	✓	✓
Aims to tell you about problems that may be hazardous.	✓	✓	✓
Aims to show up potential issues and defects, before any transaction takes place.	✓	✓	✓
Includes the standard visual inspection during which secured panels, electrical fittings, inspection chamber covers and other similar features are not removed.	✓	✓	✓
Aims to help you decide whether you need extra advice before committing to purchase.		✓	✓
Aims to help you prepare a budget for any repairs or restoration.		✓	✓
Aims to advise you on the amount of ongoing maintenance required in the future.		✓	✓
An enhanced service that includes all the features of the standard inspection plus a more extensive roof space and underground drainage inspection.		✓	✓
Provides a reinstatement cost to help you avoid under- or over-insurance.		✓	
Provides market valuation.		✓	
Aims to establish how the property is built, what materials are used and how these will perform in the future.			✓
Aims to describe visible defects, plus exposing potential problems posed by hidden defects.			✓
Aims to outline the repair options and give you a repair timeline, whilst explaining the consequences of not acting.			✓
A longer and more detailed visual inspection of a wider range of issues including a more thorough consideration of the roof space, grounds floors and services.			✓

For more information, visit [www.rics.org/homesurveys](http://www.rics.org/homesurveys).



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