

# CONDITION SURVEY

## ON THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS:

2 GREEN KEEPERS COTTAGES  
EFFINGHAM GOLF CLUB  
GUILDFORD ROAD  
EFFINGHAM  
SURREY  
KT24 5PZ

### On behalf of:

EFFINGHAM GOLF CLUB  
GUILDFORD ROAD  
EFFINGHAM  
SURREY  
KT24 5PZ

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## 1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

Address:	2 Green Keepers Cottages
Inspection date:	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
Description:	A two bedroom semi detached Victorian cottage

## 2.0 SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

Our inspection of this property covered all those parts of the building that could be seen either from ground level externally or from the interior, including accessible roof spaces.

Binoculars were used to examine roof slopes, chimney stacks etc. externally, and a dampness test meter was used internally.

Not all sections of the roof coverings are visible from ground level and we therefore cannot verify that such areas are free from defects.

Many parts of a building such as foundations, walls, drains and sub-floor areas are concealed during construction and we do not disturb these. It follows, for practical reasons, that we have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible, and we are, therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

No inspection was possible of the cavity wall ties. There is no superficial evidence of failure or weakness of these ties, but there is growing evidence that corrosion can develop in ties, particularly in any houses built before 1981, when an improved British Standard on galvanised coating was introduced. A definitive answer on the condition of ties can probably only be obtained by cutting a sample selection out of the walls and having them laboratory tested. We do not consider that the present general evidence on the problem is sufficient to justify this. It is something that should, however, be borne in mind in case at any future time any cracks or irregularities appear in any external cavity walls that might be a pointer to this type of defect.

At the time of our inspection the house was occupied and furnished with considerable personal effects and floor coverings, which restricted our inspection.

As far as the service installations (gas, electricity, hot and cold water, space heating and drainage) are concerned, our inspection was a limited superficial one and in the absence of specific tests we cannot give any warranty as to their condition, design or efficiency.

The suitability of the main supplies and acceptability of the installations connected to them is something on which the gas, water and electricity authorities have the final word. This applies perhaps most particularly to the Gas Board who should be asked to inspect if you want to be completely assured on this.

The central heating system was in operation at the time of our inspection but no test was applied. The installation of central heating is a specialist matter governed by regulations set out by various bodies. We cannot guarantee that the installation fully complies with these regulations. If you require further assurance on the heating installation we must recommend that a specialist heating engineer is asked to inspect and report on the system. We will be pleased to arrange this on your behalf if required.

Underground pipes from rainwater down pipes or gullies were not traced or tested.

In drafting this report we have limited comment to the more material matters and in particular have not listed individually such minor items as slightly loose door or window fittings or minor decorative blemishes which have no structural significance.

Any directions given in this report are taken from facing the front of the property and given as left or right.

### 3.0 **CONDITION SURVEY**

#### 3.1 **Description**

The subject property comprises a two bedroom Victorian cottage with a garden to the rear of the property.

The property was built in 1900 using traditional construction techniques and is built to an average standard of workmanship.

Given the age of the property, there may be deleterious materials used in the construction of the building, which would involve the opening up of parts of the fabric to establish their presence. No opening up of the fabric of the building has been undertaken as part of our inspection.

#### 3.2 **Construction**

**Roof:** Of cut timber trussed rafter pitched and hipped construction with a sarking felt to the underside of the tiles. The roof is covered in slate tiles with matching ridge and hip tiles and lead lined valley gutters.

**Walls:** Believed to be a mixture of solid brickwork and stone and cobble construction having been rendered and painted.

**Floors:** Ground floors are a mixture of solid concrete construction and suspended timber joisted construction all with close fitting floor coverings.

**Joinery:** PVC-u double glazed windows. Timber fascia and barge boards with plastic gutters and downpipes.

### **3.3 Movement**

As foundations cannot be inspected without considerable excavation and possible damage to the property we cannot comment on their construction, depth or condition. Adequate insurance cover in respect of damage arising through subsidence, landslip or heave is essential.

From our local knowledge and from enquiries made with the building control officer, the property is likely to be built upon sandy ballast interspersed with chalk pockets. This is a relatively stable sub soil.

From our inspection the walls appear to be free from significant structural cracking but minor cracks and flaking paint exist to the rendered finish.

Some hairline cracking was found internally, but this is likely to be due to normal shrinkage and thermal movement (the expansion and contraction of building materials due to changes in temperature and humidity).

We have not been advised of any history of past movement and noted no signs of current ground or other structural movement affecting the property.

### **3.4 Chimney Stacks and Boiler Flues**

The condition of chimney stacks, flashings and chimney pots can only be ascertained by close inspection from long ladders. Such an inspection may reveal latent defects, possibly instability. Not all chimney stack elevations could be seen from ground level or relevant vantage points.

Chimney stacks can be weakened by storms and are prone to frost attack. Consequently repairs can be necessary periodically.

The internal condition of chimney stacks and flues cannot be ascertained. Flues should be swept prior to use.

There is a shared central brick built stack serving the property with a lead flashing to the roof line. The chimney was seen to be in fair condition for its age but the rendering is cracked and requires replacement. It appears that the lead soaker and flashing require replacement and damp penetration has occurred internally to the wall and ceiling below the stack.

In buildings of this age chimney stacks did not usually incorporate a damp proof course and damp can penetrate downwards. Adjoining timbers are vulnerable. Good external maintenance is essential to reduce moisture ingress.

Flashings at the junction between chimney stacks and roof coverings must be well maintained and checked regularly for defects which would result in water penetration and damage, particularly to timbers.

Television aerials attached to chimneys can in extreme cases put undue strain on a chimney stack and you are advised to have a periodic inspection made of the fixing brackets and brickwork. Also a falling aerial can damage the covering.

### **3.5 Roofs**

The main roof slopes have been viewed from ground level with binoculars. The inspection was undertaken from within confines of the site, boundaries and trees permitting and from communal locations i.e. roads and footpaths.

A general inspection of the roof timbers has been made but we have not examined all surfaces of every length of timber because of the style of construction and restricted access.

The main roof slopes were noted to be acceptably even and free from any undue distortion, deflection or distress which indicates that the roof frame is dealing adequately with the imposed load of the roof covering.

The roof is covered in the original slate tiles with matching ridge tiles. Valley gutters are formed from lead valleys.

For its age the roof covering is in quite good condition but whilst we do not consider that stripping and recovering is immediately necessary, many purchasers of a house of this age would choose to ensure a watertight and trouble-free covering. For the present we suggest that the missing, broken and slipping slates should be replaced to ensure that the roof is watertight and safe.

Once such roofs have started to deteriorate it is a question of time when complete stripping and renewal of the slates becomes essential and until that time piecemeal replacement of individual slates to prevent leaks can be carried out as and when necessary. As this becomes more frequent, complete replacement becomes more economic.

Moss growth is present on roof slopes. This can impede the run-off of rainwater, lead to gutter blockages and cause water penetration, which in turn may lead to rot or other defects in nearby timbers.

The roof slopes appear in satisfactory condition with no slipped or missing tiles and there is nothing to indicate any weakness in the timbers making up the roof structure.

The ridge tiles to the main roof are in fair condition and appear to be well bedded.

### **3.6 Rainwater Goods**

It was not raining at the time of our inspection, so we are unable to comment as to whether the gutters and downpipes are free from leakage. It is recommended that they are checked when it is raining and all works necessary carried out.

Rainwater goods comprise of plastic gutters downpipes, the alignment and general condition of which appear satisfactory from ground level. The guttering requires cleaning.

We did note that rainwater downpipes discharge underground. We have not traced these and cannot confirm their adequacy.

Rainwater fittings must be maintained and clearly regularly otherwise external walls can be damaged and damp could penetrate internally. Leaking, badly aligned and blocked gutters can rot eaves timbers, including concealed timbers. Gutters may need realigning and eaves timbers should be checked periodically.

Defective rainwater goods are a common cause of dampness, which can in turn lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

### **3.7 Main Walls**

The main walls to the original building are believed to be of solid brickwork and stone cobbles having been rendered and painted. At low level there are plastic wall vents forming a Dutch method of damp proofing.

The low level render is cracked and debonded and the damp proofing vents grills are partially painted over. Generally the remaining rendering to the main wall is cracked in numerous places and debonded. Some repairs are required.

A wall of solid construction is less resistant to wind driven rain than modern cavity construction, so there is always the risk, especially on the exposed elevation, of damp penetration to the interior. In this particular case we did not find any.

There is damp to the main bedroom walls due to defective lead flashing to the chimney stack.

In view of the age of the property it cannot be readily assumed that window and door openings are provided with adequate lintels to support masonry above. Consequently, the need to provide these in future cannot be ruled out, particularly if you envisage renewing door or window frames.

It is important to properly maintain the junction between the external walls and door and window frames otherwise rain could penetrate the fabric, possibly causing damage. Any cracks or gaps should be repaired and silicone sealant could be injected.

The main bedroom window mastic has partly fallen off and requires replacement.

Walls appear structurally satisfactory with no evidence of current subsidence, settlement or other forms of significant structural movement. The rendering however, will require repair.

### **3.8 Foundations**

We cannot advise you as to the depth and size of the foundations provided with this property. To obtain information relating to the foundations would require the excavation of trial holes around the base of the main walls. In the absence of any visible signs of structural failure or evidence of any past repair work having been carried out, we can see no necessity to carry out a detailed examination of the foundations.

We are not able to comment on the construction or adequacy of the foundations, but with a property of this age they are unlikely to be adequate by modern day standards.

Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. The possibility of future problems cannot be ruled out. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to overgrow the property although total removal of trees or pruning should not be undertaken without specialist advice as this could also result in damage.

According to the Geological survey map of this area, the property is likely to be on a sub-soil of sandy gravel with some clay pockets. As such you should have the drains inspected periodically to ensure they remain watertight and ensure that your buildings insurance covers subsidence, heave and other similar movements of the sub soil. We cannot rule out the possibility of future ground movement.

### **3.9 Damp-Proof Course/Sub-Floor Ventilation**

In most domestic buildings constructed after about 1875, a horizontal damp proof course of bituminous felt, slate, etc., is normally incorporated in the main walls at ground level to prevent the natural ground moisture from rising up those walls by capillary action.

The damp proof course is believed to be provided by means of a double slate layer to the base of the main external walls. This could not be confirmed due to the rendering.

Care will be needed to avoid any bridging of the damp proof course in the future by, for example, garden earth, paths, etc.



It is important to ensure that earth, paths, etc., are kept at least six inches below the level of any damp proof course and internal floor levels otherwise bridging could occur resulting in dampness internally.

Since the property has areas of suspended timber flooring to the ground floor accommodation, air bricks should be inserted at the base of walls. We could not see any air bricks and these should be installed.

Air bricks are required in order to provide ventilation to the underside of the flooring. This air flow would restrict the build up of condensation beneath the floor, which could result in fungal decay occurring in the timbers in the property.

There is some bounce to the floors and we have not been lifted floor boards to ascertain their condition.

It is important to maintain a flow of air in the void beneath the ground floor in order to prevent dampness and the development of rot. Air bricks should be introduced.

There should always be at least one brick course between the ground level and the air bricks to prevent water being blown into the under floor void by the prevailing wind as this can lead to timber infestation.

Air bricks should be at approximately 1.5 - 2m apart around the perimeter of the house.

The solid floors do not require sub-floor ventilation but where necessary air bricks should be ducted through to serve the timber floors.

#### **4.0 External Joinery**

Windows have been inspected on a random basis. It has not been practical to inspect all parts of the windows and, where appropriate, no external inspection has been possible in respect of fixed light, fan light, stuck or locked windows.

The windows comprise of replacement PVC-u double glazed windows. These are generally in poor condition with numerous misted panes. In addition, there are no trickle vents fitted.

Some movement to the frames was noted, particularly to the front door. The rubber seals to the windows and doors are in poor condition. It is likely that the windows and doors will require replacement.

Several of the stone window sills are cracked and require repair. In addition, there is no drip channel present.

The gap between the window and door frames and adjoining brickwork should be filled with colour matched flexible mastic to prevent rainwater penetration. Some mastic has fallen off which will allow driving rain to penetrate the fabric of the building.

The quality of double-glazing units can vary. We are of the opinion that the windows are of poor quality and require replacement.

The double glazed windows only have small openings. This could be dangerous as it may restrict escape from the room in the case of fire.

The external doors are fitted with weatherboards and water bars on the threshold in accordance with good practice.

The external roof joinery is of timber sections which were seen to be in fair condition. The gap between the exposed rafter feet has mesh applied which will prevent the majority of vermin entering the roof void.

There is always the risk when external decoration is being undertaken that areas of wood rot may be discovered. This is not uncommon.

#### **4.1 External Decoration**

The external decorations are generally poor, with flaking paint to the external rendering and rafter feet and fascia boards requiring redecoration.

Affected areas should be rubbed down and painted.

All exterior timber work should be carefully checked for decay when re-decoration is carried out and repairs undertaken as found to be necessary. The external paintwork should be maintained to a good standard to reduce the dangers of timber decay.

#### **4.2 The Site**

The boundary fences throughout are in fair condition generally. Boundaries are formed from timber and brickwork walls. These are all in fair condition. Some fence panels are missing and require replacement.

Repairs to outbuildings, boundary walls and paths can be expensive even though the defects are minor in relative terms to the property as a whole.

Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to overgrow the property though total removal of trees or pruning should not be undertaken without specialist advice as this could also result in damage.

#### **4.3 Drainage**

From the extent of our inspection, no sign of any leakage or damage was noted within the accessible/visible parts of the foul drainage system. However, having regard to the location of the

drainage system below ground level, the vast majority of the drainage system could not be inspected and no flow test was undertaken. The only way of telling the true condition of the drainage system is by a full specialist test utilising CCTV cameras.

In a property of this age, there is a likelihood that drain defects will have developed. It should be appreciated that an inspection of the accessible manholes cannot conclusively confirm that other hidden areas are free from defect. This can only be ascertained by a detailed drains test.

A drains test should be undertaken to ascertain the condition of this system. All recommendations should be implemented.

Given the age of the property we would recommend that the drains are inspected by CCTV camera.

Surface water drains have not been tested and their condition or effectiveness is not known. Similarly, the adequacy of soakaways has not been established although you are advised that they tend to silt up and become less effective with time.

## **CONDITION (Inside)**

### **4.4 Roof Space**

A general inspection of the roof timbers has been made but we have not examined all surfaces of every length of timber because of the style of construction and restricted access.

Our inspection was restricted due to the items and insulation in the loft space and although we were as thorough as possible, there could be the risk of hidden defects.

Certain sections of the roof structure could not be examined in detail, such as the lower ends of the rafters and the wall plates. If these timbers have been in contact with dampness for some time it is possible that decay may have occurred.

Our inspection did not include a roof load calculation as this would be within the realm of a Structural Engineer.

The roof is of softwood construction of a typical design for a property of this type and age and is made up with evenly spaced rafters secured to the ridge board and to the perimeter wall plates and ceiling joists at the point of passing.

There is a sarking felt to the underside of the tiles, which is in good condition and prevents tile lift in wind and wind blown debris entering the roof space.

Intermediate horizontal timbers known as purlins support the rafters. Struts have been provided to secure and prevent sagging of the purlins. Additional horizontal timbers known as binders are fixed at right angles to the run of the ceiling joists to secure and prevent sagging of the ceilings. The rafters and other roof timbers and ceiling joists are of adequate size and spacings to carry the normal loads likely to be imposed on them.

There was no significant undue deflection of timbers or other obvious deficiencies, which indicates that the framing is performing satisfactorily for its age.

We did note some rodent droppings in the roof space and the rodent should be eradicated. We also found minor woodworm infestation, which requires treating.

Within the roof space we found that the galvanised water pipes have generally been lagged and the plastic cold water storage tank has a close fitting lid and is insulated.

#### **4.5 Ceilings**

Ceilings have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken. We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind ceilings and the type of materials employed can only be fully ascertained by further investigation.

Ceilings are a mixture of lath and plaster construction and plasterboard some having been artexed and painted. Ceilings are uneven and with minor cracks evident. The hall ceiling is water damaged due to the shower above leaking. This requires repair.

The lounge ceiling may contain asbestos boarding in a timber frame. If this is asbestos it will require removal or encapsulation.

The majority of the lath and plaster ceilings are cracked and require repair. You should be aware that these ceilings can collapse without prior notice.

Artex has been used within the property. This is a textured plaster which was provided usually as a skim coat to the plasterboard. This material tends to contain a relatively small quantity of asbestos fibre as a binder. The use of asbestos ceased in July 1984. On the basis of the likely age of the textured finish it is therefore recommended that the artex is not worked or sanded in any way which could release fibres. If it is desired to remove this material then specialist advice needs to be sought.

Lath and plaster construction is usually formed by applying plaster on to the face of willow laths which are fixed to timber floor or ceiling joists. The gap between the willow laths enables the plaster to pass between them to form a key to secure the main surface to the woodwork. Over a period of years fractures occur in the plaster where it passes between the laths. The ceiling plaster surface can then become separated from the lath construction.

The underside of ceilings has been tested by applying light pressure, to see if there is any loss of key in lath and plaster construction. Where ceilings are cracked this is the case.

Over a period of years fractures occur in the plaster where it passes between the laths. The ceiling plaster surface can become separated from the lath construction. When this happens there is a risk of collapse, which can cause damage to the furniture and fittings within the room, and the risk of injury to anyone who may be in the area when failure occurs. The normal useful life of this type of construction varies between 40 to 70 years. The addition of central heating to a property tends to cause failures and may vary this anticipated life span.

Undulations and hairline cracks are visible beneath the lining paper to the ceilings in some rooms. In a property of this age, large areas of 'live' ceiling plaster should be expected and we would caution that small localised patch repairs of lath and plaster surfaces are rarely possible due to the homogenous nature of the plaster which tends to act as a continuous skin which acts as one surface when it pulls away from the backing. Consequently, when re-decorating the various rooms it is likely that some fairly substantial areas of ceiling plaster will have to be replaced before a desirable surface finish can be achieved. If you envisage decorating over the existing surface, it should be possible to keep this work to a minimum.

There is hairline cracking to the ceiling surfaces undoubtedly following the line of the plasterboard joints behind. This is quite common and due to normal acceptable shrinkage.

#### **4.6 Interior Walls/Partitions**

Internal walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and concealed parts would need to be opened up in order to ascertain the materials used and their condition. Similarly we cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind panelling, dry lining, other applied finishes/decorations and, where applicable, heavy furniture and fittings. Defects may become apparent when wallpaper or other finishes are removed.

Internal partitions throughout the property are of solid masonry, which have been plastered and decorated.

There is some general cracking and distortion, which is quite common in all property, particularly at the margins of the ceilings and around the doors and windows.

The condition of the plasterwork is reasonable for its age. There are a number of hollow areas where a typical loss of adhesion has occurred between the plaster and its backing material. Accordingly, it must be accepted that patch repairs will be found to be necessary prior to re-decoration.

Tapping the walls generally throughout the property, hollow soundings were evident. In practical terms this does not necessarily mean the plaster will fall away when stripping off old decorative coverings but the risk of this occurring must be accepted.

In view of the age of the property you must expect to find that some areas of the wall plaster will need attention when re-decoration is carried out.

Minor shrinkage cracks were noted in the plasterwork although these are not considered to be significant in a property of this type and age. Some making good will be required prior to next decoration. We did find the wall surfaces to be slightly uneven.

The partitions have settled in the past, causing some cracking and distortion of the door openings. This appears to be an established feature and is not considered unusual in buildings of this type. We consider the extent of movement to be within acceptable limits.

#### **4.7 Fireplaces, Flues, Chimney Breasts**

There is an open fire to the lounge and bedroom. These have not been tested by us.

However, original flue linings, if any, in a building of this age are likely to have perished and require renewal. This can lead to leakage of harmful flue gases, particularly if there are redundant flues adjacent.

The condition of the internal parts of the chimneys and whether they have been lined cannot be ascertained without opening up the structure. Flues in chimneys in a property of this age are often defective and repairs or re-lining should be anticipated.

Please note in buildings of this age the flue linings are often decayed and the flues unsuitable for use unless they are re-lined. You are recommended therefore to have them checked prior to use.

#### **4.8 Floors**

As the majority of the floors were concealed by carpets and other coverings, a proper inspection of the floors could not be made. This is only possible on taking up floor coverings and a considerable number of the floorboards. We cannot, therefore, report that all timbers are free from rot or other defects.

It should be noted that floors are one of the hardest areas to pass comment upon due to the presence of furniture and fitted carpets. Comments are therefore, based on selected areas where the edges of carpets could be turned back, to give an indication of the type of construction used and its condition.

We cannot, therefore, report that there are no defects such as inadequate damp proofing or cracked surface. If you require further comment as to the condition, then we would be pleased to return to the property to carry out a further inspection provided suitable arrangements could be made with the vendor.

The ground floors to the building are a mixture of suspended timber joisted construction with the kitchen having a solid concrete floor. The concrete floor is in sound condition, but is unlikely to be insulated.

We noted that the concrete floors are in sound condition and free from resonance when impact tested.

The nature and thickness of the concrete floor is not known. Consolidation of hardcore under the concrete can occur, particularly where the thickness exceeds 600 mm (2 feet), resulting in deflection or cracking of the floor slab.

Some movement has occurred to the ground bearing concrete floor slab, evidenced by minor gapping between the skirtings and floor surfaces. This is considered to be within normal tolerances for the age of property and the movement is probably due to initial consolidation in the hardcore beneath the concrete slab.

The remaining ground and first floors are of suspended timber construction. We noted some evidence of slight deflection, which is probably a result of initial settlement and unlikely to cause further problems, provided the floors are not overloaded. Some floorboards are loose or creaking and need to be properly fixed. Air bricks need to be introduced.

Floor timbers can be weakened or damaged by the introduction of services e.g. cables, pipes, etc. Consequently, when timbers are exposed they should be checked. Any loose timbers should be secured.

#### **4.9 Damp**

Tests for dampness were taken internally with an electronic moisture meter. Effective testing is not practical where walls are panelled or lined, where there are wall tiles, where there are fixtures such as kitchens and bathrooms or, where applicable, in areas concealed by heavy furniture.

Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal wall surfaces. The readings obtained indicate that the damp proof course may have failed to the hallway and lounge external walls.

Treatment is required.

The main bedroom walls have been affected by water penetration from a leaking flashing to the chimney. These will require replastering.

We recommend that arrangements must be made for a reputable damp proofing company to attend at the property to undertake a detailed inspection and to provide a report and estimate for damp proofing work to be undertaken to eradicate dampness within the property. All recommendations for work should then be undertaken, ideally prior to commitment to purchase, and the cost implications incorporated into any final negotiations between yourself and the vendor.

Plaster on walls affected by rising damp contains salts from the soil, which are hygroscopic and attract moisture from the air. Until such contaminated plaster is removed and replaced with a special plaster, the walls will remain damp. It is normally necessary to remove the plaster from the affected walls up to a height of 1 metre above the floor and re-plaster. The damp proofing contractors guarantee may not be fully effective until such re-plastering has been carried out.

Condensation dampness can occur in any building and is at least partly related to the method of occupancy. It is important to ensure adequate ventilation, particularly to bathrooms, showers, kitchens, etc., preferably via extractor fans fitted with a humidity control. Background heating should be provided as a minimum. Certain heaters, such as gas fires, produce large amounts of water vapour. Furniture and cupboards placed against cold and external walls can give rise to condensation. Roof spaces should be adequately ventilated. Condensation dampness and mould can be prejudicial to health and lead to respiratory problems.

## **5.0 Internal Joinery**

The internal doors comprise timber panelled doors with lever furniture. The internal doors have suffered some wear and tear. They do not fit perfectly but otherwise they appear to be satisfactory for their purpose.

The kitchen units are in dated and poor condition and ideally require replacement. The kitchen fittings include built in appliances, which have not been tested by us. No comments can be given as to the condition or safety of these appliances.

Kitchen cupboard units can be damaged by plumbing leaks, condensation and dampness in adjoining walls, etc. Loose hinges and doors should be tightened. Internal cleaning may be necessary.

Kitchen appliances have not been moved out and consequently we cannot comment upon the condition of concealed plumbing, walls, floors, etc. Similarly appliances have not been inspected and their condition/safety is not known.

The staircases are in keeping with the style of the property and free from significant defect. We noticed that several of the treads/risers are loose and require re-wedging/re-gluing. However, we regard this as no more than a matter of routine repair.

## **5.1 Internal Decoration**

The removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to, or reveal defects in, the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs prior to redecoration.

Internal decorations were generally noted to remain in dated condition but these are largely a matter of personal taste.



## **5.2 Timber Defects**

A representative number of accessible timbers were examined in order to establish whether the structure as a whole is subject to significant deterioration by way of insect infestation, rot attack, and/or undue structural distress. As a result, we can report that we found no evidence of such deterioration within the timbers examined.

No defects were found but a full inspection of all internal timbers was not possible. In a property of this age some timber defects are likely to be present unless previous treatment has been properly carried out.

No obvious sign of significant rot or wood beetle infestation was found to exposed timbers at the time of this inspection. Whilst a representative sample of timber has been inspected the possibility of concealed defects being present cannot be entirely ruled out.

There was no visible evidence of a dry rot outbreak at the time of our inspection. However, dry rot can live unseen behind plaster or in brickwork and whilst we have taken all reasonable care in our investigations, hidden dry rot could be present in areas we were unable to inspect.

Sporadic woodworm was found in timbers to the loft and we recommend that a timber specialist be asked to inspect and report on the infestation and to submit an estimate for the cost of treatment.

There is no practical way to tell if woodworm is active or not. It is prudent to call in a specialist firm to treat the infestation.

## **5.3 Thermal Insulation**

Some insulation is present in the roof void, although this is considered inadequate. We recommend a minimum thickness of 300mm of fibreglass quilt or similar insulating material is provided.

Recent medical evidence indicates that fibreglass and mineral fibre insulation may be prejudicial to health and this should be borne in mind when using areas insulated with such material. Certainly we would advise the use of protective masks when laying this type of insulation.

Care should be taken to ensure that the insulation does not block essential ventilation around the edges of the roof at the eaves. Such ventilation is needed to dry out any condensation that forms in the roof space.

## **SERVICES**

The Main service installations within this property have been the subject of a purely visual inspection only and have not been formally traced or tested by us in any way. The information provided within this part of the report is purely for your initial advice and consideration only. Should you wish formal service tests

to be undertaken we would be pleased to arrange this on your behalf and upon receipt of your formal instructions. However we do make the following initial observations at this time.

#### **5.4 Electricity**

From the extent of our inspection we advise that whilst the electrical installation was found to be in working order, we believe that if it were formally tested it would be found not to comply with the current requirements of the Institute of Electrical Engineers (17<sup>th</sup> Edition). Whilst this is not unusual we do recommend that it would be prudent for you to have the electrical installation tested prior to formal exchange of contracts in order that the cost implications involved in upgrading the system to ensure ongoing compliance can be confirmed and the work undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

You should note that the electricity board recommend an electrical test every five years or at each change of ownership and we recommend that such a test should be carried out by an NICEIC registered electrician prior to purchase in order to ensure that the installation is safe and to establish the cost, if necessary, of having it upgraded to current standards.

The incoming key operated supply meter and consumer unit are located in the hall. The consumer unit comprises a 10 way modern RCD miniature circuit breaker board. There is limited earth leakage bonding present.

It is likely that some upgrading will be required to conform to current IEE Regulations 17<sup>th</sup> Edition.

In the absence of a test and report by a qualified electrician, you must understand that there may be defects to the wiring and installation, which are concealed. We have not tested any switches, sockets or wiring.

The observed wiring and fittings appear to be dated and current guidelines advise that electrical installations should be tested every five years, or upon change of ownership, and you are recommended to consider the merits of this advice.

Electrical renewal or repair works may cause damage to internal decorations, plaster surfaces, etc. Should you propose installing additional power and/or lighting points then this could necessitate substantial alterations to, or upgrading of, the electrical installation.

In view of our findings it is recommended that a competent electrical contractor, preferably one registered with the NICEIC, be engaged to carry out a thorough inspection and test together with an assessment of the cost of works required to ensure compliance with current IEE standards. You are strongly advised to implement any recommended works.

#### **5.5 Gas**

The gas is supplied by calor gas tanks. These appear to be in fair condition.

No test of the gas installation has been made but there was no noticeable smell of gas within the property to indicate the presence of significant leakage. You should note that all alterations or installations of pipework or appliances must be carried out by Gas Safety registered installers.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer i.e. a member of Gas Safe Registered installers. Works to gas appliances etc by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

## **5.6 Plumbing/Sanitary Fittings**

The nature, depth and condition of underground pipe work concealed within the property, is not known. Leaks could occur in concealed plumbing for some time before becoming apparent. Shallow pipes are at risk to damage from frost, vehicles, etc. Water escaping underground could possibly undermine the foundations.

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper and galvanised steel. There may be some lead pipework within the property and this should be established.

No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in ducts and floors.

The cold water tank in the roof is of plastic and is insulated and has a close fitting lid.

We have not moved plumbed-in household equipment and therefore cannot comment upon the condition of plumbing to these fittings or determine the state of the walls and floors that are concealed.

Within the property the sanitary fittings were visually inspected. The bathrooms and fittings are in dated condition and the shower tray appears to be leaking. Repairs / replacement are required.

Leaks from unsealed junctions of walls and baths, basins, shower trays and sinks, or plumbing leaks to these fittings can go undetected in enclosed areas and cause damage and rot to decorations and joinery.

It is important to ensure that the tiling and seals are properly made and maintained at the junction between wall surfaces and baths, showers etc., as damp penetration can lead to the development of fungal decay in concealed areas. This may not become apparent until a major attack has developed necessitating extensive and costly repairs.

## **5.7 Heating**

The installation of central heating systems is a specialist fitment. As a general rule we would advise that the main component parts, and in particular we refer to the gas boiler and hot water cylinder, will have a life expectancy of some ten to fifteen years depending upon the quality of maintenance during that time.

At the time of our inspection all of the component parts were noted to be in place.

In the absence of any suitable service agreement we do advise that it would be prudent on your part, to arrange for a reputable heating contractor to attend at the property to undertake an inspection and to advise upon the current condition of the central heating installation, whether any of the main component parts are approaching the end of their useful life expectancy and, if so, the likely cost implications of repair.

The Glow Worm Ultimate boiler is located in the kitchen. This boiler is old and dated and ideally requires replacement for a modern efficient boiler.

The boiler serves pressed steel radiators to each of the principle rooms. The radiators are not fitted with control valves. The radiators are generally quite old but in fair condition. The bathroom radiator is rusting and requires replacement.

As with all gas fired appliances, it is essential that the boiler is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and it should be subject to a routine annual service. If there is no evidence to suggest that the boiler has been serviced within the past 12 months, you should have it checked by a Gas safe registered installer. This should extend to the adequacy of the flue and ventilation arrangements. We cannot confirm the condition or effectiveness of the system.

#### 4.0 MAINTENANCE INSPECTION FORM – Unit 1 Green Keepers Cottages

Cost column relates to urgent budgets. Costings are approximate and may vary from contractors prices.

ITEM	ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	URGENT	1-2 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	COST
	<b>EXTERNAL</b>					
	<b>Roofs</b>					
1	Main roof	Slate covered pitched timber roof	Remove the moss from the roof tiles	Check the valley gutters and for slipped tiles	Visual check of the covering and structure	800.00
2	Loft	Cut timber roof with a sarking felt	Eradicate the rodents. Treat the woodworm.	Improve the level of insulation	Visual check of the roof structure internally.	600.00
3	Chimneys	Brick built and rendered with lead flashings and soakers	Replace the lead flashings and soakers. Hack the rendering and repoint the stack. Hack off rendering to second capped off stack and repoint brickwork. Replace lead flashings and soakers	Check flashings and pointing.	Check flashings and pointing.	2000.00
4	Rainwater goods	Plastic half round gutters and downpipes	Clean the gutters and check fixing brackets. Clear waste gullies of leaves and debris and provide grate.	Visual check of the guttering and brackets	Visual check of the guttering and brackets	300.00
5	Soil and Vent pipe	Cast iron	Overhaul rusting S&V	Visual check	Visual check	150.00
6	Perimeter walls	Solid brickwork rendered and painted. Low level damp proof course vents.	Hack off all debonded and cracked rendering. Approx 30% of walls affected. Re-render and decorate. Clear blocked damp proof course vents of paint. Make good rendering to kitchen door	Check new rendering for shrinkage cracking.	Visual check	4500.00
7	Damp and Damp proof course	Believed to be of slate with a Dutch ventilation method.	Damp proof course has partially failed. Treat the dampness to the hall and lounge external walls with a silicone injected DPC. Hack off affected internal wall plaster and repalster. Repair the damp affected wall plaster to the main bedroom due to the chimney flashing leaking	Monitor for dampness re-occurring.	Monitor for dampness re-occurring.	2100.00

ITEM	ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	URGENT	1-2 YEARS	3-5 YEARS	COST
8	Windows	Replacement PVC-u double glazed windows.	<p>Replace the misted glazing panes to the lounge, and main bedroom.</p> <p>Replace rubber door seals and window seals.</p> <p>Replace the mastic sealant externally.</p> <p>Repair stone window sills and provide drip channel</p>	Consider replacing the windows with modern PVC-u frames and double glazing with trickle vents fitted.	Visual check	600.00
9	External Doors	Replacement PVC-u double glazed doors.	<p>The kitchen door seals are perished and require replacement.</p> <p>Minor movement to the door frame requires additional screw fixings.</p>	Consider replacing the doors.	Visual check	85.00
10	Drainage	Cast iron manhole covers and pipework	Get the drainage CCTV'd by camera and repair any defects.	No action	No action	300.00
	<b>INTERNALLY</b>					
11	Ceilings	A mixture of possible asbestos sheeting, lath and plaster and plasterboard. Some ceilings have an artexed finish.	<p>Check the lounge ceiling for asbestos boarding and replace if found.</p> <p>Repair the damage to the hall ceiling due to water leak.</p> <p>Repair the main bedroom ceiling due to the leaking chimney flashing.</p>	Consider replacing the old lath and plaster ceilings with modern plasterboard.	No action	1200.00
12	Walls	Solid brickwork with woodchip coverings. The kitchen has artex to the walls.	Make good dampness to wall plaster to the lounge, hall and main bedroom and redecorate.	Consider a full redecoration	Visual check and monitor	1200.00
13	Floors	Suspended timber joisted construction and solid concrete floor to the kitchen	Provide air bricks to the suspended timber floors.	No action	No action	500.00
14	Kitchen	Range of wall and base units and appliances.	Upgrade the kitchen with modern units	No action	No action	5500.00
15	Bathroom	WC, bath and sink, very dated.	Upgrade the sanitary ware and install an extract fan.	No action	No action	4000.00
16	Heating	Dated Glow Worm boiler and radiators	<p>Replace the boiler with a modern efficient unit.</p> <p>Fir control valves to radiators and replace the rusting bathroom radiator.</p>	Yearly servicing	Yearly servicing	3000.00
17	Electrical	10 way modern RCD and key meter.	Upgrade the earth bonding.	Yearly servicing	Yearly servicing	750.00
					<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,585.00</b>

ACS Property Consultants Limited

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