

Home condition survey

Before instructing a surveyor you should understand the “terms” under which the report is prepared so you have a clear understanding of the level of service you are buying. The “terms” of the report are set out below.

To confirm you understand the “terms” of the service, please sign two copies of this letter and return one to the surveyor. Please keep a copy for your own records.

Introduction and terms on which this report is prepared

When you buy a home it is recommended to have an independent report on the condition of the property. The Home Condition Survey is produced by a surveyor who is a member of the SAVA Scheme. The surveyor will provide an objective opinion about the condition of the property which you, as the buyer, will be able to rely on and use.

The surveyor

The surveyor is a member of the SAVA Scheme, which is operated by National Energy Services Ltd, and has passed an assessment of skills and holds one of the below:

- Level 4 Diploma in Home Inspection
- Level 6 Diploma in Residential Surveying and Valuation
- Associate/Member of RICS whose professional competency has been approved by SAVA.

In addition the surveyor will:

- have insurance the provides cover in the surveyor is negligent
- follow the scheme and product rules required by SAVA
- lodge the report on the SAVA register for regular monitoring of competence
- have a complaints procedure which includes an escalation route to SAVA
- have had a criminal records check undertaken

The inspection

The surveyor must follow the inspection standards and code of conduct set by SAVA. A copy of these can be found on www.myhomeconditionsurvey.co.uk.

The Home Condition Survey is in a standard format and is based on terms which set out what to expect of both the surveyor and the Home Condition Survey. Neither you nor the surveyor can amend these terms for the survey to be covered by the SAVA scheme. However, the surveyor may provide you with services beyond the report. These services are not covered by these terms nor by the Scheme and so must be covered by a separate contract.

What this report tells you

This report will provide you with the following information:

- The construction and condition of the property on the date of inspection
- Whether more enquiries or investigations are needed
- The reinstatement cost for insurance purposes derived from data supplied by the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS), except where:
 - the property is very large or historic
 - where it incorporates special features
 - if it is of an less usual construction not covered by BCIS data

In these circumstances a specialist would be needed to assess the reinstatement cost.

The main aim of this report is to inform you of:

- any serious defects or issues that may need attention and may affect your decision to buy the property
- areas that may require further investigation to prevent damage to the structure of the building
- matters that should be referred to your legal adviser for further investigation

The report applies “condition ratings” to the major parts of the main building. The report will not provide a condition rating to outbuildings. The condition rating applied will be; 1, 2, 3 or NI (not inspected - see “How the Inspection is carried out” below).

Condition rating definition

Condition Rating **1** - No repair is currently needed. Normal maintenance must be carried out.

Condition Rating **2** - Repairs or replacements are needed but the surveyor does not consider these to be serious or urgent.

Condition Rating **3** - These are defects which are serious and/or require urgent repair/replacement or where the surveyor feels that further investigation is required. For example, where the surveyor has reason to believe a repair work may needed but an invasive investigation is required to confirmation. A serious defect is one which could lead to rapid deterioration in the property or one which is likely to cost more than 2.5% of the reinstatement cost to put right.

You may wish to obtain quotes for additional work prior to exchange of contract where a condition rating 2 or 3 is given.



What this report will not tell you

This report will not tell you about:

- the value of the property
- matters that might affect value (such as the location of the property or the availability of public transport and other facilities)
- any minor defects that would not normally effect your decision to buy
- how to undertake any repairs to remedy any defects or deficiencies
- the cost of any repair work
- the efficiency of any services installed or any features that could only be effectively monitored over a longer period of time

If you need advice on subjects that are not covered by the Home Condition Survey, this must be arranged separately.

The report is not an asbestos inspection under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

What, when and how the inspection is carried out?

You should understand that when the surveyor carries out the inspection the property does not belong to you, but to a third party. The surveyor undertakes a full visual and non invasive inspection (including loft spaces, cellars, all where the access is safe). The surveyor will look at the inside and outside of the main building, all permanent outbuildings, grounds and areas in common or shared use and the parts of the gas, electricity, water and drainage services that can be seen.

The surveyor will carry out the inspection from all vantage points possible, but cannot:

- report on leisure facilities or equipment
- report on temporary outbuildings
- trespass on adjacent private property
- walk on any sort of roof
- access areas that are more than 3m above the floor level – such features will be inspected from ground level or from a vantage point within the building
- take up or move carpets, floor coverings, floorboards or insulation etc.
- move heavy furniture or remove contents of cupboards
- move smaller items of furniture etc. without the express consent of the occupier
- force open or remove secure panels or the fabric of the building
- undertake a specialist test of any of the services, although where possible they will be observed in normal operation, or turn on any services that are not connected at the time of the inspection. The surveyor cannot comment on the efficiency of any services or renewable installations (such as photovoltaic panels)
- comment on sound insulation or noise of any sort

The surveyor will curtail the inspection if he/she feels it unsafe to continue for any reason (including the risk of damage to the property itself, risks to any occupiers or visitors and risks to the safety of the surveyor etc.)

The surveyor will check for damp in vulnerable areas using a moisture meter.

Flats

The surveyor will carry out a non invasive inspection at the level of detail set out above for the main walls and roof over the flat. The surveyor inspects the shared access to the flat and the area where car parking or the garage for the flat are located. The surveyor will not:

- inspect the rest of the block to this level of detail
- inspect shared areas or services to other flats in the block
- access the roof space unless the access is within the flat and subject to the restrictions outlined above
- comment on shared drains, fire or security alarms
- comment on any terms of the lease

Property risks

The surveyor assumes that the home is not built with nor contains hazardous material and is not built on contaminated land. However, if any materials are found during the inspection which may contain hazardous substances, if anything is identified which may damage the property or if the surveyor finds evidence to suggest any contamination of the land this will be reported and you may wish to seek further advice.

Risks to people

The surveyor will report on matters that may have existed for a long time and cannot reasonably be replaced or modified but may still, in the opinion of the surveyor, present a risk to occupiers or visitors.

Your rights and responsibilities

The report is for you to use and your legal advisor to use but the surveyor accepts not liability if you or anyone else chooses to pass this report to someone else.

Upon instructing the surveyor you have a 14 day cooling off period; however, if you request that the surveyor carry out the inspection during this 14 day period, you will be liable to pay the full fee.