

Property Consultation Services, Inspections & Building Surveys: 2024

Your home is probably the most expensive property purchase most of us will ever make. The vast majority of property sales rely on a pre-purchase property survey to provide essential information on the condition of the property in question. But with many different types of surveys on offer, which is the right one for you? Should you get an RICS HomeBuyer Report or a full building survey?

All Our Surveys and property services are undertaken by Experienced & Qualified Surveyors, and signed off by Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Our specialist surveying team undertakes numerous Surveys every week and can provide professional advice on all surveying requirements.

With over 50 years of combined surveying experience in and around London and the Home Counties, our expert multidisciplinary team can provide comprehensive reports and in-depth analyses on the condition of any type of property. We have also introduced an innovative product to ease the survey type selection.

Once our report has been completed and you've had time to digest its recommendations, we encourage our clients to get in touch to discuss the findings with us directly. This will give you the opportunity to ask further questions if they arise. It will also give us the chance to get to know you better so we can provide the best possible customer experience, now and in any future dealings.

RAW's 'New Build' Snagging Inspection (From £500.00)

We offer a snagging inspection designed for the purchase of new build properties. Following the inspection, you will receive a report containing a photographic schedule captioned to highlight the pertinent and relevant information for your consideration.

This inspection is useful when purchasing a new build property (with a warranty) and we recommend it is undertaken within the first week of the last month of any warranty period provided by the developer. (usually 6 or 12 months following your purchase)

This is so that any defects or items requiring remediation are identified to you to take to the developer for correction before the warranty expires, and also after a period of time allowing for them to manifest.

The inspection will not include destructive investigations and will not remove any materials or fittings unless specifically agreed.

The inspection will not include a detailed examination of service installations unless specifically agreed upon and for which an additional charge will be made.

The inspection will not include a detailed examination of external items unless specifically agreed.

The inspection will include preliminary thermal imaging of insulated structures and around the windows etc to identify potential cold bridging or areas of inadequate insulation.

The inspection will include all visible areas and look to identify any items that do not meet the expected quality of finish or installation.

Any area of concern that could not be sufficiently examined will be identified as requiring further investigation.

RAW Building Consultation (Interactive) (From £500.00)

We offer a building consultation designed for property purchases where a written report may not be appropriate for your circumstances or when the type of survey most appropriate is difficult to decide. Benefits include the speed of information, when there is simply insufficient time for a written survey or for example you intend to undertake extensive alteration works upon completion or in the near future or you need to know if you wish to progress your offer on a property but the content of a traditional report would be unwarranted or because you cannot decide which type of survey to choose.

A consultation is a 'walk and talk' interactive inspection with you in attendance or, exceptionally, it can be an inspection by us then followed up with a conversation or meeting to discuss the salient points. The latter requires a solid brief from you in respect of the areas that you require information about.

It gives you an opportunity to discuss any ideas that you have and we can offer our advice, therefore leaving you better informed in respect of your requirements, intentions and plans for the property. In some situations the information found allows you to abandon the purchase, or renegotiate the offer price in the knowledge of what you are buying, the liabilities and the financial implications of what will be required.

Your brief will help us establish what aspects are most important to you allowing us to concentrate on those matters during the inspection, for example:

- Structural implications and feasibility of extending or altering the property
- Adequacy of an existing building element in respect of alterations
- Implications and potential to redevelop the property
- Any planning or building regulation implications when considering refurbishing the property

This initial consultation provides the preliminary inspection for any surveys that follow, therefore allowing you to upgrade from a consultation to a condition report, Homebuyers report or full Building Condition survey if the circumstance warrant it. For example, the property is being sold in poor condition and requires extensive works - which is known, however, the extent of the known work is not established, for example, the roof will require some new slates or tiles, however during the consultation inspection it is noted the rafters are undersized which changes the required works from recovering the roof to replacing the roof complete. Such items may have planning and building regulation implications which are not apparent from the initial assumption that the roof needs repairs.

The consultation is led by you.

We will look at any part of the building and happily comment and discuss any concerns you have now or become apparent during the consultation.

All findings are then discussed - and if required a written report can be provided upon request subject to an additional fee - for example to satisfy your requirements or provide a record of inspection.

Building Consultation Fee: From £500+VAT

Follow on write up: From £250+VAT (optional - eg a short report on the condition of up to three specific elements)

Or by Agreement Upgrade to surveys described below: RICS level 1,2 or 3 survey on request. (The Building Consultation Fee is discounted against each of the Survey types)

RICS: The Home Survey Standards..... Do I need a Homebuyers Report ?

The old survey standards have been in place for some time and, during this time, the world has seen significant social, economic, political and technological change. The RICS and the wider residential property industry has responded to these changes – developing services that home buyers can recognise and trust.

The following old formats have been replaced with the new levels of survey:

Condition Report	replaced with	RICS Level 1 Survey
Home Buyers Report	replaced with	RICS Level 2 Survey
Building Survey	replaced with	RICS Level 3 Survey

NOTE: The following prices are indicative and do not include consideration of individual or unique features such as English Heritage listings, the inclusion of additional outbuildings, or any specialist testing. A property specific quote can be provided upon request.

RICS Level 1 Survey

A RICS Level 1 Survey is the most basic of the three surveys. It's designed for home buyers or homeowners who are seeking a professional and objective report on the condition of a property.

In what instances will a RICS Level 1 Survey be suitable?

A RICS Level 1 Survey will be best suited to conventionally built, modern properties that are in satisfactory condition.

A RICS Level 1 Survey will not suit older or complex properties or those in a neglected condition.

What will the surveyor do?

The surveyor will carry out a visual inspection of the property (which is less extensive than Levels 2 and 3) and but will not carry out any tests on the fabric or services (e.g. electrics, plumbing, heating) of the building.

What will be included in the survey report?

The succinct survey report will objectively describe the condition of the building, its services and grounds, and will provide an assessment of the relative importance of any defects or problems.

The report will also highlight any relevant legal issues and/or obvious risks to the building, people, or grounds.

A RICS Level 1 Survey report will not include advice on repairs or ongoing maintenance.

Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence about any aspect of the property, the report will provide recommendations for further investigations.

RICS Level 2 Survey

A RICS Level 2 Survey is an intermediate survey designed for home buyers or homeowners who are seeking a professional opinion on the condition of the main elements of a property. It is less comprehensive than a Level 3 survey.

In what instances will a RICS Level 2 Survey be suitable?

A RICS Level 2 Survey will suit a broad range of conventionally built properties.

It is unlikely to suit complex buildings (e.g. those that have been significantly extended or altered), most unique or older historic properties, or properties in a neglected condition.

What will the surveyor do?

A RICS Level 2 Survey includes a more extensive visual inspection of the building, its services (e.g. electrics, plumbing, heating) and grounds but does not include any testing.

Concealed areas such as roof spaces, basements and cellars will be inspected if it is safe to do so.

What will be included in the survey report?

The report will objectively describe the condition of the various elements of the property, its services and grounds, and will provide an assessment of the relative importance of any defects or problems.

It will include basic advice about repairs and any ongoing maintenance issues, and, if the surveyor has access to the current EPC report, they will state the energy efficiency rating, check for any obvious discrepancies between the EPC and the property, and explain the implications.

The report will also highlight any relevant legal issues and/or obvious risks to the building, people, or grounds. The surveyor will be able to provide advice on suitable additional services where the homeowner / home buyer is planning on refurbishment work.

Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence about any aspect of the property, a recommendation for further investigations will be made.

RICS Level 3 Survey

A RICS Level 3 Survey is designed for home buyers or homeowners who are seeking a professional opinion based on a detailed assessment of the property.

In what instances will a RICS Level 3 Survey be suitable?

A RICS Level 3 Survey will suit any domestic residential property in any condition.

What will the surveyor do?

A RICS Level 3 Survey will be the most extensive of the three types of survey. The surveyor will carry out a detailed visual inspection of the building, its services (e.g. electrics, plumbing, heating) and the grounds.

Concealed areas such as roof spaces, basements and cellars will be inspected if it is safe to do so.

Although the survey will not include any testing on the fabric or services of the building, they will be observed in normal operation i.e. they will be switched on or off and/or operated where the occupier has given permission and it is safe to do so.

What will be included in the survey report?

The report will objectively describe the form of construction and materials used for different parts of the property. It will describe their condition and provide an assessment of the relative importance of any defects or problems.

In addition to this, it will:

- Describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects in areas that have not been inspected*
- Propose the most probable cause(s) of any defects based on the inspection*
- Outline the likely scope of any appropriate remedial work and explain the likely consequences of non-repair*
- Make general recommendations in respect of the priority and likely timescale for necessary work*
- Highlight any relevant legal issues*
- Comment on the energy efficiency of the property including noting the energy efficiency rating (if the surveyor has access to the current EPC report), highlighting any discrepancies between the EPC and the property along with the implications of any discrepancies, and advising on the appropriateness of any energy improvements recommended by the EPC.*

Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigations will be made (however these should be minimal due to a more detailed property inspection).

Further information about the new RICS Home Survey standards:

- <https://www.rics.org/uk/upholding-professional-standards/sector-standards/building-surveying/home-surveys/home-survey-standards/>*
- <https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/qualify/home-survey-standard-nov-2020.pdf>*

Additional Services:

Building Reinstatement Valuation

Upon taking out building insurance, Insurers will often ask for a building reinstatement valuation. This is the total sum the building is insured for should it require a complete rebuild following a total loss.

The cost to rebuild a property can vary considerably depending on various factors such as location, site geography, party wall implications, and material costs for example. These intricacies are not always reflected in the asking price or the price the property is sold for. We can provide rebuild cost guidance for residential rebuilding that is recognised by the ABI (Association of British Insurers) in accordance with current building costs as determined by the Building Costs Information Service (BCIS)

Extension / Alteration Feasibility Study

If you are thinking of altering or extending your property we are able to provide a feasibility study with a broad estimation of the likely costs involved. based on m2 construction rates, and specific items eg structural works, drainage implications, etc. This can be beneficial when purchasing a property that requires additional work, and you are looking to understand the budget for potential alterations.