

TYPES OF PROPERTY SURVEY

RICS Home Survey level one

This service is designed for clients (buyers, sellers and owners) seeking a professional and objective report on the condition of the property at an economic price. As a result, it is less comprehensive than survey level two and survey level three.

This level of service includes a visual inspection that is less extensive than for the other survey levels. No tests of the building fabric or services are undertaken. The report objectively describes the condition of the building, its services and the grounds. It highlights relevant legal issues and any obvious risks to the building, people or grounds. The report is succinct and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects and problems. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation will be made.

A survey level one report does not include advice on repairs or ongoing maintenance and this, combined with the less extensive inspection, usually means it is better suited to conventionally built, modern dwellings in satisfactory condition. It will not suit older or complex properties, or those in a neglected condition.

Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements).

RICS Home Survey level two

This level of service is for clients who are seeking a professional opinion at an economic price. It is, therefore, less comprehensive than a level three service. The focus is on assessing the general condition of the main elements of a property. This intermediate level of service includes a more extensive visual inspection of the building, its services and grounds, but still without tests. Concealed areas normally opened or used by the occupiers are inspected if it is safe to do so (typical examples include roof spaces, basements and cellars). The report objectively describes the condition of the different elements and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems. At this level, although it is concise, the report does include advice about repairs and any ongoing maintenance issues. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigations will be made.

This level of service suits a broader range of conventionally built properties, although the age and type will depend on the knowledge and experience of the RICS member. This level of service is unlikely to suit:

- complex buildings, for example those that have been extensively extended and altered;
- unique or older historic properties – although survey level two services may be appropriate for some older buildings; or
- properties in neglected condition.

In such cases, a survey level two service will often result in numerous referrals for further investigations, an outcome that many clients find disappointing.

Where the client is planning to carry out extensive repair and refurbishment work in the future, you should advise Varco Consultants Ltd in advance so that additional commentary may be made in this respect.

Remedial recommendations will not include structural calculations. Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements). Any need for further investigation (whether intrusive or not) would be recommended in the Report where necessary.

RICS Home Survey level three

This level of service is for clients who are seeking a professional opinion based on a detailed assessment of the property.

The service consists of a detailed visual inspection of the building, its services and the grounds and is more extensive than a survey level two. Concealed areas normally opened or used by the occupiers are inspected if it is safe to do so (typical examples include roof spaces, basements and cellars). Although the services are not tested, they are observed in normal operation – in other words, they are switched on or off and/or operated where the occupier has given permission and it is safe to do so.

The report objectively describes the form of construction and materials used for different parts of the property. It describes the condition and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems. Additionally, it should:

- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects in areas not inspected
- propose the most probable cause(s) of the 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 and
- give an indication of likely budget costs.

Where an RICS member feels unable to reach the necessary conclusions with reasonable confidence, they will refer the matter for further investigations. A survey level three report does however endeavour to provide the client with as much information as possible to allow them to make an informed decision.

This level of service will suit any domestic residential property in any condition.

Remedial recommendations will not include structural calculations. Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements). Any need for further investigation (whether intrusive or not) would be recommended in the Report where necessary.

SPECIFIC DEFECT SURVEY

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Regulated by RICS
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors



This may also be known as a specific survey entailing an inspection of a building's particular problem. This will typically assess a specific issue and may possibly uncover new issues in the process. Further investigation may be recommended. The survey will enable you to gain better understanding of the specific issue in question and could include investigation of the following;

- Structural movement
- Timber decay and rot
- Damp
- Construction Defects
- Subsidence

Remedial recommendations will not include structural calculations. Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements). Any need for further investigation (whether intrusive or not) would be recommended in the Report where necessary.

This service is delivered in accordance with the Home survey standard (1st edition) RICS professional statement and is equivalent to level 2. This will typically comment on the specific defect in question, the construction; suspected causation of the defect and its importance; and remedial works considered necessary.

In addition, this service has the following particular features in accordance with the Clients' specific instructions: *will be restricted to the defect in question.*

STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL SURVEY (NOT A FULL BUILDING SURVEY TYPE 3)

This may also be known as a structural appraisal survey entailing an inspection of a building's structural fabric only. This would typically be limited to the external wall structure, roof structure, intermediate floor and intermediate walls. This will NOT include commentary of the building fabric i.e. flashing, windows; roof coverings; detailing etc., will NOT include cursory commentary of the services and/or any comments of the grounds of the property. This only focuses on the visible condition of the building's "skeleton".

This will typically assess a structural fabric only and may possibly uncover new issues in the process. Remedial recommendations will not include structural calculations. This type of survey will only seek to undertake a general structural appraisal of the property, and must not be construed as a full Building Survey. Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements). Any need for further investigation (whether intrusive or not) would be recommended in the Report where necessary. The survey will enable you to gain better understanding of the visible structural condition in question and could include investigation of the following;

- Roof structure
- Intermediate floor(s)
- Intermediate wall(s)
- Exterior wall and attached structures i.e. chimney stacks etc.

This service is delivered in accordance with the Home survey standard (1st edition) RICS professional statement and is equivalent to level 2. This will typically comment on the construction, condition; suspected causation of any visible defects and its importance; and remedial works considered necessary to the structural fabric only.

In addition, this service has the following particular features in accordance with the Clients' specific instructions: *will be restricted to the visible structural fabric only, and will NOT comment on the building fabric.*

SCHEDULE OF CONDITION

This may also be known as a condition survey and records the visible condition of the building only. This does NOT comment on suspected causation of defects and remedial measures considered necessary.

This service is delivered in accordance with the Home survey standard (1st edition) RICS professional statement and is equivalent to level 1. This will typically comment on the building element, construction and visible condition only. In addition, this service has the following particular features in accordance with the Clients' specific instructions: *will be restricted to the visible condition of the building elements only.*

Please note this survey is non-intrusive and based upon visual inspection only of elements visible within the lines of sight (using binoculars for exterior elements).

The above services/survey(s) and extent noted can be provided for both residential and commercial properties.