

RICS  
**Building Survey**

SAMPLE

Property address

Client's name

Date of inspection



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

# Contents

---

- A Introduction to the report\*
- B About the inspection
- C Overall assessment and summary of condition ratings
- D About the property
- E Outside the property
- F Inside the property
- G Services
- H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)
- I Issues for your legal advisers
- J Risks
- K Energy efficiency
- L Surveyor's declaration
- What to do now
- Description of the RICS Building Survey Service
- Typical house diagram

\* Please read the entire report in order.

RICS is the world's leading qualification when it comes to professional standards in land, property and construction.

In a world where more and more people, governments, banks and commercial organisations demand greater certainty of professional standards and ethics, attaining RICS status is the recognised mark of property professionalism.

Over 100,000 property professionals working in the major established and emerging economies of the world have already recognised the importance of securing RICS status by becoming members.

RICS is an independent professional body originally established in the UK by Royal Charter. Since 1868, RICS has been committed to setting and upholding the highest standards of excellence and integrity – providing impartial, authoritative advice on key issues affecting businesses and society.

The RICS Building Survey is reproduced with the permission of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors who owns the copyright.

© 2012 RICS

---



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

# A

## Introduction to the report

---

This Building Survey is produced by an RICS surveyor who has written this report for you to use. If you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do this at your own risk.

The Building Survey aims to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision when purchasing the property, or when planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrading of the property;
- provide detailed advice on condition;
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects;
- where practicable and agreed, provide an estimate of costs for identified repairs; and
- make recommendations as to any further actions or advice which need to be obtained before committing to purchase.

Section B gives an outline description of what the inspection covers. A more detailed description is contained in the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' at the end of this report.

Any extra services provided that are not covered by the terms and conditions of this report must be covered by a separate contract.

After reading this report you may have comments or questions. If so, please contact the RICS surveyor who has written this report for you (contact details are given in section L).

If you want to complain about the service provided by the RICS surveyor, the surveyor will have an RICS-compliant complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask.

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## B

## About the inspection

---

Surveyor's name	<input type="text"/>		
Surveyor's RICS number	<input type="text"/>		
Company name	<input type="text"/>		
Date of the inspection	<input type="text"/>	Report reference number	<input type="text"/>
Related party disclosure	<input type="text"/>		
Full address and postcode of the property	<input type="text"/>		
Weather conditions when the inspection took place	<input type="text"/>		
The status of the property when the inspection took place	<input type="text"/>		

Property address	<input type="text"/>
------------------	----------------------

**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## About the inspection (continued)

We inspect the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings. We also inspect the parts of the electricity, gas/oil, water, heating, drainage and other services that can be seen, but these are not tested other than through their normal operation in everyday use.

To help describe the condition of the home, we give condition ratings to the main parts (the 'elements') of the building, garage, and some parts outside. Some elements can be made up of several different parts.

In the element boxes in parts E, F, G and H, we describe the part that has the worst condition rating first and then outline the condition of the other parts. The condition ratings are described as follows.

3	Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.
2	Defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
1	No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
NI	Not inspected (see 'Important note' below).

**Important note:** We carry out a desk-top study and make oral enquiries for information about matters affecting the property.

We carefully and thoroughly inspect the property using our best endeavours to see as much of it as is physically accessible. Where this is not possible an explanation will be provided.

We visually inspect roofs, chimneys and other surfaces on the outside of the building from ground level and, if necessary, from neighbouring public property and with the help of binoculars. Flat roofs no more than 3m above ground level are inspected using a ladder where it is safe to do so.

We inspect the roof structure from inside the roof space if there is safe access. We examine floor surfaces and under-floor spaces so far as there is safe access and permission from the owner. We are not able to assess the condition of the inside of any chimney, boiler or other flues. We do not lift fitted carpets or coverings without the owner's consent. Intermittent faults of services may not be apparent on the day of inspection.

If we are concerned about parts of the property that the inspection cannot cover, the report will tell you about any further investigations that are needed.

Where practicable and agreed we report on the cost of any work for identified repairs and make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out. Some maintenance and repairs that we suggest may be expensive. Purely cosmetic and minor maintenance defects that have no effect on performance might not be reported. The report that we provide is not a warranty.



Please read the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' (at the end of this report) for details of what is, and is not, inspected.

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**

## C

# Overall assessment and summary of condition ratings

This section provides our overall opinion of the property, highlighting areas of concern, and summarises the condition ratings of different elements of the property (with only the worst rating per element being inputted in the tables). It also provides a summary of repairs (and cost guidance where agreed) and recommendations for further investigations.

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, and discuss in detail with us.

## Overall opinion

3

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property		
F: Inside the property		
G: Services		
H: Grounds (part)		

2

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property		
F: Inside the property		
G: Services		
H: Grounds (part)		

1

Section of the report	Element number	Element name
E: Outside the property		
F: Inside the property		
G: Services		
H: Grounds (part)		

Property address

## C

## Overall assessment and summary of condition ratings (continued)

---

### Summary of repairs (and cost guidance)

Formal quotations should be obtained prior to legal commitment to purchase the property

Repairs	Cost guidance (where agreed)

### Further investigations

Further investigations should be obtained prior to legal commitment to purchase the property (see 'What to do now')

SAMPLE

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## D

## About the property

---

Type of property

Approximate year  
the property  
was built

Approximate year  
the property  
was extended

Approximate year  
the property  
was converted

Information  
relevant to flats  
and maisonettes

### Accommodation

### Construction

### Means of escape

### Security

### Energy

We have not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). If we have seen the EPC, then we will report the 'Current' rating here. We have not checked this rating and so cannot comment on its accuracy. We are advised that the property's current energy performance, as recorded in the EPC, is:

### Energy Efficiency Rating

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...



## About the property (continued)

### Services

#### Gas

Mains ☐

Other

#### Electricity

Mains ☐

Other

#### Water

Mains ☐

Other

#### Drainage

Mains ☐

Other

*Please see section K for more information about the energy efficiency of the property.*

### Central heating

Gas ☐Electric ☐Solid fuel ☐Oil ☐None ☐

### Other services or energy sources (including feed-in tariffs)

### Grounds

### Location

### Facilities

### Local environment

### Other local factors

Property address

**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## E

# Outside the property

## Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

E1 Chimney stacks	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E2 Roof coverings	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E3 Rainwater pipes and gutters	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E4 Main walls	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E5 Windows	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E6 Outside doors (including patio doors)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E7 Conservatory and porches	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E8 Other joinery and finishes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E9 Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Inside the property

### Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

F1

Roof structure

F2

Ceilings

F3

Walls and partitions

F4

Floors

F5

Fireplaces, chimney  
breasts and flues

F6

Built-in fittings  
(e.g. wardrobes)

F7

Woodwork  
(e.g. staircase and joinery)

F8

Bathroom and  
kitchen fittings

F9

Other

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

# Services

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. This means that we can only inspect the visible parts of the available services, and we do not carry out specialist tests. The visual inspection cannot assess the services to make sure they work efficiently and safely, or meet modern standards.

## Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

G1

Electricity

*Safety warning: The Electrical Safety Council recommends that you should get a registered electrician to check the property and its electrical fittings at least every ten years, or on change of occupancy. All electrical installation work undertaken after 1 January 2005 should have appropriate certification. For more advice contact the Electrical Safety Council.*

G2

Gas/oil

*Safety warning: All gas and oil appliances and equipment should regularly be inspected, tested, maintained and serviced by a registered 'competent person' and in line with the manufacturer's instructions. This is important to make sure that the equipment is working correctly, to limit the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning and to prevent carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from leaking into the air. For more advice contact the Gas Safe Register for gas installations, and OFTEC for oil installations.*

G3

Water

G4

Heating

G5

Water heating

G6

Drainage

G7

Common services

G8

Other services/features

Property address

# Grounds (including shared areas for flats)

Limitations to inspection

1 2 3 NI

H1  
Garage(s)

☐

H2  
Permanent outbuildings  
and other structures

☐

H3  
Other

Property address



# I

## Issues for your legal advisers

---

We do not act as the legal adviser and will not comment on any legal documents. However, if during the inspection we identify issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, these will be listed and explained in this section (for example, check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows). You should show your legal advisers this section of the report.

I1 Regulations	
I2 Guarantees	
I3 Other matters	

SAMPLE

Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

## Risks

---

This section summarises defects and issues that present a risk to the building or grounds, or a safety risk to people. These may have been reported and condition rated against more than one part of the property or may be of a more general nature, having existed for some time and which cannot be reasonably changed.

J1

Risks to the building

J2

Risks to the grounds

J3

Risks to people

J4

Other risks or hazards

SAMPLE

Property address

**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**...

# K

## Energy efficiency

This section describes energy related matters for the property as a whole. It takes account of a broad range of energy related features and issues already identified in the previous sections of this report, and discusses how they may be affected by the condition of the property.

This is not a formal energy assessment of the building but part of the report that will help you get a broader view of this topic. Although this may use information obtained from an available EPC, it does not check the certificate’s validity or accuracy.

K1  
Insulation

K2  
Heating

K3  
Lighting

K4  
Ventilation

K5  
General

Property address





# Surveyor's declaration

"I confirm that I have inspected the property and prepared this report."

Signature

Surveyor's RICS number

Qualifications

For and on behalf of

Company

Address

Town

County

Postcode

Phone number

Website

Fax number

Email

Property address

Client's name

Date this report  
was produced

## RICS Disclaimers

1. This report has been prepared by a surveyor ('the Employee') on behalf of a firm or company of surveyors ('the Employer'). The statements and opinions expressed in this report are expressed on behalf of the Employer, who accepts full responsibility for these.

Without prejudice and separately to the above, the Employee will have no personal liability in respect of any statements and opinions contained in this report, which shall at all times remain the sole responsibility of the Employer to the exclusion of the Employee.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may produce the report in his or her own name unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader limited liability company.

To the extent that any part of this notification is a restriction of liability within the meaning of the *Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977* it does not apply to death or personal injury resulting from negligence.

2. This document is issued in blank form by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and is available only to parties who have signed a licence agreement with RICS.

RICS gives no representations or warranties, express or implied, and no responsibility or liability is accepted for the accuracy or completeness of the information inserted in the document or any other written or oral information given to any interested party or its advisers. Any such liability is expressly disclaimed.



Please read the 'Description of the RICS Building Survey Service' (at the end of this report) for details of what is, and is not, inspected.

Property address

# What to do now

---

If you are a prospective or current home owner who has chosen an RICS Home Survey you should carefully consider the findings, condition ratings and risks stated in the report.

## Getting quotations

You should obtain reports and at least two quotations for all the repairs and further investigations that the surveyor has identified. These should come from experienced contractors who are properly insured. You should also:

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

Some repairs will need contractors with specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers or plumbers). Some work may also need you to get Building Regulations permission or planning permission from your local authority. Your surveyor may be able to help.

## Further investigations

If the surveyor is concerned about the condition of a hidden part of the building, could only see part of a defect or does not have the specialist knowledge to assess part of the property fully, the surveyor may have recommended that further investigations should be carried out (for example, by structural engineers or arboriculturists) to discover the true extent of the problem.

## Who you should use for these further investigations

Specialists belonging to different types of organisation will be able to do this. For example, qualified electricians can belong to five different government-approved schemes. If you want further advice, please contact your surveyor.

## What the further investigations will involve

This will depend on the type of problem, but to do this properly, parts of the home may have to be disturbed. If you are a prospective purchaser, you should discuss this matter with the current owner. In some cases, the cost of investigation may be high.

This guidance does not claim to provide legal advice. You should consult your legal advisers before entering into any binding contract or purchase.



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Home**  
Surveys

# Description of the RICS Building Survey Service

## The service

The RICS Building Survey Service includes:

- a thorough inspection of the property (see 'The inspection'); and
- a detailed report based on the inspection (see 'The report').

The surveyor who provides the RICS Building Survey Service aims to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision when purchasing the property, or when planning for repairs, maintenance or upgrading the property;
- provide detailed advice on condition;
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects;
- where practicable and agreed, provide an estimate of costs for identified repairs; and
- make recommendations as to any further actions or advice which need to be obtained before committing to purchase.

Any extra services provided that are not covered by the terms and conditions of this report must be covered by a separate contract.

## The inspection

The surveyor carefully and thoroughly inspects the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction and defects (both major and minor) that are evident. This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as physically accessible. Where this is not possible an explanation is provided in the 'Limitations to inspection' box in the relevant sections of the report.

The surveyor does not force or open up the fabric without owner consent, or if there is a risk of causing personal injury or damage. This includes taking up fitted carpets, fitted floor coverings or floorboards, moving heavy furniture, removing the contents of cupboards, roof spaces, etc., removing secured panels and/or hatches or undoing electrical fittings. The under-floor areas are inspected where there is safe access.

If necessary, the surveyor carries out parts of the inspection when standing at ground level from adjoining public property where accessible. This means the extent of the inspection will depend on a range of individual circumstances at the time of inspection, and the surveyor judges each case on an individual basis.

The surveyor uses equipment such as a damp-meter, binoculars and a torch, and uses a ladder for flat roofs and for hatches no more than 3m above level ground (outside) or floor surfaces (inside) if it is safe to do so.

The surveyor also carries out a desk-top study and makes oral enquiries for information about matters affecting the property.

## Services to the property

Services are generally hidden within the construction of the property. This means that only the visible parts of the available services can be inspected, and the surveyor does not carry out specialist tests other than through their normal operation in everyday use. The visual inspection cannot assess the efficiency or safety of electrical, gas or other energy sources; the plumbing, heating or drainage installations (or whether they meet current regulations); or the internal condition of any chimney, boiler or other flue. Intermittent faults of services may not be apparent on the day of inspection.

## Outside the property

The surveyor inspects the condition of boundary walls, fences, permanent outbuildings and areas in common (shared) use. To inspect these areas, the surveyor walks around the grounds and any neighbouring public property where access can be obtained. Where there are restrictions to access, these are reported and advice is given on any potential underlying risks that may require further investigation.

Buildings with swimming pools and sports facilities are treated as permanent outbuildings and therefore are inspected, but the surveyor does not report on the leisure facilities, such as the pool itself and its equipment internally and externally, landscaping and other facilities (for example, tennis courts and temporary outbuildings).

## Flats

When inspecting flats, the surveyor assesses the general condition of outside surfaces of the building, as well as its access and communal areas (for example, shared hallways and staircases) and roof spaces, but only if they are accessible from within the property or communal areas. The surveyor also inspects (within the identifiable boundary of the flat) drains, lifts, fire alarms and security systems, although the surveyor does not carry out any specialist tests other than through their normal operation in everyday use.

## Dangerous materials, contamination and environmental issues

The surveyor makes enquiries about contamination or other environmental dangers. If the surveyor suspects a problem, he or she recommends further investigation.

The surveyor may assume that no harmful or dangerous materials have been used in the construction, and does not have a duty to justify making this assumption. However, if the inspection shows that these materials have been used, the surveyor must report this and ask for further instructions.

The surveyor does not carry out an asbestos inspection and does not act as an asbestos inspector when inspecting properties that may fall within the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. With flats, the surveyor assumes that there is a 'dutyholder' (as defined in the regulations), and that in place are an asbestos register and an effective management plan which does not present a significant risk to health or need any immediate payment. The surveyor does not consult the dutyholder.

## The report

The surveyor produces a report of the results of inspection for you to use, but cannot accept any liability if it is used by anyone else. If you decide not to act on the advice in the report, you do this at your own risk. The report is aimed at providing you with a detailed understanding of the condition of the property to allow you to make an informed decision on serious or urgent repairs, and on maintenance of a wide range of issues reported. Purely cosmetic and minor maintenance defects that have no effect on performance might not be reported. The report is not a warranty.

The report is in a standard format and includes the following sections.

- A Introduction to the report
- B About the inspection
- C Overall assessment and summary of the condition ratings
- D About the property
- E Outside the property
- F Inside the property
- G Services
- H Grounds (including shared areas for flats)
- I Issues for your legal advisers
- J Risks
- K Energy efficiency
- L Surveyor's declaration
  - What to do now
  - Description of the RICS Building Survey Service
  - Typical house diagram

## Condition ratings

The surveyor gives condition ratings to the main parts (the 'elements') of the main building, garage and some outside elements. The condition ratings are described as follows:

**Condition rating 3** – defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

**Condition rating 2** – defects that need repairing or replacing but are not considered to be either serious or urgent. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

**Condition rating 1** – no repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

**NI** – not inspected.

Continued...

# Description (continued)

The surveyor notes in the report if it was not possible to check any parts of the property that the inspection would normally cover. If the surveyor is concerned about these parts, the report tells you about any further investigations that are needed.

The surveyor may report on the cost of any work to put right defects (where agreed), but does not make recommendations on how these repairs should be carried out. However, there is general advice in the 'What to do now' section at the end of the report.

## Energy

The surveyor has not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as part of the RICS Building Survey Service for the property. If the surveyor has seen the current EPC, he or she will provide the Energy Efficiency Rating in this report, but will not check the rating and so cannot comment on its accuracy. Where possible and appropriate, the surveyor will include additional commentary on energy related matters for the property as a whole in the K Energy efficiency section of the report, but this is not a formal energy assessment of the building.

## Issues for legal advisers

The surveyor does not act as 'the legal adviser' and does not comment on any legal documents. If, during the inspection, the surveyor identifies issues that your legal advisers may need to investigate further, the surveyor may refer to these in the report (for example, check whether there is a warranty covering replacement windows).

The report has been prepared by a surveyor ('the Employee') on behalf of a firm or company of surveyors ('the Employer'). The statements and opinions expressed in the report are expressed on behalf of the Employer, who accepts full responsibility for these.

Without prejudice and separately to the above, the Employee will have no personal liability in respect of any statements and opinions contained in this report, which shall at all times remain the sole responsibility of the Employer to the exclusion of the Employee.

In the case of sole practitioners, the surveyor may produce the report in his or her own name unless the surveyor operates as a sole trader/limited liability company.

To the extent that any part of this notification is a restriction of liability within the meaning of the Unfair Contract Terms Act 1977 it does not apply to death or personal injury resulting from negligence.

If the property is leasehold, the surveyor gives you general advice and details of questions you should ask your legal advisers. This general advice is given in the 'Leasehold properties advice' document.

## Risks

This section summarises defects and issues that present a risk to the building or grounds, or a safety risk to people. These may have been reported and condition rated against more than one part of the property or may be of a more general nature, having existed for some time and which cannot reasonably be changed.

## Standard terms of engagement

- 1 **The service** – the surveyor provides only the standard RICS Building Survey Service ('the service') described here, unless you and the surveyor agree in writing before the inspection that the surveyor will provide extra services. Any extra service will require separate terms of engagement to be entered into with the surveyor. Examples of extra services include:
  - plan drawing;
  - schedules of works;
  - re-inspection;
  - detailed specific issue reports;
  - market valuation and re-instatement cost; and
  - negotiation.
- 2 **The surveyor** – the service is to be provided by an AssocRICS, MRICS or FRICS member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, who has the skills, knowledge and experience to survey and report on the property.
- 3 **Before the inspection** – this period forms an important part of the relationship between you and the surveyor. The surveyor will use reasonable endeavours to contact you regarding your particular concerns about the property and explain (where necessary) the extent and/or limitations of the inspection and report. The surveyor also carries out a desk-top study to understand the property better.
- 4 **Terms of payment** – you agree to pay the surveyor's fee and any other charges agreed in writing.
- 5 **Cancelling this contract** – you are entitled to cancel this contract by giving notice to the surveyor's office at any time before the day of the inspection. The surveyor does not provide the service (and reports this to you as soon as possible) if, after arriving at the property, the surveyor decides that:
  - (a) he or she lacks enough specialist knowledge of the method of construction used to build the property; or
  - (b) it would be in your best interests to have an RICS HomeBuyer Report or an RICS Condition Report, rather than the RICS Building Survey.

If you cancel this contract, the surveyor will refund any money you have paid for the service, except for any reasonable expenses. If the surveyor cancels this contract, he or she will explain the reason to you.
- 6 **Liability** – the report is provided for your use, and the surveyor cannot accept responsibility if it is used, or relied upon, by anyone else.

## Complaints handling procedure

The surveyor will have an RICS-compliant complaints handling procedure and will give you a copy if you ask.

**Note: These terms form part of the contract between you and the surveyor.**



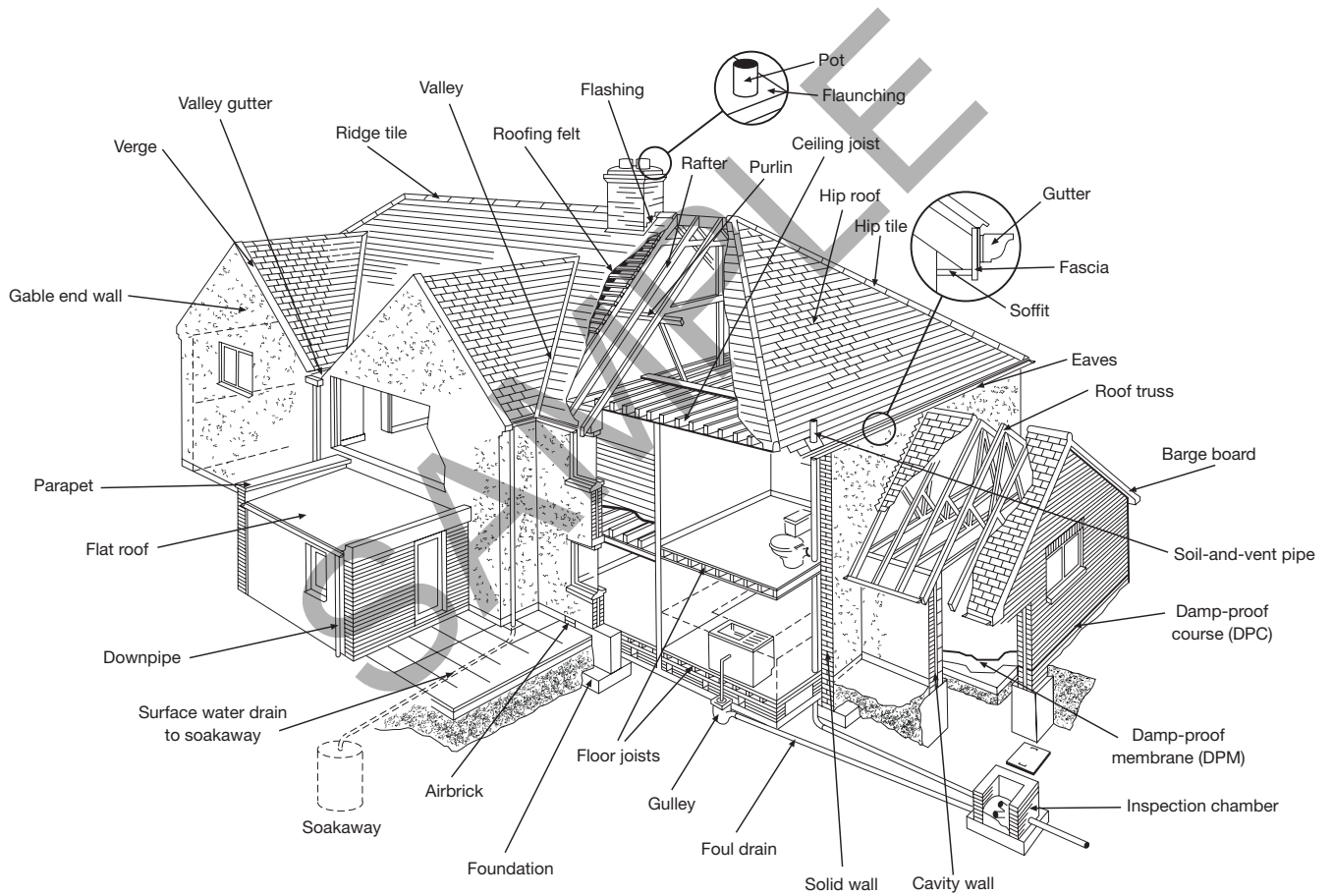
**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

**RICS**  
**Building Survey**

# Typical house diagram

This diagram illustrates where you may find some of the building elements referred to in the report.



Property address



**RICS**

the mark of  
property  
professionalism  
worldwide

RICS  
**Building Survey**