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DAMP SURVEY REPORT

PCA Property Care ASSOCIATION

MEMBER

The Damp Specialist Company Ltd
Jury Farm Ripley Lane, West Horsley, Leatherhead,
England, KT24 6JT
01483 000000 info@thedampspecialistcompany.co.uk
www.thedampspecialistcompany.co.uk

Damp Survey Report

Report Information

Report Reference number	
Client Name	
Report Date	
Property Address	
Property Image	
Survey Date and Time	03/09/2025
Occupied/ Unoccupied	Unoccupied
Surveyor Name	Bianca Hedesiu BSc(Hons) CSTDB WRT ASD

Introduction

Scope of Survey	Full Property
Instructions Received Full Property	We have received instructions from the client to complete a Damp Survey aimed at documenting the presence of damp within the property.
How?	In Written Form

Property Description

The property survey is a	Semi-detached
Assumed to have been constructed in the	Victorian Period (1837–1901)
Assumed floor construction comprising of	A combination of original timber suspended floors and solid concrete floors
Assumed wall construction comprising of	9-inch solid walls

Background Information

Weather during the survey	cloudy

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Point of reference	All left, right, front and rear references are taken from standing outside the property facing the main front elevation. Walls are classified as 'outside of external walls', 'inside of external walls', or 'interior walls.
Non-Invasive Survey Note	The survey is non-invasive observational one, and we will not inspect roof voids of sub-floor voids which are not readily accessible to us without invasive action.

Limitations and Restrictions

Survey Limitations and Restrictions	Our inspection excludes outbuildings such as sheds, garages, stores and conservatories unless specifically requested for inclusion under your instructions. We may comment on other aspects of the building which may have a direct influence on damp and/or decay, and are within the capabilities of our surveyor. These will only be mentioned in brief without disruptive investigation. Unless specifically agreed, no invasive action will the taken during the survey i.e., lifting of floor coverings, removal of plaster, render, or joinery etc. Loft Timbers & Subfloor Timbers will only be checked where safely and readily accessible, and only in a Full Property Survey. During the course of our surveys, even when previously agreed, roofing timbers in the loft areas may not be inspected where access is restricted due to the absence of suitable boarding. Accessing unboarded loft spaces poses safety risks and limits the ability to thoroughly examine structural timbers for issues such as dampness, fungal decay, or wood-boring infestation.
Further Useful Mentions	•Recommendations for further investigation should be followed where specified. •Further specialist surveys may be recommended (e.g., CCTV drainage surveys, leak detection surveys, further invasive checks). •It is the client's responsibility to instruct repairs in accordance with recommendations.

External Examination Notes

External Observations	The External Observations section of a damp report provides an overview of the property's external elements, identifying defects or conditions that could contribute to damp issues. This section focuses on the property's external envelope and adjacent features that may influence moisture ingress or water retention, as observed during the time and conditions present during our survey.
External Defects Identified:	Rising Damp, Penetrating Damp, Other

External Examination- DPC & Air Bricks

Damp-Proof Course visible and compliant with BS8215	DPC Not Compliant with BS8215
Timber Suspended Floor present	
Air Bricks compliant with BS8215	No
Capillary Action	Capillary action refers to the movement of moisture through small pores in the masonry. As moisture is absorbed by the lower part of the walls, it moves upwards through the brickwork and mortar, leading to dampness on the internal surfaces. This is a common issue in older properties that lack an effective or physical DPC.
Rising Damp	Rising damp is a type of moisture issue that occurs when groundwater rises up through porous building materials such as brick, stone, or mortar. This phenomenon happens because of capillary action, where water is drawn upward through tiny pores in the material, much like water traveling up a sponge.

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BS8215:2019 DPC & Air Bricks	This British Standard provides standards and guidance for the design and installation of damp-proof courses (DPC) and ventilation provisions like air bricks in buildings. Below are the key points: Damp-Proof Course (DPC) Placement: -The DPC must be installed at least 150 mm above the finished ground level to prevent water ingress from rain splash and rising damp. This is a critical height to prevent bridging from soil, pathways, or landscaping. -The DPC should be installed below the lowest timber member in a wall (e.g., wall plates or floor joists) to protect them from dampness. In cavity walls, the DPC should be positioned at least 150 mm above external ground level and ensure the cavity is clear of obstructions that could allow damp to bypass it. Air Brick Placement: -Air bricks must be positioned with their bottom edge at least 75 mm above the finished ground level. This height ensures they are not blocked by soil or paving and minimises the risk of water ingress. -Air bricks must be installed to provide effective cross-ventilation in suspended ground floor voids. This reduces the risk of condensation and prevents damp and timber decay. -Air bricks should be spaced evenly along the wall. The minimum ventilation area should be 1,500 mm² per metre run of wall to comply with ventilation requirements for voids.
Defects Identified Relating To Rising Damp/ Issues with DPC	Bridged DPC by High External Ground Levels, Bridged DPC by Rendered Plinth, Bridged DPC by Raised Adjoining Structure
Bridged DPC:	A bridged DPC occurs when high external ground levels, rendered plinths, debris within cavities, or internal solid plastering connects allows moisture to moisture bypass the intended protective layer, bypassing its function.
Bridged DPC by High External Ground Levels:	The external ground levels adjacent to the front wall and front step are raised, almost certainly bridging the original DPC and possibly obstructing a front air brick by the front step. This is likely allowing moisture to wick up into the base of the walls through capillary action causing low-level dampness internally and restricting underfloor ventilation. Some of the air bricks on the left-hand side flank wall are also too close to the ground, not allowing for the recommended separation from the ground level.

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Bridged DPC by Rendered Plinth:	The external renders and rendered plinth present at the base of the external walls are likely cement based and in the case of the renders, paint over using a non-breathable masonry paint, both conducive to trapping moisture in the wall due to their non-breathable nature. Given the render / rendered plinth extend down to ground level, it spans the wall below DPC and above, which can allow for the moisture to bypass the DPC via the plinth and cause internal damp at low levels of the walls.	

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Annotated Pictures		
		
Bridged DPC by Raised Adjoining Structure:	The poorly detailed front step being higher than the internal ground levels and DPC and is adjoining the external elevations directly. This is therefore allowing for lateral damp and restricting the subfloor ventilation in the area.	

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Contributory Issues	Hygroscopic Salt Contamination Due to Rising Damp
Contributory Issue: Hygroscopic Salt Contamination Due to Rising Damp	Rising damp often carries salts from the ground into the masonry and plaster. These salts, once embedded, attract moisture from the air, creating ongoing damp issues even when the original source of moisture is no longer present.
Defects Identified Relating To Inadequate Subfloor Ventilation	Cross Ventilation Not Achieved, Air Bricks Positioned Too Low
'Cross flow' Ventilation Deficiencies	One functioning air brick was noted at the front, several on the side elevation (side path) and one on the rear side bay. Despite this , crossflow ventilation is not achieved as there is no equivalent provision for ventilation to the suspended floor to the rear. Ventilation is therefore suboptimal to the suspended timber floors. The most effective type of ventilation type of ventilation to a timber suspended floor is the crossflow type, meaning from side to side or front to back. Poor ventilation within subfloor voids increases humidity levels, encouraging fungal decay (wet rot, dry rot) and timber infestation by wood-boring insects.
Annotated Pictures	
High External Ground Levels Near Suspended Floors	Raised ground levels at the front can obscure or block underfloor air bricks, significantly impairing cross-ventilation. Where air bricks are not positioned at the recommended minimum separation from the ground levels, and are either in line or obstructed by the high external ground levels, risk of decay or infestation is increased due to the blockages to the ventilation but also due to the possibility of moisture entering the subfloor void from water splashing from the nearby surfaces.

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Annotated Pictures	 
Risk of Decay/ Infestation to the Subfloor Timber	
Risk of Decay/ Infestation to the Subfloor Timber	Rising Damp Moisture from rising damp can penetrate through walls into the ends of floor joists embedded directly into brickwork, causing timber decay, rot, and a weakened floor structure over time. Due to the non-invasive of nature of our surveys and fixed floor coverings we were unable to inspect the subfloor timbers in the area. Air Bricks Positioned Too Low Where air bricks are not positioned at the recommended minimum separation from the ground levels, and are either in line or obstructed by the high external ground levels, risk of decay or infestation is increased due to the blockages to the ventilation but also due to the possibility of moisture entering the subfloor void from water splashing from the nearby surfaces. Lack of Cross Ventilation Poor 'cross flow' ventilation (front to back or side to side) within subfloor voids is conducive to humidity building up inside the void, encouraging fungal decay (wet rot, dry rot) and timber infestation by wood-boring insects.

External Examination- Penetrating Damp

Penetrating Damp	Penetrating damp is a type of damp that occurs when water infiltrates a building horizontally from the outside, typically through walls, roofs, or windows. Unlike rising damp, which comes from the ground, penetrating damp is caused by external water sources, such as rain entering the structure through defects or porous materials.
Defects Identified Relating To Penetrating Damp	Render/ Coverings, Rainwater Goods, Roof, Window/ Doors, Chimney Stacks

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Rainwater Goods Defects Noted	-A front downpipe discharges at the base of the front wall, between the front door and front bay with no visible connection to the drainage system. This is thought to be allowing for saturation at low levels. Internally, dampness was recorded in corresponding areas of the reception room. -The rear gully, located adjacent to the rear left-hand side bay, was found to be blocked and filling up quickly during testing indicating overflow issues are very likely to affected the surrounding wall area. This is therefore thought to be directing water against the wall and likely contributing to internal dampness in the dining room and adjoining hallway.	
Annotated Pictures		
		

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Render/ Coverings Defects Noted	Localised deterioration external render and external paint was noted, potentially contributing to moisture penetration.
Annotated Pictures	
Chimney Stacks/ Flashings Defects Noted	Old Chimney Breast & Hygroscopic Salt Contamination, Pointing
Pointing	Rear Shared Chimney: The side chimney stack appears to have been removed above the roof line. The remaining chimney to the rear (shared with neighbour) could only be observed from ground level and our view of it was limited. Despite this, we were able to observed weathered pointing which makes the chimney stack vulnerable to water ingress.

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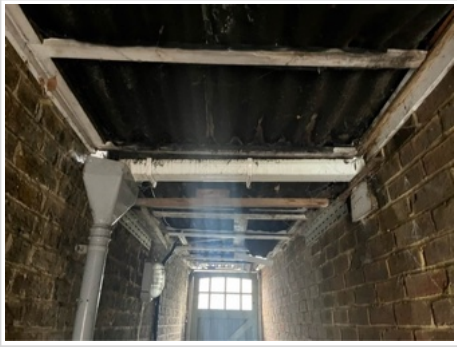
Annotated Pictures	
Old Chimney Breast & Hygroscopic Salt Contamination	Note: Hygroscopic Salt Contamination to Chimney Breasts Chimney breasts and flues can absorb moisture from years of burning fossil fuels, which release hygroscopic salts. These salts remain in the masonry and plaster and absorb moisture from the air, leading to damp patches and staining around the chimney breast even when there is no active water penetration. Moisture can linger in the chimney structure due to the presence of these salts, leading to persistent damp issues.
Roof Defects Noted	Side Lean-to Roof: The corrugated plastic covering is poorly flashed against the wall and has no guttering provisions, therefore substandard in its design. Portico Roof: Deteriorated mortar flashing was noted to the portico roof. Covered Path Roof: The side path roof is also thought to be suboptimal and the covering is leaking, contributing to internal damp risk.
Roofer Inspection Recommended	Yes
Further Roofer Inspection	A further roofer drone inspection is recommended to observe any further defects to the chimney stack, as this could be contributing to moisture ingress in the chimney breasts below. In addition, the roofer should advise on new roof coverings for the lean to extension and side path, incorporating compatible membranes and rainwater goods disposal systems.
Annotated Pictures	 

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Windows & Doors	Defective Timber Framed Windows/Doors The side lean to extension roof without any guttering has allowed the window sills and door frame to decay in the areas below.
Annotated Pictures	   

External Examination- Other

Defects Identified Relating To Other Types of Damp	Suspected Plumbing or Drains Leak, Other
Further CCTV Survey Recommended	Evidence of leakage from joints, with moss growth noted on the soil stack on the left-hand side elevation. This may be allowing water ingress adjacent to the dining room wall and will need to be tested and checked in the areas below ground to confirm any issues/ leaks. Defective internal drainage pipes, such as waste pipes or soil stacks, leaking under floors or within walls, can create localised damp issues and foul odours.

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Annotated Pictured		
		
Other Defects	A leaking tap was noted by the rear elevation corresponding to the kitchen.	

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Annotated Pictured	

Damp Related Observations

Internal Observations	The Internal Observations section of a report provides a detailed description of the internal condition of the property, focusing on evidence of moisture-related issues within the building's interior. This section documents visible signs of dampness, their severity, and potential causes. This is essential to diagnosing damp problems and recommending appropriate remedial measures.
1.Moisture Meter Readings Note:	Protimeter moisture meter readings were taken using an MMS machine reading with records moisture using 2 settings: (a) Relative Scale (RS) of 60-999 RS where any reading over 200 RS is considered damp. Readings were taken via radio frequency at a nominal depth of 19 mm. (b)Wood Moisture Content (%WMC) represents a qualitative wood moisture equivalent measurement scale for affected building materials using penetrating moisture meters which u se electrical conductivity. Dry readings are normally classified as <=20% WMC, and damp readings 21-99 %WMC.
2.Wood Rot Conditions Note:	Microbial growth multiplies rapidly in conditions above 60% RH at ambient temperature 21 degrees C. Timber with moisture content above 16% WMC is at risk of surface microbial growth and will decay above 20%WMC.
3. Timber in Contact With Wet Masonry Note:	Any timbers in direct contact with damp masonry are at risk of fungal decay, especially dry rot. Fungal decay, including dry rot and wet rot, thrives in damp conditions, and timbers in contact with damp masonry provide the necessary moisture for fungal growth.

Affected Rooms:

Room Affected

Number	1
Room(s)/ Area Affected	Hallway
Signs Of Water Damage Observed	Blown Plaster, Water stains
Specifically:	On the wall either side of the front door, by the radiator at the bottom of the staircase and on the diving wall between hallway and dining room (at low levels of the walls)
Moisture Meter Readings	200RS-999RS

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	Dampness noted on both sides of the front door at low levels, corresponding with raised levels and step and bridged DPC. Elevated damp readings were also noted by the bottom of the staircase, adjacent to a radiator pipe running into the floor, and dampness was recorded with evidence of skirting and floorboard deterioration. We suspect a small hidden plumbing leak is likely responsible for this. We also cannot rule out any issues originating from the party wall neighbour as this affected wall is a party wall.
	Elevated damp readings and deterioration of the plaster were also noted on the dividing wall between the hallway and dining room. Defects to the overflowing gully and leaks on the chimney stack are thought to be contributory factors for the damp.
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	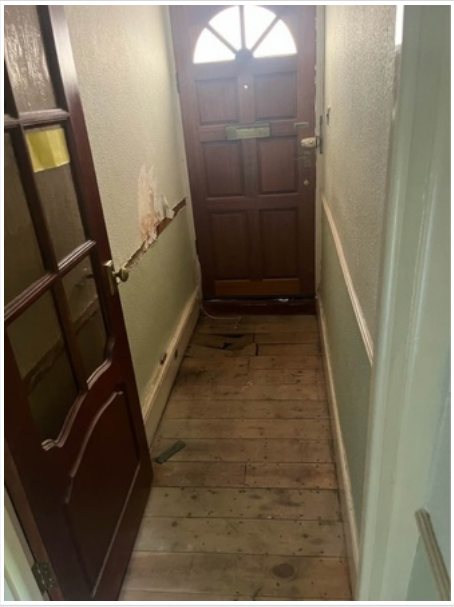 

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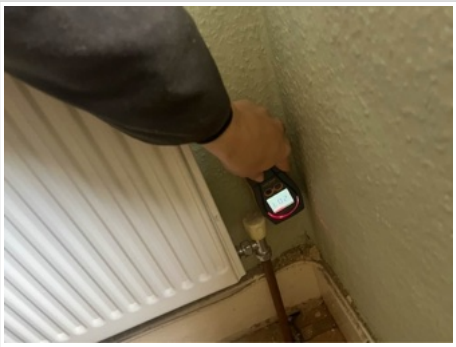

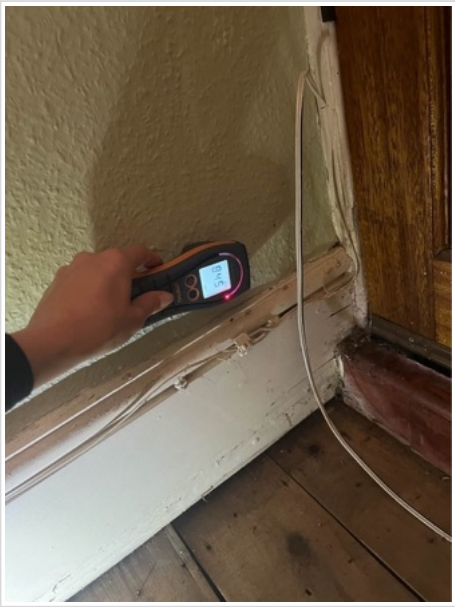

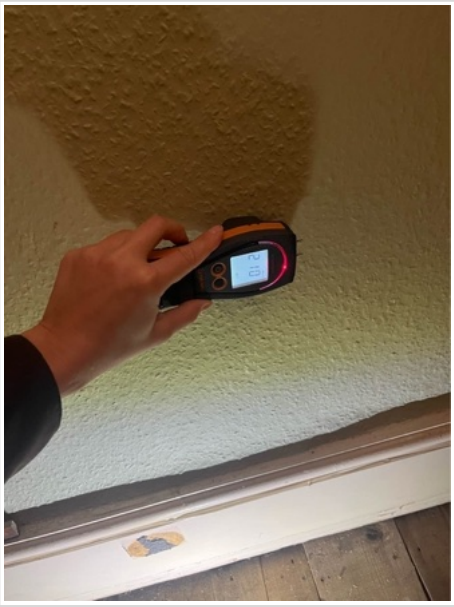

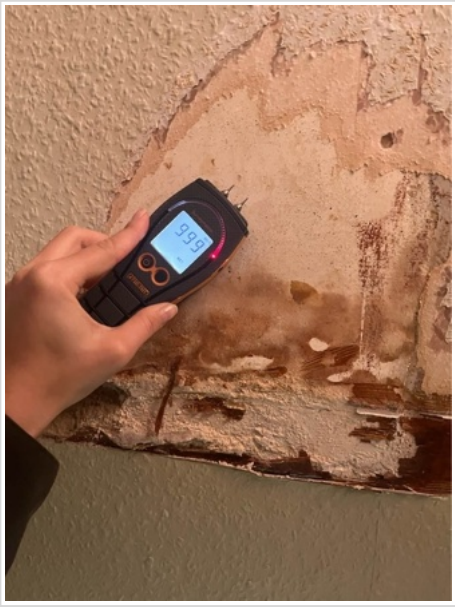

Room Affected (1)

Number	2
Room(s)/ Area Affected	Reception room

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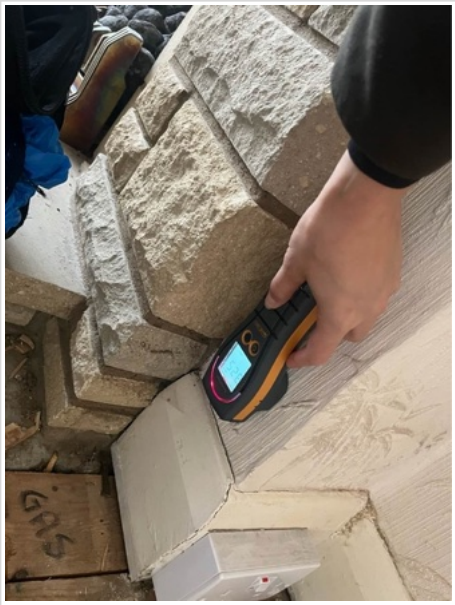
Signs Of Water Damage Observed	Wallpaper damage
Specifically:	On the inside of the front bay, on the inside of the left-hand side elevation including chimney breasts (at low levels)
Moisture Meter Readings	200RS-999RS
	Elevated damp readings were noted on the front elevation and bay, corresponding to the discharging downpipe and raised ground levels. The readings extend on the inside of the side flank wall, at low levels of the walls only and only sporadically. We believe the defects to the rendered plinth bridging the DPC and inadequate roof coverings over the side path are responsible for the those.
	Chimney breasts also showed high readings when tested. Given the stacks above have been removed we suspect the readings are a sign of salt contamination due to old soot contaminants in the plaster. Chimney stacks are believed to be scheduled for removal as part of refurbishment works.
Annotated Pictures	 
	 

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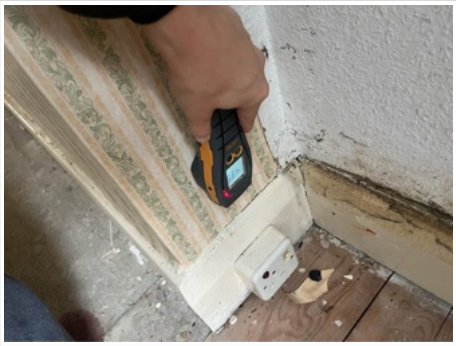


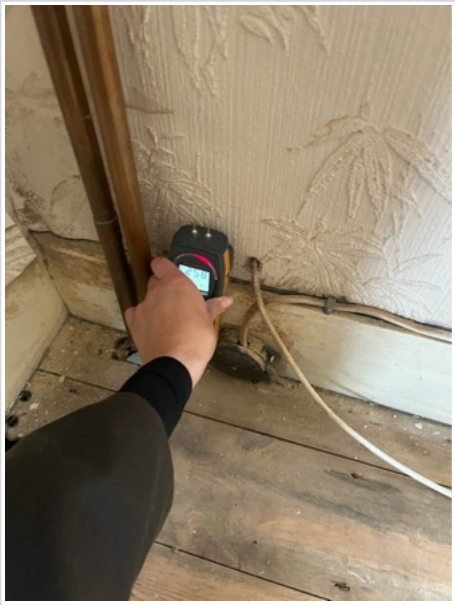

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Room Affected (2)

Number	3
Room(s)/ Area Affected	Dining Room & Kitchen
Signs Of Water Damage Observed	Blown Plaster, Water Stains
Specifically:	On the inside of the left-hand side flank elevation (at low levels of the walls), on the inside of the party wall including chimney breast (at low levels in the dining room)
Moisture Meter Readings	200RS-999RS
	Dining Room: Dampness at low levels was noted to rear bay walls and adjacent internal partition wall between the dining room and hallway. This is thought to be corresponding with overflowing gully and defects to soil stack. The party wall including the chimney breast also records elevated moisture levels at low levels which could be related to the chimney stack defects, hygroscopic salt contamination of the chimney breast due to the old soot in the plaster or hidden leaks. We also cannot rule out any issues originating from the neighbouring property. Accesibile floorboards and joists by the party wall were also found to show elevated damp readings higher than the 20% Wood Moisture Equivalent (WME%) threshold, after which timbers become at risks for decay or infestation by wood boring insects.
	Kitchen: Elevated damp readings were recorded on the left-hand side wall at low levels, likely associated with defective lean-to roof flashings and drainage.

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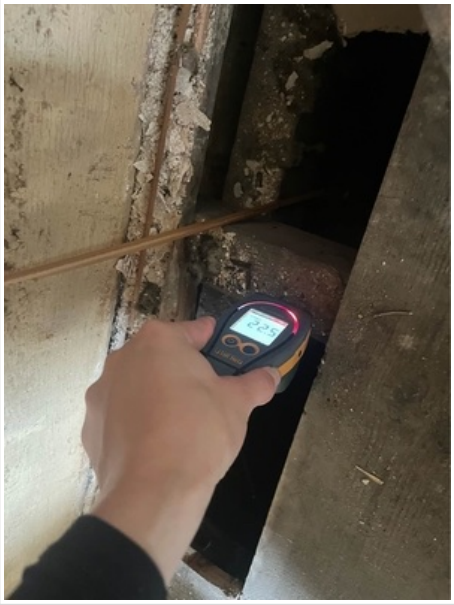
Annotated Pictures		
		

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	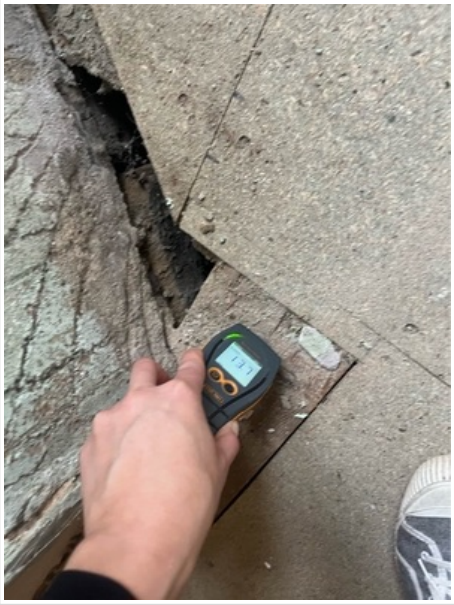	
		
		
		
Suspected Plumbing Leak		

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Further Leak Detection Recommended	Plumbing leaks beneath floors from heating systems, hot and cold-water services, or drainage runs can cause hidden underfloor dampness, timber decay, and contribute to elevated damp levels.

Conclusions

Conclusions	Based on the observations made at the property, it is highly likely the property suffers from the following issues which are causing the internal damp, namely:
Types of Damp Indentified	Rising Damp and Subfloor Ventilation, Penetrating Damp, Suspected Leaks, Other Types Of Damp

Recommendations (Penetrating Damp)

Penetrating Damp	Penetrating Damp was found to be present at the property due to the following external defects. In more detail:
Rainwater Goods:	Redirect downpipe at front elevation to a proper gully or connect to storm water drains. Clear and unblock gullies, particularly the overflowing rear left-hand side gully. Repair defective joints to soil stack to stop leaks. Conduct a water test during heavy rainfall or simulated with a hose. Identify and repair all leaking joints, ensuring brackets are sound and joints are watertight. Where gutters are distorted or split, replacement with matching materials is required.
Render Coverings:	In the short term, repairs to the render can be undertaken by opening cracks to a sound substrate and repaired with a weather-resistant filler or mastic. Another option is using cement or mortar. For a long-term solution, consider replacing the render with a more flexible and modern render type, such as: -Silicone-based render: Highly flexible, breathable, and water-resistant. -Monocouche render: A single-coat, breathable option with good flexibility. -Acrylic render: Durable, flexible, and resistant to cracking. These options will provide better protection against wind-driven rain and thermal movement.
Chimney & Flashings	Old Chimneys & Hygroscopic Salt Contamination, Open Pots, Brickwork
Chimney: Open Pots Flashings: Portico Roof	Roofer drone inspection is recommended to the chimney stack for further defects. New lead flashing to be added to the portico roof at the junction with the front elevation. Install galvanised chimney cowls to all open chimney pots to stop moisture ingress.
Chimney: Brickwork	Repoint brickwork of the stack with lime mortars. Apply a BBA-approved deep-penetrating water repellent such as Stormdry masonry cream to protect external masonry while allowing breathability.
Hygroscopic Salt Contamination of the Chimney Stack/ Breast	Plaster can be tested for the presence of those salts to confirm their presence. Where plaster/ decorations has deteriorated damp proofing specialist providing the necessary guarantees should be instructed to carry out the following works: -Hack off the plaster back to chimney stack brickwork on the affected chimney breasts walls corner to corner around the chimney breast (whole length and height) and take down ceiling plasterboard to allow membrane to be inserted all the way up the wall. -Apply a vertical damp proof membrane as per the manufacturer's guidelines (such as Newton 503) to the affected interior walls. -Fix back plasterboard to the walls with no screws into the new membrane on the wall.

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Roof:	Replace the corrugated plastic side lean-to roof with a properly flashed and guttered structure to prevent ongoing ingress. Relay or reconstruct covered side path roof, installing proper drainage.
Other	Replace affected timber elements on the lean to extension. Repair leaking tap.
Natural Drying Note	The affected walls are likely to dry out naturally, however this will take several months of Spring/Summer weather (Masonry drying time is usually 25mm/month). If any salts or other contaminants appear then these must be neutralised before re-decoration. Any damp stains should be neutralised with a stain block such as Zinsser before redecoration. You can consider speeding up the drying the process of natural drying by the installation of dehumidifiers and air movers.

Recommendations (Bridged DPC & Subfloor Ventilation)

Render/ Rendered Plinth Bridging the DPC	Cut back the render /rendered plinth and stop 5-10mm above the DPC.
French Drain necessary to lower the high external ground levels	Install a French drain or dry gravel channel along the front elevation of the property, directly adjacent to the raised patio and external wall; This would create a lowered channel along the rear elevation (150mm-200mm wide) to ensure a minimum 150mm clearance from DPC to ground level, and 75mm clearance from ground to air bricks; The channel may be backfilled with a thin gravel layer with levels still kept in the recommended place compared to the DPC and air bricks. Reposition front step if necessary to facilitate lowering.
DPC Treatment (only if plaster deteriorates)	If plaster starts to deteriorate or salts become visible to the surface of the wall, a DPC treatment might be necessary. A PCA contractor should be instructed to hack off affected internal finishes back to brickwork up to 1.2m high, treat exposed masonry with salt neutralisers, and re-plaster with appropriate 3:1 sand/cement render mix incorporating waterproofing and additives. This will prevent further damage or spoiling to the internal decoration. Those works are best completed by a waterproofing contractor offering the necessary guarantees for the treatment. BS 6576:2005 gives recommendations for the chemical treatment of rising damp in existing buildings with solid walls, cavity walls (unfilled or filled) and random rubble-filled walls.
Subfloor Ventilation Deficiencies	
Subfloor Ventilation Improvements:	-Install additional air bricks to both front and rear walls of the suspended timber floors (serving both reception rooms and dining/kitchen areas), ensuring proper cross ventilation. - Lower ground levels adjacent to air bricks to maintain at least 75mm of clear airspace below air brick openings. -Ensure that subfloor ventilation meets current standards, with airbricks installed at no more than 1.8m centres and cross-ventilation achieved.

Recommendations (Suspected Leaks)

CCTV Drainage Survey	Carry out CCTV drain survey to check condition of underground drainage and identify defects or leaks. Arrange CCTV drainage surveys to assess the condition of internal drainage runs. Repair or replace defective sections, ensuring all new drainage works comply with Building Regulations Part H.

The Damp Specialist Company Ltd
Jury Farm Ripley Lane, West Horsley, Leatherhead,
England, KT24 6JT
01483 000000 info@thedampspecialistcompany.co.uk
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Trace and Access/ Leak Detection	Engage a professional leak detection service to identify and rectify any present plumbing leaks. Initiate an insurance claim under “Trace & Access” and “Escape of Water” coverage on the Buildings Insurance.
Water damage drying and remediation	Once leak has been fixed, appoint a water damage specialist to carry out strip-out, professional drying and reinstatement works. You are advise to carry those tests in the neighbouring property to ensure no defects originate from beyond the party wall. Professional drying regime using industrial dehumidifiers following IICRC S500 guidelines. Damp timber elements to be treated with a fungicidal treatment. Drying duration estimated at 3-4 weeks, monitored by moisture mapping. Once the readings have reached equilibrium, the reinstalments can begin.

Surveyor Signature

Signed:	Bianca Hedesiu BSc (Hons) CSTDB WRT ASD
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