

## Home Condition Report - Terms of Engagement

### **1. Introduction**

A Home Condition Report (HCR) is a report on the condition of the property at the time of inspection. It is prepared by a Sussex Inspections Home Inspector who is registered with the SAVA Official Government Certification Scheme in accordance with the Terms of Engagement, published within the report. Sussex Inspections strongly advise you to read these terms of engagement so that you can understand exactly what the Home Inspector does during the inspection.

A Home Condition Report is an authorized document to be included in a Home Information Pack and is the only housing survey that can be included. No responsibilities can be accepted for the consequences should the readers fail to act upon specific reasonable advice contained within this document or a Home Condition Report.

### **2. What a Home Condition Report tells you**

A Home Condition Report tells you about the construction and condition of the property on the date it is inspected. It tells you about matters that are considered significant or in need of attention. It also tells you about matters which require further investigation to prevent damage to the fabric of the building or which are a threat to personal safety.

The property is broken down into separate elements, and each element is given a condition rating of 1, 2, and 3, or not inspected. The condition ratings are applied as follows:-

#### **CONDITION DEFINITION RATING**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | No repair is presently required. Normal maintenance must be undertaken.   |
| <b>2</b> | Repairs are required but these are not considered to be either serious or urgent.   |
| <b>3</b> | Defects of a serious nature or defects requiring urgent repair. Alternatively or additionally: Further investigation is required. |

### **3. What a Home Condition Report does not tell you**

The HCR does not include a valuation of the property. It does not tell you about any minor matters that would not ordinarily have any effect on a buyer's decision to purchase. It does not warn you about any Health and Safety Risks to occupiers or visitors to the property except where conditions affecting Health and Safety are such that repairs or building work are required.

### **4. What you should do in the event of a query or complaint**

Should you have any query or complaint about a Home Condition Report or the Home Inspector, please follow the published complaints procedure. This can be obtained on request from Sussex Inspections or the Home Inspector who undertook the inspection.

### **5. Terms of Engagement**

The Home Inspector has a duty to provide an impartial opinion that can be used and relied upon by a prospective buyer and the seller. The report may also be relied upon by a mortgage lender in so far as they wish to do so.

All Sussex Inspections Home Condition Reports are carried out in accordance with the Home Inspectors Inspection and Reporting Requirements. A copy is available upon request.

Any services agreed in addition to preparing a Home Condition Report, must be by another contract with Sussex Inspections. The terms of payment and fees payable for a Home Condition Report are as separately agreed between Sussex inspections and the Seller (or on the Seller's behalf). Those parts of the property that are inspected and those parts that are not inspected are set out below and form part of these terms.

## **6. What is inspected?**

**Externally:** All reasonably accessible parts of a property are inspected from within its grounds and adjoining public and communal areas; from ground level with the help of binoculars. To assist in inspecting any elements of the property such as roofs and chimneys, which cannot be accessed from ground level, the Home Inspector will use a ladder where the surface is no more than three metres from ground level and where it is safe and practical to do so.

**Internally:** The Home Inspector will access as many parts of a property as is safe and practical. Internal fixed floor coverings are not lifted and heavy items of furniture are not moved. Cupboards are not emptied where it would be unreasonable for the Home Inspector to do so. To assist an inspection, a moisture detecting meter is used in selected locations. In the event that some part of a property which would normally be inspected is inaccessible, this will be mentioned within the HCR.

**Services:** The Home Inspector will carry out a visual inspection of those parts of the services (electrics, gas, water, drainage), which can be generally seen on a day-to-day basis. Taps will be turned on, and drainage inspection chambers will be opened where they can be found and lifted safely by one person.

**Flats:** The interior of the flat is inspected as described above. The roof space is only inspected where it has direct access from within the flat. The common parts that lead to and from the flat, plus the exterior of that part of the building containing the flat is inspected to identify if there are any urgent or significant defects, for which the cost of repair is likely to be shared by the flat owner and others.

**Grounds:** The Home Inspector will walk round those parts of the grounds where it is safe to do so, but will only report on matters of an urgent or significant nature.

## **7. What is not inspected?**

The Home Inspector will not carry out tests of services or look at parts of the property that are covered, unexposed and inaccessible. In particular the following is not inspected:

**Exterior:** The parts of the property that can only be seen by entering somebody else's private grounds or property. Flat roofs that cannot be reached, other than from ground level with a three metre ladder. (The Home Inspector will not walk on flat roofs). Exposure

works is not carried out to the foundations and parts of the property covered by the ground.

**Interior:** Areas that are behind secured trap doors, behind furniture or filled cupboards. Floor surfaces and under floor areas that are beneath fitted carpets and other fixed floor coverings. Roof voids, where there is no access or where the access is above three metres from the immediate floor level below, or where it would be unsafe. Insulation and other material in the roof space is not lifted or moved. The inside of chimneys, boiler and other flues.

**Services:** Where services are turned off at the time of the inspection and so cannot be visually observed in operation by the Home Inspector. Although the Home Inspector might advance heating programmers where it is clear the heating boiler is switched on to the main services. No contractor tests on services are carried out and the Home Inspector does not report on compliance with Regulations relating to such services to the property. Drainage inspection covers are not lifted where they are screwed down, particularly heavy, or otherwise sealed in. Any services not listed in the Services Section F are not inspected at all.

**Flats:** Roof spaces which are not accessible from within the flat.

**Grounds:** Leisure facilities including swimming pools, tennis courts together with temporary outbuildings such as timber sheds, all of which are expressly excluded from the scope of an HCR.

**Contamination:** The Home Inspector will not test for the presence of harmful substances within the building or in the grounds. However, where in the course of inspection signs of contamination are seen that require testing or further investigation, then this is mentioned.

**Planning:** The Home Inspector will not carry out any search of registers about planning, building regulation approvals and other statutory information held by local and other public authorities about the property. Where it is evident during inspection that there have been alterations or additions to the property for which statutory permissions or consents might have been required this is noted in Section C1 of the report.

**Note** The Home Inspector may recommend further investigation where a suspicion about defects is raised within a part of the property that has not been inspected.

For any clarification please contact:

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