

# Clear Surveys

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## SURVEY & ESTIMATE

Property Address:  
An older house, Seaford

Prepared For:  
Anonymous

Survey Date:  
February 2023

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### **1. Purpose of this survey and estimate**

This report has been prepared for the purposes of assisting the prospective purchasers in assessing what defects may be apparent within the property and the estimated costs of fixing these defects.

It is expected that the purchaser, will use the report to;

- Plan and budget for repairs they will need to make to the property both immediately and in the coming years if relevant
- Negotiate any fair reduction in the asking price if relevant

The report aims to cover works that will be required to make the property safe and habitable. It does not usually cover refurbishment works to replace items that are dated but functional, so long as they are not defective. This means that an older property with dated fixtures and fittings, that may obviously require some refurbishment, won't necessarily be listed as defective, so long as the relevant parts of the property are functional and do not require immediate repair or pose any financial risk.

The surveyor will identify repairs they feel that affect the habitability of the property with 'Urgent Safety Issue' so you can assess these in relation to the asking price and budget for the repairs soon after purchasing the property. 'Repairs Required' identifies anything that has been deemed to be defective, but within this category there will be items that are more or less important, both in terms of timeframe or financial risks. 'Repairs Required in Coming years' helps you plan for items that are not currently defective, but that may need to be monitored after you purchase the property. 'Further Information Needed' and 'Unable to Inspect in Detail' categories are used to highlight any limitations in the survey and to quickly identify items that you may wish to follow up with your legal advisors.

There are no typical surveys as every property has it's own idiosyncrasies both from the point of original construction and by the alterations and repairs it may have been subjected to since it's original construction. However, it is incredibly rare for no defects to be located whatsoever, even on very modern housing. It is worth remembering, the

report is seeking to test the house against an ideal standard. The reality is that it is almost impossible for any house to reach this standard at the exact snapshot in time the survey provides. In summary, a survey identifying even a wide range of defects usually does not mean the property represents a poor purchase but a very small amount of noted defects, is usually a sign of a good purchase, subject to the seriousness of those defects.

## **2. Limitations**

The surveyor has assessed the internal external finishes of the property and where on site access is available, has looked into any void spaces such as lofts. The expert may not be able to see all of the property, for example they will not be able to cut back vegetation in the garden, lift fitted carpets or view any inaccessible voids like the areas under floorboards. The surveyor will try to identify areas that have not been inspected in the report but this list will not be exhaustive. The report may have omissions and if you believe there to be any, you have the right to ask for these items to added to the report. If you believe this to be the case please contact us.

We of course do not have x-ray vision and no survey can cover every single aspect of the property. It is not practical to move the vendor's furniture, vehicles or other belongings. The expert will use their years of experience in assessing defects to assess if these inaccessible areas may contain any hazards i.e. by looking for evidence of decay or faulty wiring. However, an item not receiving mention in the report does not mean this item has been approved as sound.

We occasionally recommend additional reports are completed and can make recommendations for local specialists should they be required. Examples of these could be experts to use CCTV to survey the drains that cannot be seen, or a Remedial Specialist to assess for any rot or beetle infestation in timber.

The report and estimate is not a quote. The costs provided are estimated broad costs based on our knowledge of similar works. The emphasis is on speed; detailed quotes will be more accurate but will take much longer to prepare and will involve many more specialists attending the property and preparing individual costs before these are drawn into a formal quote. This is not the purpose of the Survey & Estimate.

### 3. Your Surveyor

Ben Clear has been in the construction industry all his working life. He has worked on both sides of the building and surveying divide, having previously owned and operated his family construction business, CRB Contractors, which was founded by his father in 1979. Ben took over the running of the company in 2005 after achieving a first class honours degree punctuated by summers spent working 'on the tools'.

A recognised Master Builder, Ben sits on the National Standards Committee for the Federation of Master Builders, advising on disputes and technical issues. Ben has a high level of technical expertise but is also an experienced developer, having bought, improved and sold multiple properties over many years. Importantly he knows how to quickly and accurately provide costs and identify whether a property is worthy of your attention and your finances.

Via Clear Surveys Ben offers a range of additional Project Services that can help you get your project from an idea to reality. Clear Surveys offers free of charge introductions to competent, tested, local contractors plus design and planning permission services for extensions, conversions and alterations.

Ben lives in Seaford, East Sussex with his wife Aimee and daughters, Evie, Ruby and Rosa.

Ben adds "It's important to me to love what you do. I have a real passion for building works. I relish the problem solving and pragmatism that buildings demand but most of all I enjoy getting to know my clients so that I can understand their hopes and wishes for their project. Only then can I offer them a building that does exactly what they want it to do, at a price they are happy with."



## 4. Negotiating the asking price

If you are concerned about how the report may have affected the offer you have made for the property, please find some useful information below.

When approaching the estate agent or vendor with a revised offer we suggest you take the following factors into consideration;

### **The current asking price**

Discuss with the agent what they considered when pricing the property; were they aware of any of the defects and did they approximate the repair costs when setting the asking price? An example of this could be a house where the roof has many missing tiles and there are obvious leaks from the roof. The agent likely considered these obvious defects but you will need to check they adjusted the asking price sufficiently to cover this.

### **Your agreed price**

If you have already negotiated discounts off the asking price, you will need to consider how much more you can request to agree a fair revised sale price. Many vendors will understandably consider how much they have already discounted, especially if any significant or costly defects have been identified and form part of any negotiation.

### **Speak to your agent**

There are normally two agents in the process, yours, and the vendors. Both will be able to provide an opinion on any revised offer and advise on the potential for success.

### **Be as fair as you can**

Even though the report and estimate may total say £50,000, this doesn't necessarily mean the asking price should be reduced by this amount. Consider the items above and reflect the urgency of any specific repairs and their effect on the property being habitable. Fair discounts are of course far more likely to be met with good responses.

## 5. Report & Estimate

Item No.	Element of Building	Action Required?	Repairs Required	Estimated Cost inc. VAT
1	Main Roof	Repairs required	The external portions of the roof that are visible are in reasonable order with only nominal defects (noted below). However, the original loft conversion works included fibreglass insulation which has been pressed between the rafters. An inspection of the rafters was therefore very limited. This technique of insulating between the rafters was common at the time of the loft conversion construction, however, it is now generally accepted as very poor practice. The insulation blocks airflow and encourages higher moisture levels in the timbers, which can eventually lead to decay and failure. Currently we saw no signs of decay or failure but we would still recommend the insulation is removed and replaced with an appropriate rigid insulation system which would include a 50mm vent space between the roof felt and the insulation. During these works a proper inspection of the felt condition can be also be achieved	£4812
2	Verges	Repairs required	Verges are the edge part of the roof that usually sit above the gables (sloped edge sections) where the tiles are bedded and pointed in mortar which can fail over time due to erosion and wind uplift. One section requires repair on the rear left corner	£178
3	Ridges and Hips	No immediate repairs noted		
4	Eaves	Repairs required	An inspection of a section of eaves beneath the tiles showed that the felt has retreated from the gutter line upwards. This is very common on properties of this age. The felt is exposed to UV rays from the sun which degrade it and this can eventually cause leaks into the soffit, cavity or at worst the internal walls. This should be addressed with simple felt replacement just above the gutter, allowing for new felt drapes to gutter to carry water from roof to gutter	£533
5	Leadwork	Repairs required	The chimney (which is shared with the neighbour) has debris blocking the rear back gutter section which needs to be cleared. The lead is well aged and should be inspected during the debris removal to see if any splits are developing that would require repair	£71
6	Chimney/s	No immediate repairs noted		
7	Flat Roofs	Repairs required in coming years	The lower extension flat roof looks to have been completed in recent years and should have a long lifespan remaining. The upper dormer flat roof could not be fully inspected but the age of the parts we could view would suggest that it likely only has a few years lifespan remaining	

8	Guttering	Repairs required	Some sections are misaligned and require attention	£101
9	Fascia, soffit and barge boards	No immediate repairs noted	Lack of ventilation detailed elsewhere	
10	Rainwater drainage system	Unable to inspect in detail	We cannot survey underground systems during this type of survey and therefore cannot rule out any failures below ground. Pipework within the boundary of your property will highly likely be your responsibility to repair although some insurance policies do cover these repairs. We would recommend an underground CCTV survey is completed if you want to know the condition of underground pipes which we can arrange if required. The rainwater connection to the below ground system on the rear of the rear extension is open. This needs an end cap to form a seal with the downpipe as debris can easily enter the drain and block the below ground system	£56
11	Wastewater drainage system	Unable to inspect in detail	The comments regarding rainwater drainage responsibilities above also apply to underground foul water services although any shared services (those where another property's foul water runs through a pipe within your boundary) will be the responsibility of Southern Water to inspect, repair and maintain so in these cases your financial exposure is lessened. However, any drains that are shared are covered by strict rules regarding building over or near them so this can affect any plans for extensions, leans to, conservatories etc. A CCTV survey can plot and identify shared drains to see how this may affect any future plans you may have for the property.	
12	External Walls	Repairs required	We noted some nominal cracking around lintels by feeling for imperfections in the wallpaper linings, these are quite common and though we only had a limited view of the issues due to the wallpaper, these did not indicate a serious amount of movement. In general the external walls are in sound condition, though a little close to the surrounding paved areas in places along the side elevation	
13	Porch	Repairs required in coming years	The outer upvc door is starting to distort due to sun damage, it currently operates but you may wish to consider replacing it in the future	
14	Rendering	No immediate repairs noted	Some minor cracking to the front elevation render which is normal	
15	Gable End Wall	Repairs required	The external felt tiles are still in reasonable order. The gable is not strapped to the roof structure as is now common practice	£125
16	Stonework	Element not present in this building		
17	Pointing	No immediate repairs noted	The pointing is of differing ages but in good condition	

18 Windows and Doors

The windows are not provided with trickle ventilators. These allow a small amount of background ventilation without the need to frequently open windows and help maintain a healthier environment within the building. There are difficult to retrofit into existing windows so you should consider them when replacing any windows in the future and in the meantime allow to open windows more frequently or to use the hit an miss style vents installed in most rooms. Otherwise the upvc windows and doors are in reasonable order with only minor repairs required. The dormer window on the first floor is an older style aluminium window which is in poorer condition than the ground floor windows

19	Ground Floors	No immediate repairs noted		
20	Plastering walls and ceilings	Repairs required	The conservatory artex ceiling is bowing and needs replacing (see notes in asbestos section below). Various other cracks in plasterwork are minor in nature	£259
21	Internal decorations	No immediate repairs noted	The decor is dated but has not specifically failed so is not listed as a defect	
22	Electrical consumer unit and wiring	Urgent Safety Issue	The consumer unit is dated and does not provide individual fuse arrangements, meaning on fault can bring down the whole system via the retrofitted single RCD. Whilst this isn't immediately unsafe, it is impractical to live with in a modern home.	£864

Whilst we cannot inspect all parts of a system during a survey like this, we typically remove a number of sockets and switches and look at the age and condition of the wiring to help inform if a rewire may be necessary now or in the near future. Older wiring can often be retained without issue, but where extensive renovations may be taking place in a specific area or across the property, often the argument for replacing the older wiring becomes stronger. This is due to the fact rewiring is disruptive to plaster, paintwork, floor coverings etc. so ideally you would not want to rewire a house that otherwise didn't require any other works or repairs. The cabling and accessories are dated but not specifically unsafe, but you should consider a full rewire if you are planning renovation works (allow around a £5000 budget for a full rewire).

We did note that the lighting circuits where inspected are not earthed which is typical of wiring of this age. This, whilst not ideal, does not necessarily warrant a rewire but no metal light fittings should be used on unearthed wiring as they could easily become electrical charged if for instance a cable had wired loose inside the fitting. We noted metal fittings in use which is of serious concern. We also noted exposed cabling used externally without mechanical protection (rear PIR light). The sum here is to cover the Urgent Safety Issues and a replacement consumer unit, not the full rewiring



23	Fire Safety	Repairs required	The bedroom windows do not afford a fire escape route as they need 'egress' hinges to be fitted. The 1st floor bedroom cill height is too high to easily facilitate an escape. There is no central fire detection system. The staircase is not fire protected and the staircase discharges into a room that doesn't lead directly to the front door. This may have been acceptable at the time of installation but it would now be viewed as a hazard under contemporary rebuilding regulations	£1608
24	Heating & Hot Water systems	Urgent Safety Issue	<p>A boiler and heating/hot water system, much like a car, needs regularly servicing and care to ensure it keeps running. Typically boilers are said to have around 15 year lifespans before then becoming more economical to replace rather than repair but this can vary wildly. Factors like servicing, repairing faults when identified, how long a system may have been out of use at any point and how much use the system has had overall can all affect just how long a specific boiler may last. We recommend servicing records are sought via your legal advisors which will at least in part be reassurance (if they exist) that the boiler has been looked after. We noted a sticker on the boiler that suggested it was last serviced in November 2022. We tested the heating and hot water and all was functioning normally but the boiler is old and you may wish to replace it with a combi boiler that heats the water on demand. The current gravity fed system offers quite low hot water pressure and relies on cold water being stored in the loft space to create pressure. The pipework is mostly original but the radiators have been updated so should be more efficient than the original items would have been.</p> <p>An urgent safety issue means the boiler should not currently be used though the risks to any occupants may be nominal and the previous servicing engineer has obviously not flagged the issue: there is a fresh air vent very close to the boiler which vents into an adjacent kitchen cupboard. This could lead to carbon monoxide entering the property. The vent should be blocked up to remove the safety issue. Additionally, the immersion supply to the hot water cylinder has been wired to a mains 13amp plug which is not safe to use. It has been unplugged and you should not plug this back in. We have included for hardwiring the immersion to a new circuit along with blocking up the air vent by the boiler flue here.</p> <p>The lounge gas fire looks to be disconnected but we couldn't confirm this. It should be thoroughly checked by a Gas Safe engineer prior to being used</p>	£443
25	Plumbing and bathrooms	Repairs required	The WC overflow is running into the pan so the cistern/ball cock needs adjusting. The bath sealant is failing and requires repair	£137
26	Utilities	Unable to inspect in detail	We could not trace the rising water main to see what material it is formed in	

27	Internal joinery	Urgent Safety Issue	<p>The screen glass doors that divide the conservatory from the lounge do not appear to be safety glass and could smash and cause harm if impacted. They also do not divide the conservatory from the thermal envelope of the house. External grade doors should be deployed here to prevent the colder, uninsulated conservatory space, drawing heat from the house.</p> <p>The handrail to the staircase has been moved into an unsuitable position and the lower section removed altogether (we found it in the front eaves loft!). The balustrading has been removed meaning there is no fall protection in place</p>	£2578
28	Kitchen	Repairs required	The kitchen is dated and you will likely wish to replace it. It has various minor defects that could be repaired if you wish to retain it	£374
29	Staircase	See above		
30	Upper Floors	No immediate repairs noted		
31	Floor finishes	Repairs required	Various floor coverings are beginning to perish and need replacing. We noted that the original parquet floor was still present under the lounge and hallway carpets	£1920
32	Loft voids	Unable to inspect in detail	There are essentially 4 void areas. The front and rear eaves cupboards are accessible and we could enter these to inspect the structure. The main small loft above the first floor ceiling is inaccessible. There is an access hatch to the void beside the chimney on the party wall on the first floor but this was inaccessible as it has loose artex coverings which we couldn't risk disturbing due to the potential for asbestos in the artex	
33	Roof timbers	Unable to inspect in detail	As per the Main Roof item, the majority of the roof structure is concealed by fibreglass insulation which increases the risk of decay	
34	Insulation levels in loft or roof	Repairs required	During the removal of the rafter level insulation, this should be replaced by a rigid and vented system as detailed and budgeted for in the Main Roof item	
35	Garage Roof & Walls	Repairs required	The old prefab garage walls are failing, with spalled concrete sections and heavy corrosion to the reinforcement around the door lintel and reveals. These will require repair to prevent significant failure. The roof is asbestos sheet. The condition was poor but we did not see any evidence of extreme leaks (though the weather was dry during the inspection)	£1058
36	Garage Door	Repairs required	The door arms, cones and restraining wires are all heavily corroded and we would expect the door to fail soon under normal use	£1320

37	Garden	Unable to inspect in detail	Whilst we saw no immediate issues with the garden in general this does not form a detailed part of our survey. As such, the garden and borders are not inspected for potential risks like Japanese Knotweed or other invasive plants. We recommend buyers check their environmental searches to see if there is an increased risk in this area and seek advice or inspection via a specialist if required	
38	Driveways, Patios and Pathways	Repairs required	The driveway is in reasonable order, though the drainage to the side section is poor, relying on a long gentle and irregular fall back to the Aco channel drain near the front left corner of the house. This means water has been collecting below the DPC on the house wall which would benefit from the introduction of a French drain arrangement to protect the house wall	£569
39	Retaining walls	No immediate repairs noted	The left side boundary includes a recently rebuilt retaining wall	
40	Fences and/or boundary walls	Repairs required	The fences are of mixed age and condition. The rear fence has had recent post repairs. Confusingly the old posts are sitting around 600mm into the garden of No.30 which could indicate the boundary line has moved or that there were potentially originally two fences with some no mans land in between them. You should check the red line drawing that defines the boundary to see where the actual rear boundary lies	
Additional Points				
41	Any evidence of previous structural works inside or out?	Yes	<p>Rear extension is built in a basic fashion and is not a warm, dry insulated part of the home. It could likely be upgraded to meet contemporary building regulations and to provide full habitable accommodation but at likely quite a high expense. Budget around £10,000 if required.</p> <p>The loft conversion was likely compliant with building regulations at the time of installation. Whilst it has several different areas of concern in terms of fire protection and insulation (costs in main survey items above), the structure appears well thought out and it does not appear to have a detrimental effect on the house structure below. We noted it is not connected to the main central heating so currently has no heating at all</p>	
42	Evidence of any wall tie degradation?	No	No obvious horizontal cracking which would indicate wall tie degradation but we can recommend specialist who can insert a camera in the wall cavity for an additional cost if required	
43	Any timber rot or decay in visible areas?	No	Whilst we did not detect any obvious wet or dry rot, it is impossible to inspect every piece of timber within the property during a survey. A fully destructive survey can achieve this but unless we have our suspicions that an issue may exist this would be counter productive.	

44	Any potential asbestos?	Yes	<p>The property may contain asbestos containing materials. These can be found in a number of areas like soffits, ceilings, floor adhesives, older vinyl floor tiles, damp proof courses, pipe insulation and Artex. Artex installed prior to the year 2000 may contain a low risk form of asbestos called chrysotile. Whilst bound within a secure material, most asbestos does not present an immediate risk but issues can arise if you wish to undertake works to areas that may contain asbestos. We can organise asbestos tests to any suspicious materials once you take occupation of the property and give further advice about managing asbestos within the home safely. The presence or possible presence of asbestos should not deter you from purchasing a home, indeed it's quite difficult to find any house built before the year 2000 that has no asbestos within it somewhere. Current estimates suggest around half of all UK homes have some asbestos content, the most important thing is to know where it is and how to avoid disturbing it. We only recommend removal of asbestos where it will be directly affected by other planned works or where it has already been damaged. Generally, encapsulation or no action at all, is the safest solution. We noted the following potential asbestos containing materials based on a quick visual check but this is not an exhaustive list and no samples were taken for lab analysis: asbestos water tank, DPC's, various artex ceiling and wall coatings, garage roof, bitumen adhesive under parquet floor</p>	
45	Any ventilation issues not noted elsewhere?	Yes	<p>We noted that the roof voids are not formally ventilated. This can be achieved in a number of cost effective ways and is especially important if improving insulation values as condensation can form in the loft voids and shorten the lifespan of the structural timbers if airflow through the loft is not achieved from cross ventilation. Additionally there is no mechanical extraction to fresh air provided in the bathrooms. This is recommended to help manage normal moisture levels inside a property, without mechanical extraction, occupiers need to exercise good window opening discipline to remove excess moisture build up</p>	£379
46	Any damp issues not noted elsewhere?	Yes	<p>The property had no major risk areas with one small exception under and beside the kitchen sink. We detected a higher level here which could indicate an historic leak from the sink or washing machine plumbing. It is currently low risk but we would suggest checking this again during any kitchen refurbishment work and prior to fitting new units</p>	
47	Any issues with trees within the grounds of the property?	No	<p>There are various conifer type trees in the rear garden which can affect the house foundations if left to grow unchecked. However, all were currently pruned to a sensible level and they do not appear to have had any effect on the house or extension</p>	

48	Preliminaries	Yes	Include budget for any relevant scaffolding, welfare facilities, fees, permits, planning consents and building regulations requirements to facilitate the above recommended repairs	£1620
<b>TOTAL FOR REPAIRS</b>				<b>£19,004</b>

## 6. What Next? Project Services

Clear Surveys can help you get the repairs required undertaken quickly and efficiently using **our wide panel of specialist contractors and general builders**. Having spent many years in the industry, we are in an almost unique position of having well tested relationships with excellent contractors who would be pleased to provide a quote. We do not take any commission for introductions to contractors, we do so purely out of an interest in the works we prescribe being completed in a competent manner, by qualified professionals that we trust.

We can start the ball rolling by producing a detailed **Schedule of Works** which will describe the exact tasks that you want to undertake in an itemised format, so that you receive, clear and concise **Quotations** with specific inclusions and exclusions to avoid future in build disputes. We also provide specialist **Tendering Services** where we can assess the quotes you receive against industry standards and make recommendations based on our findings, alongside checking for errors and omissions.

We also draft **JCT Building Contracts** for you and your selected contractor to sign to ensure the terms of the contract are set and agreed in advance, and important details like adequate **Insurances, Retentions, and Defects Periods** are all agreed in advance. We undertake these types of services on projects as small as £5000, right up very large projects in excess of £1m.

We also offer specific planning advice to establish if any **Planning Permission** is required or if **Permitted Development Rights** can be relied upon to undertake the proposed works. We work with you to produce bespoke designs to suit your wants and needs whilst ensuring compliance with planning law. We also prepare plans and construction details for **Building Regulations** applications to ensure the project is completed to the correct specifications in line with contemporary regulations.

## 7. Further Investigations

We may have alluded to various other types of survey than can be completed at this stage should you need further reassurance before completing the purchase. Please find the details of various organisations that can provide further information should you need assistance.

### **Drainage Surveys:**

We will not have been able to view into any underground drains so if you would like a full report for this we recommend contacting The National Association of Drainage Contractors, or we can advise of local drainage experts;

<https://nadc.org.uk/home-buyers-drain-surveys/>

**Asbestos Surveys:**

We may have identified potential asbestos containing materials in the property. A full R&D survey can be completed either prior to, or after purchasing the property if required. We recommend searching for accredited asbestos surveyors by region on the United Kingdom Accreditation Service website, or we can advise of named local contractors;

<https://www.ukas.com/find-an-organisation/>

**Structural Issues:**

Your Expert may have identified structural issues that require further investigation. We recommend using the Find an Engineer service provided by the Institute of Structural engineers, or we can provide details for local engineers;

<https://www.istructe.org/building-confidence>