

This guidance note has been issued by McCluskey Chartered Surveyors. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to those who are looking to purchase a property in the UK. This document should not be considered in isolation and aims to offer an overview into property defects. Readers are advised to employ the services of a Chartered Surveyor when purchasing a property.

The levels of surveys

1. Introduction

Surveys can be instructed whether you are selling or purchasing a property. They are designed to identify aspects of a property that require attention and provide assurance where the property is in a reasonable condition. The below sections outline the range of inspections instructed on residential properties. The primary inspection are the Level 2 and 3 surveys discussed on page 2.

2. Limited survey/ Defect analysis report

A Limited Survey would be undertaken where specific information is required. This may look at the main structure of the property, commenting specifically on any structural issues or defects, or there may be specific concerns in relation to damp, for instance.

3. Schedule of Condition

A Schedule of Condition acts as photographic/written evidence of the condition of a property. The primary aim is to record the condition of a property before commencing construction works or entering into a lease. This may also form part of a Party Wall etc. Act 1996 award.

4. Snagging Inspection

Snagging Inspections for clients and contractors alike ensure that contracted works have been completed to a satisfactory standard. Where items are found not to have been finished to a satisfactory standard, a schedule of the outstanding items, along with details of what is required to complete them is submitted to all parties involved. This proves useful as the service and subsequent schedule can be agreed upon, and the works finished as per the contract.

5. Walk-Through Survey

A Walk-Through Survey comprises a brief inspection of the property, commenting on the general condition and noting issues such as cracking or damp. No report is included as part of this service, however a summary of findings is provided.




6. Level 2 - Home Buyer Report

This is probably the most common form of survey. A Home Buyer Report can be instructed for residential properties of a conventional construction built after 1900. This provides a thorough visual inspection of the property whereby the surveyor will comment on the construction of the property and any defects, with recommendations for repairs and ongoing maintenance to prolong the life of the property.

7. Level 3 - Building Survey

A Building Survey is significantly more in depth and is suited for larger, older properties, or where works are planned. The report will comment on the construction of the property, its current condition, and advise on remedial action of defects and maintenance regimes for the property. A Schedule of Costs for repair can also be provided on request.

All of our reports are written in accordance with the RICS Home Survey Standard. **Both Level 2 and 3 surveys** offer a breakdown of each element of the property. Each element is given a condition rating of 1-3. The condition ratings are described below:

-  Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.
-  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.
-  No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.

This presents a quick visual aid for you to identify any areas of high concern. However, before we issue our report, we will always call you to offer an overview of our findings. This allows us to explain our findings and presents an opportunity for you to ask any questions. We are then available for follow up advice at any time, even once you have moved into the property.

For information on the most common property defects, see [Guidance Note 3 – The top three property defects](#). Visit our website for the complete series of [Guidance Notes](#).

