

RICS HOME SURVEYS

Which service is the most suitable for you.

When purchasing a property, choosing the right home survey is key. But navigating the specifics of each level of survey can be confusing and a little intimidating - which one is right for you?

This information pack is designed to help you choose the right survey for your purchase, arming you with all the crucial information you need to move forward with clarity and confidence.

We'll break down the three key levels of RICS Home Surveys, and share our expert advice on when each of these surveys is right for you and your property purchase.

For more information or to arrange a survey, simply get in touch with our helpful team of experts:



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RICS Home Surveys - Overview

Steren Surveyors are a team of RICS-certified professional surveyors. But what does this mean, and why should it matter?

'RICS' stands for the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. RICS is a professional regulatory body that develops and enforces leading international standards to protect consumers and businesses, ensuring the highest level of professionalism from your property survey.

In short, commissioning RICS-registered surveyors to assess your property ensures that your survey is comprehensive and exacting - meaning peace of mind is assured.

Steren Surveyors offer three levels of RICS home survey. As you progress through the levels, the level of detail, advice and coverage on your assessment changes. That doesn't mean that the most comprehensive survey is necessarily right for everyone - the survey you choose is usually dependent on the type of property you're looking to purchase.

Next, let's look at each level of survey in turn - what they offer, and when each level might be right for your property

RICS Home Survey – Level 1

What is a RICS Home Survey – Level 1?

The RICS Home Survey – Level 1 is an easy-to-understand report that will give you a matter-of-fact assessment of the condition of the property by rating various areas of the building and flagging up areas that need attention.

When should you choose a RICS Home Survey – Level 1?

We would recommend a RICS Home Survey - Level 1 for new-build home, flat, or bungalow purchases.

If you're looking at an older property, a property that's been altered, or a property in need of repairs, we'd strongly recommend opting for a **RICS Level 2** or **RICS Level 3** survey.

*NOTE: If you would like a market valuation included with your survey, please see **RICS Home Survey - Level 2**.*

What does a RICS Home Survey – Level 1 cover?

The report will identify significant defects, readily apparent potential hazards and essential repairs, potential issues that may cause future defects, and aims to reassure the client of such areas of concern using a 'traffic light' condition rating system.

The main objectives of a RICS Home Survey – Level 1 is to investigate and highlight potential concerns with:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural condition • Areas of movement • Dampness • Drainage (where accessible) • Rainwater pipes and gutters • Timber defects • Insulation • Condensation • Roof structure • Windows and doors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External walls • Services (electricity, gas, drainage, water, heating) • Party walls • Mundic • Japanese Knotweed and other invasive species • Radon Gas • Environmental issues • Health and Safety |
|--|--|

What *isn't* included in a RICS Home Survey – Level 1 survey?

No tests of the building fabric or services are undertaken. The RICS Home Survey – Level 1 does not include advice on repairs or ongoing maintenance, and it does not include a valuation.

Level 1 Inspection information

The surveyor conducts a non-invasive inspection of the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction and significant visible defects that are evident.

This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as is physically accessible. This allows us to provide a report on:

- Areas of concern that should be investigated appropriately prior to sale
- Any issues that may impact present value or future saleability
- Any major works/expenditure that may be forthcoming
- If the home is habitable and safe.

Post survey care

Every Stereon Surveyors client gets access to our unique after-survey support and consultation services - helping you break down and act upon any information revealed in your survey. We'll go into more detail on our Post Survey Care packages at the end of this information pack.



Continue reading for more information on our *RICS Home Survey – Level 2* and *RICS Home Survey – Level 3* offerings.

RICS Home Survey – Level 2

What is a RICS Home Survey – Level 2?

A RICS Home Survey – Level 2 is a comprehensive visual survey that offers a more extensive assessment than the Level 1 survey. In addition to a more detailed inspection, the Level 2 report also offers an optional market valuation as part of your report.

NOTE: If you would like to include market valuation in your survey then please request a “Survey and Valuation” report.

When should you choose a RICS Home Survey – Level 2?

A RICS Home Survey – Level 2 is commonly recommended for post-1960s, conventional houses, flats, and bungalows that are in a reasonable condition and that have not been significantly altered or extended since their original construction.

If you're purchasing a property that has been altered, or a property in need of repairs, we would strongly recommend considering a **RICS Home Survey - Level 3** survey.

What does a RICS Home Survey – Level 2 cover?

The report will identify significant defects, readily apparent potential hazards and essential repairs and aims to reassure the client of such areas of concern using a 'traffic light' condition rating system.

Unlike the Level 1 report, the RICS Home Survey – Level 2 will include advice on repairs or ongoing maintenance and can include an optional market valuation, if requested beforehand.

Your survey will include all aspects of the **Level 1** report, **PLUS** the following:

- Entering the roof space and visually inspecting the roof structure with attention paid to those parts vulnerable to deterioration and damage.
- Advice about repairs or any ongoing maintenance issues. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation should be made.
- Identifying and listing the defects and issues that present a risk to the building or grounds, and explaining the nature of these problems.

What *isn't* included in a RICS Home Survey – Level 2 survey?

No tests of the building fabric or services are undertaken in a RICS Home Survey – Level 2.

If you're purchasing an older property, a property that has been altered, or a property that is in need of extensive repairs, we would strongly recommend considering a **RICS Home Survey - Level 3** survey.

Hybrid Level 2 Report

For properties that require a more bespoke approach, we can offer a 'Hybrid Level 2' style report.

This introduces some of the more incisive investigative processes seen in the Level 3 report when and where required. If your property has a very specific area of concern, a Hybrid Level 2 approach can be ideal - providing more insight into any potential defects alongside our suggested course of action to remedy these issues.

To find out more about a *Hybrid Level 2 Report*, contact our team directly.

RICS Home Survey – Level 2 (survey and valuation)

If you would like a market valuation included with your report then please request a "*Survey and valuation*" report.

In addition to the Level 2 survey, your report will include:

- The Surveyor's professional opinion on the 'market value' of the property, following RICS Redbook criteria, the global standard for market valuations.
- An insurance reinstatement figure for the property.

Level 2 Inspection information

The Surveyor conducts a non-invasive inspection of the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction and significant visible defects that are evident.

This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as is physically accessible. This allows us to provide a report on:

- Areas of concern that should be investigated appropriately prior to the sale
- Any issues that may impact present value or future saleability
- Any major works/expenditures that may be forthcoming
- Whether a home has been valued accurately
- If the home is habitable and safe.

This will help you renegotiate if there are major works highlighted and make an informed decision on whether to proceed with the purchase.

Post survey care

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RICS Home Survey – Level 3

What is a RICS Home Survey – Level 3?

A RICS Home Survey – Level 3 is the most extensive and detailed survey option, offering a considerably more in-depth and comprehensive inspection of the structure and fabric of a property than that offered by the other reports.

It aims to establish how a property is built, what materials were used and explains any significant defects to the main structure, outbuildings, and related grounds. This includes thermal efficiency, possible indoor air quality issues, and how the building materials will perform in the future.

A guide on the cost implications of further investigations and remedial works is also included to help you better understand any significant financial implications you may be committing to upon purchase.

NOTE: If you would like a market valuation please see [RICS Home Survey - Level 2](#).

When should you choose a RICS Home Survey – Level 3?

A RICS Home Survey – Level 3 is commonly recommended for older properties, listed buildings, non-traditional constructions, run-down properties, and heavily extended constructions.

If you're purchasing a post-1960s property, a conventional house, flat, or bungalow that is in a reasonable condition and that has not been significantly altered or extended since their original construction then a [RICS Level 1](#) or [Level 2](#) survey may be more appropriate.

What does a RICS Home Survey – Level 3 cover?

The report will identify significant defects, readily apparent potential hazards and essential repairs and aims to reassure the client of such areas of concern using a 'traffic light' condition rating system.

This level of report is the only one to describe the form of construction and materials used for different parts of the property.

Your survey will include all aspects of the **Level 2** report, **PLUS** the following:

- A description of the condition of the property and an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems.
- A proposal for the most probable cause(s) of the defects based on the inspection.
- Outlines of the likely scope of any appropriate remedial work and explain the likely consequences of non-repair; and
- General recommendations in respect of the priority and likely timescale for necessary work.

Although the services are not tested, they are observed in normal operation. E.g. They are switched on or off and/or operated where the occupier has given permission and it is safe to do so.

What isn't included in a RICS Home Survey - Level 3 survey?

The RICS Home Survey - Level 3 leaves nothing to chance. It's our most comprehensive and detailed residential survey, covering all aspects of your new property's status and condition.

NOTE: If you would like a market valuation please see [RICS Home Survey - Level 2](#).

Level 3 Inspection information

The surveyor conducts a non-invasive inspection of the inside and outside of the main building and all permanent outbuildings, recording the construction, materials used, and visible and hidden defects which could pose potential problems.

This inspection is intended to cover as much of the property as is physically accessible. This allows us to provide a report on:

- Areas of concern that should be investigated appropriately prior to the sale
- Any issues that may impact present value or future saleability
- Any major works/expenditures that may be forthcoming
- Whether a home has been valued accurately
- If the home is habitable and safe.

This will help you renegotiate if there are major works highlighted and make an informed decision on whether to proceed with the purchase.

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Summary

The survey you choose typically depends on the age and state of your property. The final choice comes down to the individual, but in general, here's a roundup of when and why we would recommend each level of RICS home survey:

- **Choose a RICS Home Survey Level 1** if you're purchasing a new-build house, flat, or bungalow.
- **Choose a RICS Home Survey Level 2** if you're purchasing a property built post-1960s, that is in a reasonable condition and that has not been significantly altered or extended since its original construction.
- **Choose a RICS Home Survey Level 3** if you're purchasing an older property, listed building, non-traditional construction, run-down property, or heavily extended construction.

Post Survey Care – Unique to Stereon Surveyors

Your survey is just the start. At Stereon Surveyors, we can provide a unique, one to one, post-survey consultation - designed to help you break down and understand the results of your survey with complete transparency.

We'll then assist you in communicating any vital information or additional steps to the relevant parties in your chain - relieving unwanted stress and anxiety and helping you to maintain positive relationships with all involved.

And if defects are unveiled after you've moved in, we can continue to provide additional support in the form of options to remedy these issues. All you have to do is reach out and get in touch.

We're here to help

Don't feel overwhelmed by your house purchase. A RICS Home Survey from Stereon Surveyors can help you purchase that dream property with clarity and confidence.

Want more information, or want to book a survey? Reach out to our expert team! We'd love to hear from you.



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