



## No.4

## ARC 3's - FLAT BUYERS SURVEY

When buying a flat you are buying the lease off the land from the 'Freehold Owner' and you are likely to also share the building with other people. It is most likely that you do not own the structure of the building nor the loft nor have any air rights. The 'Flat Buyers Survey' is similar to the 'House Buyers Survey' refer item 3.00 above, but it takes into account in more detail matters relating to communal areas and the neighbouring flats and so on. Whether it is the 'Share of Freehold' or a 'Leasehold' Flat', your lawyers will need to make enquiries to discover the contribution percentage and the cost of insurance, maintenance and annual services charges relating the block. Obviously we will be relying on you or your lawyers to provide relevant information prior to the survey. The crucial point is that you should not be liable for costs or a contribution for any past repair and maintenance which had defects prior to your occupation. The current owner should settle any costs relating to this and settle the appropriate contribution relating the upkeep of the property including the communal areas.

It is important to note that any alterations will require the Freeholders consent and a 'Deed of Variation' and where the Freeholders Surveyors will approve the plans. You will also be liable for costs. The demise of the property is crucial, i.e. is the loft void included in the sale price or not or the size of the garden etc.

This is a well-thought-out report but with considerably less technical in detail. The report covers issues relating to defects and records the condition of the property, damp issues and so on giving a general overview. It also includes appraisal of the structure but it is not an in-depth structural report as it is the Freeholders responsibility to maintain and care for the structural elements and the outside fabric. Together with a written summary, the surveyor may rate elements of the property using one of the following Condition Ratings.

- **Condition Rating 1 (green)** - No repair is currently needed. The property must be maintained in the normal way.
- **Condition Rating 2 (amber)** - 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.
- **Condition Rating 3 (red)** - Defects that are serious and/or need to be repaired, replaced or investigated urgently.

The report is separated into various easy to understand sections which makes the document user friendly:

- A. General Observations and Overview Summary of the Property
- B. Summary of Construction
- C. Internal and External Condition of the property including Structural Review.
- D. Damp and Timber condition comments.
- E. Services – Electrics and Boiler
- F. Matters apparent from the inspection which should be checked by your lawyers.
- G. Recommendations and Conclusion.
- H. Surveyors Declaration

The "Arc 3's Flat Buyers Survey" is unique, two persons from Arc 3 will visit the flat and will include sketches, photographs, tree planting schedule and good advice, providing easy to understand useful information for the purchaser. This inspection report gives a good and balanced overview of the property with recommendations and informal Architects remodelling advice, which will assist with the purchase and negotiations.

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