

Vigilant Surveys

DAMP AND MOULD INVESTIGATION

Semi detached house, North London

Address withheld

Prepared for the client

Inspected October 2026

Specimen report

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SPECIMEN REPORT

This is a real Vigilant Surveys damp and mould report, published with the written permission of the client it was written for. The name, the address, the postcode, the reference and the exact date of the inspection have been removed, along with eight photographs: the room views that show the client's belongings, and the bathroom and shower room views with personal items. Every reading, every finding and every recommendation is exactly as it was issued.

Summary in plain English

OVERALL RATING 7 OF 9

Water getting into the base of the wall at the old chimney breast, highly probably from a leak in the services: the shower room on the other side of the wall, or the heating pipework at the radiator valve directly below the damage. The cracked cement fillet at the lean-to roof is a second route for water and cannot be excluded.

Yes, there is very probably still an active source of water, and it is not rising damp. The damp is in one corner, around the old chimney breast where the shower room sits on the other side of the wall. The rest of the same wall is dry, and the readings are highest at about knee height, not at the floor, which is not how rising damp behaves.

The most likely source is a leak from the shower room behind the wall, or from the heating pipes at the radiator valve right below the damage. The boiler needing topping up about five times a year means the heating is losing water somewhere. Outside, the cement where the small lean-to roof meets the house has cracked away, which lets rain in and would explain why it is worse in wet weather.

Damp is a symptom, not the cause, so the source needs fixing first. Have the shower checked and the heating pressure tested, and get the lean-to roof repaired. Then let the wall dry before any replastering, with a plaster made for walls with salts in them. A damp proof course injection is not the answer here.

Confidence	Highly probable on the evidence
What would settle it	Checking the shower with the panel beneath the tray removed and the shower running, and a pressure test of the heating system. If both are sound, a recheck after heavy rain, measured against the living room control of 8.1 %WME, to test the lean-to roof.

The overall rating is a judgement on the whole of the findings, not a meter reading. 1 is the lowest and 9 the highest. Green 1 to 3, amber 4 to 6, red 7 to 9.

1	Dry throughout. Nothing found.
2	Dry, with a minor defect worth putting right as good practice.
3	Dry, with a defect that could lead to damp if left.
4	Elevated moisture from a single identified cause, with no work to the structure needed.
5	Elevated moisture in more than one area, no damage, correctable with general maintenance.
6	An active damp problem with a clear cause, correctable with ordinary repairs.
7	Active damp causing damage to the building, or several causes acting together.
8	Widespread damp with significant damage, or a cause not yet identified.
9	Severe, spreading or causing structural damage. Needs attention before anything else.

Instruction and conditions

Instructed by	The client
Reason for the inspection	An independent investigation of the damp at the base of the wall between the living room and the kitchen, around the doorway and the old chimney breast, to find the source and establish whether there is still an active source of moisture.
Scope	Focused survey, one problem area. Focused survey: the living room and the kitchen, with readings from the shower room behind the chimney breast, environmental readings in the hallway, and the side elevation and lean-to roof from a ladder.
Date of inspection	October 2026
Weather at inspection	Light rain
Rainfall in the previous 48 hours	Light

External conditions	18.8°C, 62.7% RH, dew point 11.5°C
Access	Owner

What the occupier reports

Recorded as given at the inspection. This is the occupier's account and is not a finding.

No obvious damp in 2017. A significant leak from the shower room in about 2019 to 2020, which may have run for close to a year. The shower was replaced in 2021. The damp has continued since, mild in summer and worse in winter and in wet weather, starting at skirting level.

First noticed	About five years ago, after the shower room leak
Pattern reported	Worse in winter
How it presents	Staining, Damp to touch, Peeling paint, Visible mould
Anything that changed it	None recorded
Previously advised by	Nobody
Works already carried out	The shower was replaced and retiled in 2021. No damp treatment has been carried out. No paperwork.
Washing dried indoors	Not known
Tumble dryer	Not known

The property

Type	Semi detached
Approximate age	1850 to 1918
Wall construction	Solid brick, assumed from the age and type of the house and not established by opening up
Ground floor	Unknown
Heating	Gas boiler in the kitchen with radiators. The owner reports the boiler has to be topped up with water about five times a year, how it is used not known

Room by room

This was a focused survey, covering the affected rooms and anything contributing to the cause. Other rooms were not surveyed. Moisture readings are comparative. %WME is not a moisture content, so readings are given against a control taken in an unaffected area of the same room.

Living room

Photograph removed
for this specimen copy

ENVIRONMENT

Air temperature and humidity	20.1°C, 63.6% RH
Dew point	13°C
Coldest surface measured	18.4°C at External side wall
Surface against dew point	5.4°C ABOVE Condensation excluded on this surface at the time of inspection.
Thermal scan	COLD SPOTS Scanned with a thermal imaging camera, surface 18.4°C, air 20.1°C, 63.6% RH.

CHIMNEY

Chimney breast	Present in this room.
Flue	NOT VENTED IN THE ROOM The breast is not vented in the room. A flue that is not ventilated at both ends stays cold and still. That is the condition in which flue condensation forms and in which hygroscopic salt contamination of the breast develops, and it is why a breast can read wet on a wall that has no other source of water available to it.

VENTILATION

Background ventilation	Opening windows
Trickle vents	None fitted
Mechanical extract	None
Door undercut	Under 10mm, measured 6mm

MOISTURE

Floor in this room	not established
Control reading	8.1 %WME. Wall right of the door to the kitchen

THE OLD CHIMNEY BREAST, ITS RETURN AND THE WALL TO THE KITCHEN, INTERNAL WALL



	Right of the radiator	Chimney breast return	Centre, at the socket	Left of the kitchen door	Left of the kitchen door, at the frame
200mm below ceiling	×	9.5	9.4	8.3	10.4
1200mm	×	10.4	12.3	11.3	9.9
600mm	13.2	83.1	100	100	70.2
Skirting, 100mm	8.5	21.2	20.4	20.6	14.4

18 readings, 8.3 to 100 %WME, 2 could not be reached

EXTERNAL WALL BELOW THE WINDOW, EXTERNAL WALL



	Left	Centre	Right
200mm below ceiling	8.3	×	7.5
1200mm	7.1	×	6.1
600mm	13.5	×	12.3
Skirting, 100mm	10.4	7.4	13.6

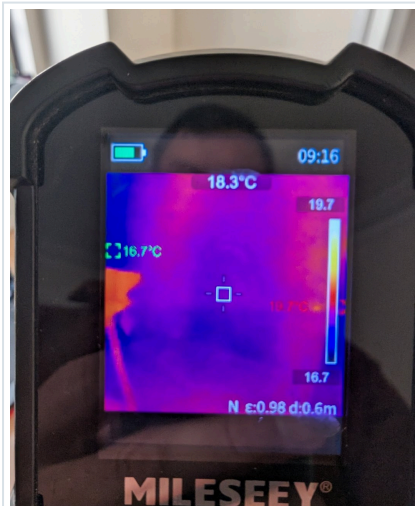
9 readings, 6.1 to 13.6 %WME, 3 could not be reached

COLD SPOT AT THE FOOT OF THE WALL, LEFT OF THE DOOR TO THE KITCHEN

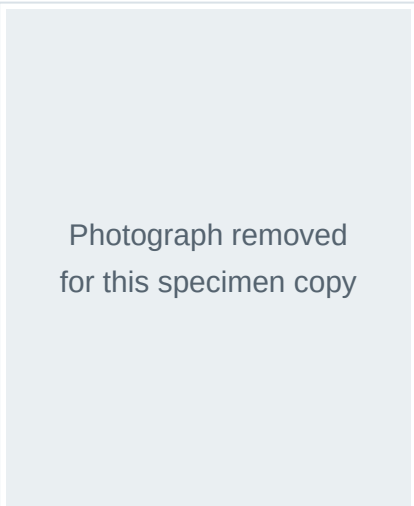
Surface	Wall
Whereabouts	Bottom corner, left of the door to the kitchen
Observed	Salting efflorescence, Mould, Staining

OBSERVED

Other observations	Staining, Salting efflorescence
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THERMAL



THERMAL



METER IN POSITION

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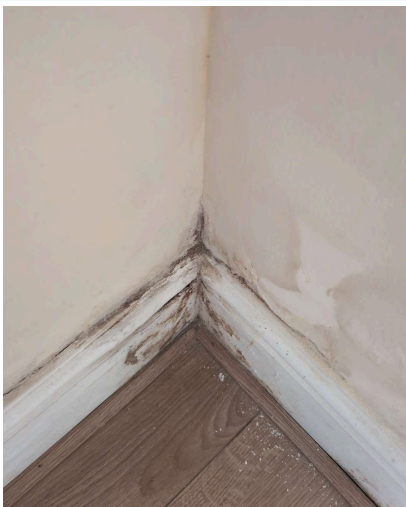
CONTROL LOCATION



DEFECT
Blown plaster and staining above the skirting



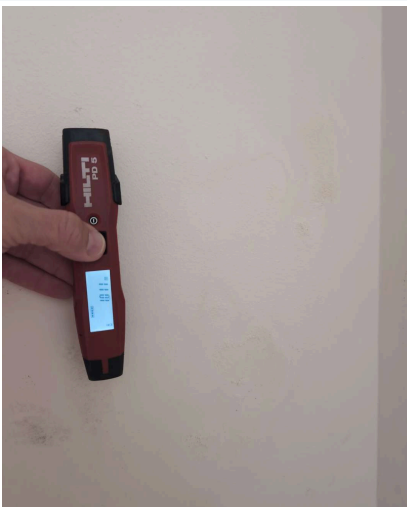
DEFECT
Blue staining along a metal corner bead, with salts on the surface



DEFECT
Staining and mould at the foot of the corner



DEFECT



DEFECT



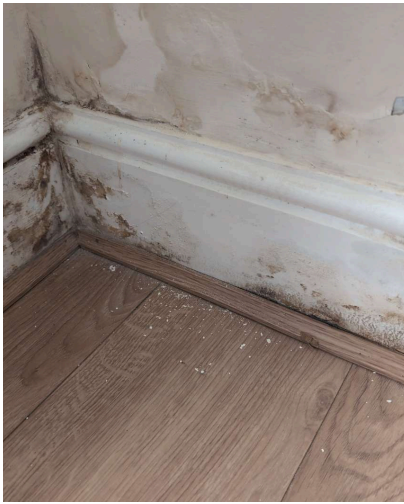
DEFECT



DEFECT



DEFECT



DEFECT
Mould and efflorescence at the skirting
in the corner



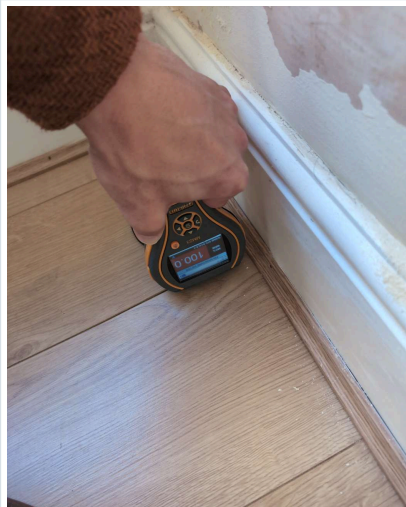
DEFECT
Damage directly above the radiator
valve



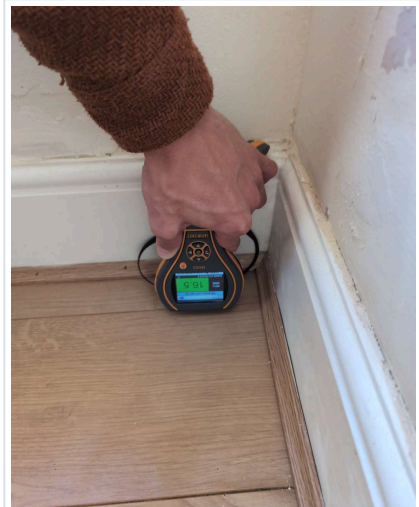
DEFECT



DEFECT
The old chimney breast



DEFECT



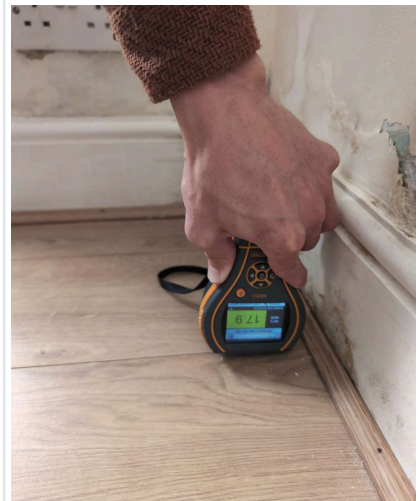
DEFECT



DEFECT



DEFECT



DEFECT

	Photograph removed for this specimen copy	
DEFECT Reading at the door threshold to the kitchen	OTHER The shower room, on the other side of the chimney breast	DEFECT Pinless reading on the shower tiles, the other side of the affected wall
	Photograph removed for this specimen copy	
DEFECT	OTHER The bathroom above the living room	

Kitchen	Photograph removed for this specimen copy
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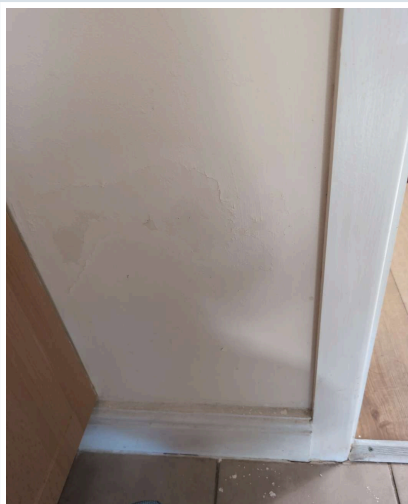
ENVIRONMENT

Air temperature and humidity	20.8°C, 61.3% RH
Dew point	13.1°C
Coldest surface measured	17.9°C at Internal partition wall to shower room

Surface against dew point	4.8°C ABOVE Condensation excluded on this surface at the time of inspection.
Thermal scan	NO ANOMALY Scanned with a thermal imaging camera, surface 17.9°C, air 20.8°C, 61.3% RH.
VENTILATION	
Background ventilation	Opening windows
Trickle vents	None fitted
Mechanical extract	Cooker hood recirculating, operational, discharging unknown
Door undercut	Under 10mm, measured 8mm
MOISTURE	
Floor in this room	not established
Control reading	9.8 %WME. Wall right of the door to the shower room
SOFT, CRUMBLING PLASTER WITH SALTS	
Surface	Wall
Whereabouts	Left of the door to the living room, above the skirting
Observed	Salting efflorescence
Reading on it	23 %WME Left of the living room door, the kitchen face of the same wall against a control of 9.8
Reading on it	14 %WME Left of the living room door, the kitchen face of the same wall against a control of 9.8
Reading on it	14.6 %WME Left of the living room door, the kitchen face of the same wall against a control of 9.8
STAINING	
Surface	Wall
Whereabouts	Right of the door to the living room
Observed	Staining
Reading on it	15.3 %WME Right of the living room door against a control of 9.8
Reading on it	9.7 %WME Right of the living room door against a control of 9.8
OBSERVED	
Other observations	Salting efflorescence, Staining



METER SHOWING THE READING



WHERE THE READING WAS TAKEN



METER SHOWING THE READING



WHERE THE READING WAS TAKEN



METER SHOWING THE READING



METER SHOWING THE READING



WHERE THE READING WAS TAKEN



METER SHOWING THE READING



WHERE THE READING WAS TAKEN



DEFECT
Kitchen side: soft, crumbling plaster left of the living room door



DEFECT
Plaster debris on the floor tiles at the foot of the wall



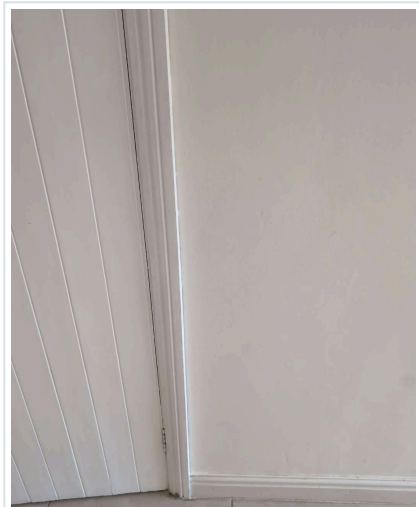
DEFECT
Pinless reading on the floor at the foot of the wall



DEFECT
Pinless reading at the foot of the wall right of the door



METER IN POSITION

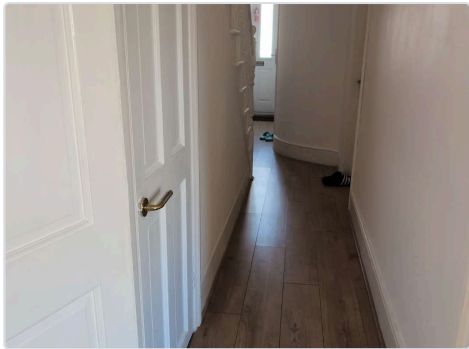


CONTROL LOCATION



DEFECT
The boiler, which the owner reports has to be topped up regularly

Hallway (comparison only)



Temperature and humidity were recorded here as a comparison against the affected rooms. No moisture survey was carried out in this room, and none was required.

ENVIRONMENT

Air temperature and humidity	21.3°C, 62.2% RH
Dew point	13.8°C
Coldest surface measured	17.3°C at Internal wall opposite staircase
Surface against dew point	3.5°C ABOVE Condensation excluded on this surface at the time of inspection.
Thermal scan	NO ANOMALY Scanned with a thermal imaging camera, surface 17.3°C, air 21.3°C, 62.2% RH.

THERMAL IMAGING

All accessible rooms were scanned with a thermal imaging camera under the conditions recorded above. cold bridging was identified at Living room. no anomaly was found in Kitchen, Hallway.

External inspection

Recorded per elevation. Damp is directional.

Side elevation and lean-to roof



Damp proof course	NOT VISIBLE Not visible: the render plinth covers the base of the wall down to the paving.
Surface against the wall	Paving, falling level
Rainwater goods	GOOD

Pointing render	FAIR
Masonry	GOOD
Drainage gullies	GOOD
Roof visible	POOR
Penetrations	NOT VISIBLE
Airbricks	GOOD
Vegetation	GOOD
Chimney stack	No stack on this elevation.



ROOF VISIBLE

Lean-to roof abutment: cracked and detached cement fillet



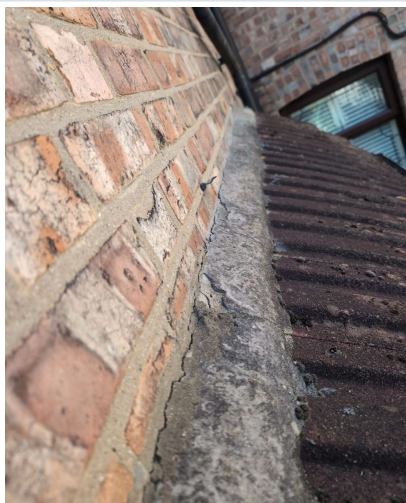
ROOF VISIBLE

Lean-to roof verge: cement shrunk away from the brickwork



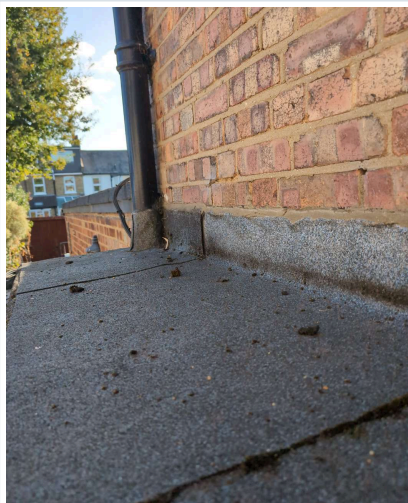
ROOF VISIBLE

Cement verge cracked along its length



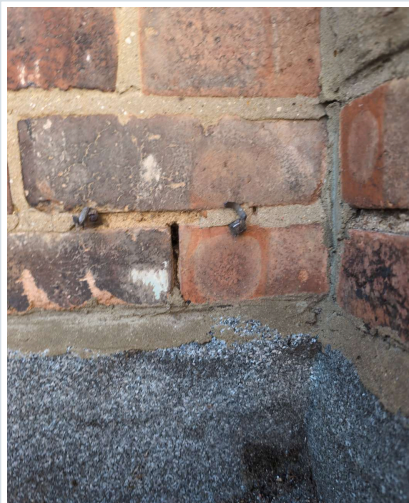
ROOF VISIBLE

Where the pitched lean-to meets the flat roof and the main wall



ROOF VISIBLE

Flat roof covering at the abutment



ROOF VISIBLE

Abutment of the flat roof with the main wall



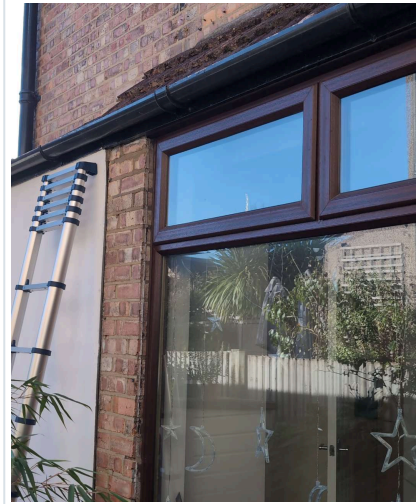
ROOF VISIBLE

The cracked verge and fillet, with water able to get behind it



DEFECT

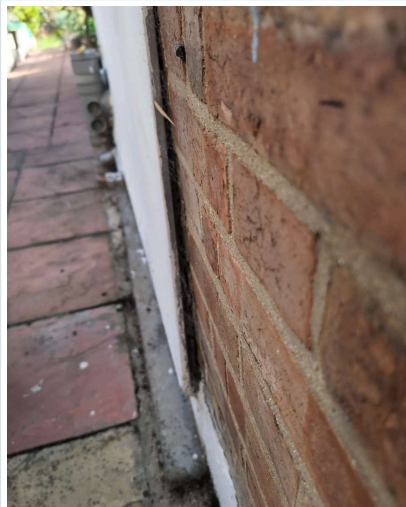
Render plinth taken down to the paving, blown around the air brick



OTHER

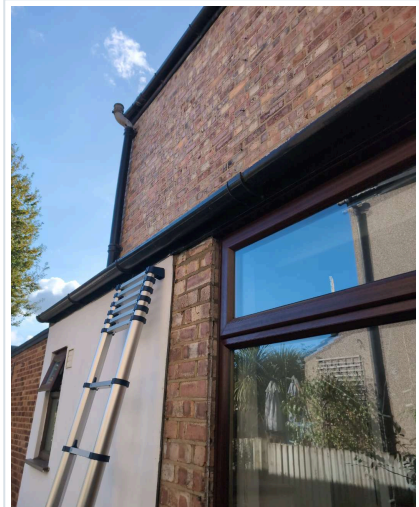


OTHER



OTHER

Open joint between the render and the brick at the window



OTHER

What was considered, and what was ruled out

Every mechanism that could produce these readings is judged on the evidence, not selected at the start. What has been excluded matters as much as what has not.

MECHANISM	VERDICT	EVIDENCE
Plumbing or drainage leak	SUPPORTED	The damage is concentrated at the one corner where the shower room sits behind the chimney breast, and a pinless reading on the shower tiles gave the top of the scale. A radiator valve and its pipework sit at floor level directly below the damage, and the owner reports the boiler has to be topped up about five times a year, so heating water is being lost somewhere. Efflorescence, the white crystals left on the surface as water evaporates, shows that water has moved through the wall. The owner reports a leak from the shower room in about 2019 to 2020, and that the damp has continued since the shower was replaced.
Salt contamination of plaster	SUPPORTED	At 600mm the readings reach 83.1 to 100 beside 13.2 a short distance away in the same row, and fall to 9.3 to 12.3 at 1200mm. Efflorescence on the surface in the living room, and soft, powdery plaster with salts on the kitchen face of the same wall. An electrical meter reads salts and moisture alike, so these readings cannot by themselves show how much is water. The salts were not tested. On the chimney breast, flue salts that draw moisture from the air cannot be ruled out.
Penetrating damp, building defect	CANNOT BE EXCLUDED	The cement fillet where the lean-to roof meets the main wall has cracked and come away from the brickwork, and the cement verge has shrunk. Rain running down the wall can get in behind it. From outside this roughly corresponds to the affected corner, and it fits the owner's account that the damp is worse in wet weather. The chimney stack has been removed and the top of the flue could not be seen.
Penetrating damp, wind driven rain	CANNOT BE EXCLUDED	The side wall is exposed, and there is an open joint between the render and the brickwork at the window. The external wall of the living room below the window reads 6.1 to 13.6, in the dry band.
Historic or residual moisture	CANNOT BE EXCLUDED	The owner reports a leak from the shower room that may have run for close to a year. A wall soaked for that long holds water and salts for a long time. But the damage has continued and recently spread on the kitchen side, which points to a source that is still active rather than one drying out.

Bridging or construction defect	CANNOT BE EXCLUDED	No damp proof course could be seen: the render plinth runs down to the level paving and is blown around the air bricks, and rain splashes back off paving onto the base of a wall. This is a defect to make good, but the affected walls are internal and the external wall of the room reads dry, so it does not explain the corner.
Rising damp	EXCLUDED	The readings do not have the shape of rising damp. They peak at 600mm, not at the base: 13.2 to 21.2 at the skirting against 83.1 to 100 at 600mm, and 14.0 at 100mm against 23.0 at 500mm on the kitchen side. The same wall right of the door reads 8.1 and 9.7. Rising damp would show as a band along the base of the wall, not one localised corner.
Surface condensation	EXCLUDED	Every coldest surface measured was 3.5 to 5.4 degrees above the dew point, and the damage sits low on internal walls, with salts and soft plaster, which is not the pattern condensation leaves. The mould at the foot of the corner is growing on damp plaster.
Interstitial condensation	EXCLUDED	The walls are of solid construction with no cavity or internal lining in which condensation could form unseen.

Technical findings

The living room and the kitchen were inspected in October 2026, with readings taken in the shower room behind the chimney breast, environmental readings in the hallway, and the side elevation and the lean-to roof seen from a ladder. It was raining lightly at the inspection, after light rain in the previous 48 hours, with 18.8 degrees and 62.7 per cent relative humidity outside. The house is a semi detached house of about 1850 to 1918, of solid construction. Readings were taken with a pin meter in %WME, a pinless meter, a thermal camera and a hygrometer.

The living room. The damage is at the base of the old chimney breast, its return and the wall to the kitchen, left of the door. The plaster is blown, the paint stained, and there is efflorescence on the surface and black mould at the foot of the corner. Blue staining runs along the metal corner beads, where the beads are corroding in damp plaster. The readings peak at 600mm: 83.1 on the return, 100 at the socket and 100 and 70.2 left of the kitchen door. At the skirting they are 13.2 to 21.2, and at 1200mm and below the ceiling they fall to 8.3 to 12.3. Readings into the timber skirting at floor level in the corner range from 14.8 to 100 on the %WME scale. The external wall below the window reads 6.1 to 13.6, in the dry band, and the control right of the door to the kitchen reads 8.1. The thermal camera shows the foot of the wall left of the kitchen door at about 16.7 degrees against 18.3 to 19.7 around it, which is consistent with damp material cooling as it evaporates.

The kitchen. The kitchen face of the same wall, left of the door, has soft and powdery plaster with salts, and debris on the floor tiles below. It reads 23.0 %WME at 500mm, 14.0 at 100mm and 14.6 at 770mm. Right of the door it reads 15.3 and 9.7, and the control reads 9.8. Pinless readings on the floor tiles at the foot of this wall gave 570 and 731 on the meter's relative scale, which is high.

The shower room and the services. The shower room sits on the other side of the chimney breast from the affected corner. A pinless reading on its tiles, the other face of the wall, gave the top of the scale, 999. A pinless reading is comparative only, and tiles and their adhesive can affect it, but it fits the readings on the living room side. A radiator valve and its pipework sit at floor level at the chimney breast return, directly below the damage. The owner reports that the boiler has to be topped up about five times a year, so water is being lost from the heating system somewhere. There is also a bathroom above the living room.

What the pattern shows. The damage is confined to one corner and both faces of one wall, around the junction of the chimney breast, the shower room and the heating pipework. The same wall right of the door reads dry. The readings peak at 600mm rather than at the base, and drop sharply between neighbouring points and above 1200mm. Efflorescence, the white crystals left on the surface as water evaporates, shows that water has moved through the wall, and the salts it leaves then hold moisture in the plaster. The worst of the damage is on an old chimney breast, and years of burning leave flue salts in a chimney breast which draw moisture from the air with no leak at all. The type of salt was not tested, so flue salts on the breast itself cannot be ruled out. An electrical meter reads salts and moisture alike, so these readings cannot by themselves separate the two. The owner's account is that the damp followed a leak from the shower room in about 2019 to 2020, has continued since the shower was replaced, and has recently spread on the kitchen side. That points to a source which is still active, rather than a wall drying out from an old leak.

Outside. The chimney stack over the old chimney breast has been removed, and how the top of the flue was closed could not be seen. Where the lean-to roof meets the main wall and changes pitch, the cement fillet has cracked and come away from the brickwork and the cement verge has shrunk and cracked. Rain running down the exposed wall can get in behind it and into the wall below, and from outside this roughly corresponds, by eye, to the affected corner. It fits the owner's account that the damp is worse in wet weather, so it cannot be excluded. At ground level no damp proof course could be seen: the render plinth runs down to the level paving and is blown and salted around the air bricks, and rain splashing back off paving wets the base of a wall. There is an open joint between the render and the brickwork at the window. The gutters and downpipes were in good condition.

Condensation. The living room was at 20.1 degrees and 63.6 per cent, a dew point of 13.0 degrees, and its coldest surface 5.4 degrees above it. The kitchen and the hallway were 4.8 and 3.5 degrees above the dew point. The vapour pressure inside ran from 1.50 to 1.58 kPa against 1.36 kPa outside, an excess of 0.14 to 0.21 kPa, which as an indication from a single visit is low. No condensation was forming at the inspection. The rooms have window ventilation only, and the kitchen cooker hood recirculates rather than extracting to outside.

Conclusion

On the evidence it is highly probable, though not confirmed, that the damp is caused by water getting into the base of the wall at the old chimney breast, and that the source is still active.

The most probable source is a leak in the services around that corner. That is either the shower room on the other side of the wall, through its waste, tray seal or supply, or the heating pipework at the radiator valve directly below the damage, given that the boiler is losing water. The cracked

cement fillet at the lean-to roof is a second route, and fits the damp being worse in wet weather. It needs repairing whatever the checks show.

It is not rising damp: the readings peak at 600mm, not at the base, and the rest of the wall reads dry. A damp proof course injection would not help and is not recommended. It is not condensation.

Flue salts on the old chimney breast cannot be ruled out without a salts test, which is a further reason the shower and heating checks come first. The order matters. Check the shower and pressure test the heating first, and repair any leak. Repair the lean-to roof. Then give the wall time to dry, take drilled samples to confirm the salts and their height, and only then remove the salt contaminated plaster and replaster with a system made for it. Replastering before the water is stopped, or with an ordinary plaster, will see the same damage again.

Recommendations

Vigilant Surveys carries out no remedial work and holds no contractor ties. No quantities or prices are given, so these can be put to any contractor for pricing.

Urgent

Actively causing damage, getting worse, or preventing other work from succeeding.

Severe

A material cause of the problem. The property will not dry until it is dealt with.

Moderate

Contributes to the problem, or should be put right as good practice.

Monitor

No action indicated on the evidence so far. Keep it under observation, and act if it changes or if it has not improved once the work above is done.

Cosmetic

Appearance only. Not a necessary measure.

These are ordered by priority, not by date. We do not set timetables, because the right sequence depends on access, on the works programme and on what the further investigation finds.

1. **Have the shower in the shower room checked: remove the panel beneath the shower tray, run the shower, and inspect the waste, the trap, the tray seal, the supply pipework and the power shower unit. Repair any leak found.**

URGENT The damage is concentrated at the corner that backs onto the shower room, a reading on the shower tiles gave the top of the scale, and the damp began after a leak from this room. A slow leak from a waste or seal can run unseen for a long time, and nothing else will hold until it is stopped. Suitable trade: a qualified plumber.

2. **Have the central heating system pressure tested, including the radiator valve and pipework at the chimney breast return, and repair any leak found.**

URGENT The boiler has to be topped up about five times a year, so water is being lost from the system, and the radiator valve sits directly below the damage. This needs doing before any samples are taken. Suitable trade: a heating engineer or plumber. If the boiler itself needs work, a Gas Safe registered engineer.

3. **Re-form the junction of the lean-to roof with the main wall with a proper flashing in place of the cracked cement fillet, and repair the cement verge.**

URGENT The cement has cracked and come away from the brickwork, so rain running down the wall gets in behind it and into the wall below the affected corner. Anything letting water into the structure is urgent. Suitable trade: a roofer.

4. **Seal the open joint between the render and the brickwork at the side window.**

MODERATE An open joint on an exposed wall lets rain into the wall behind it. It is a simple repair. Suitable trade: a general builder.

5. **Cut the render plinth back so it finishes above the damp proof course with a drip edge, keep the air bricks clear, and form an air drain where the paving meets the wall.**

MODERATE The render runs down to the level paving, so any damp proof course is bridged, and rain splashing back off the paving wets the base of the wall. The render is already blown around the air bricks. This is a defect to make good rather than the cause of the damp in the corner. Suitable trade: a general builder or a plasterer who does external rendering.

6. **Once the leaks are found and repaired and the wall has had a drying period, remove the salt contaminated plaster from the chimney breast, its return and both faces of the wall to the kitchen. Take it to at least 1m, or 300mm above the highest salt level shown by the drilled samples, whichever is greater, replace the corroded metal corner beads, and replaster with a system designed for salt contaminated masonry.**

MODERATE Salts left by the water hold moisture in the plaster and will push ordinary plaster and paint off again. Doing it last stops the new plaster being spoiled by water that is still getting in. Suitable trade: a plasterer experienced with salt contaminated walls and the plaster systems made for them.

7. **Clean the mould at the foot of the corner with detergent and water or a mould and mildew cleaner, and dry thoroughly. Bleach is not needed; removing the growth is what matters.**

MONITOR The mould is growing on the damp plaster, and damp plaster supports mould growth. Keeping it clean in the meantime keeps it in check. Suitable trade: the owner can do this.

8. **Consider a cooker hood or extract fan in the kitchen that discharges to outside.**

MONITOR The current hood recirculates, so the moisture from cooking stays in the house. This is good practice rather than a cause of the damp in the corner. Suitable trade: an electrician, with a builder if a hole through the wall is needed for the duct.

9. **Optional and cosmetic: once the new plaster has dried out, redecorate with a breathable paint.**

COSMETIC The staining is to the finishes. It is at the owner's discretion, when they naturally come to redecorate, and is not a necessary measure. Suitable trade: the owner or a decorator.

Further investigation

WHAT	WHY	WHAT IT WOULD ESTABLISH	ACCESS
Remove the panel beneath the shower tray and inspect the waste, trap and seal with the shower running, and check the supply and the power shower unit.	A reading on the shower tiles gave the top of the scale and the damage backs onto this room. Seeing the waste with water running through it is the quickest way to prove or rule out the shower.	Whether the shower is leaking into the wall, and from where.	Non destructive
A pressure test of the central heating system.	The boiler loses water and a radiator valve sits directly below the damage. A pressure test shows whether the system holds, and needs doing before any samples are taken.	Whether there is a heating leak.	Non destructive

If the shower and the heating both prove sound, a recheck of the corner after a period of heavy rain.	With the services ruled out, the lean-to roof is the remaining route. Readings after heavy rain, measured against the living room control of 8.1 %WME, would show whether the wall wets up with the weather.	Whether the roof junction is feeding the wall.	Non destructive
Before replastering, drilled samples from the corner at 600mm, from the chimney breast and from the kitchen side left of the door, tested for moisture, with a salts test to identify the type of salt.	An electrical meter reads salts and moisture alike. Samples measured against a sample from the control position, which read 8.1 %WME, show how much is water and how much is salts, and to what height the salts go.	Whether the wall has dried once the leak is stopped, whether the salts on the chimney breast come from the flue or from water, and the height any replastering needs to reach.	Invasive, consent required

Limitations of this inspection

Opening up	None undertaken
Instruments used	Thermal imaging, Moisture meter, Hygrometer, Surface thermometer
Weather qualification	Light rain at the time of inspection, with light rainfall in the previous 48 hours
Outside the scope of this report	Timber decay, which requires a CSRT qualified surveyor, Ventilation flow rates
Positions that could not be reached	The old chimney breast, its return and the wall to the kitchen, 2 positions; External wall below the window, 3 positions

How to read the readings in this report

Moisture readings are comparative. They are taken with an electrical resistance meter and expressed as a wood moisture equivalent, %WME. On plaster and masonry this is a comparative indication, not a measurement of how much water the material contains. That is why readings are given against a control taken in an unaffected area of the same room.

Green, below 17 %WME
Dry

Amber, 17 to 19 %WME
At risk

Red, 20 %WME and above
Wet

A hatched square marked x in a moisture grid is a position that could not be reached, for example behind fitted furniture. It is not a dry reading.

Dew point is calculated, not measured, from the recorded air temperature and relative humidity using the Magnus approximation. Where a surface temperature has been measured, comparing the two shows whether condensation is occurring on that surface.

Where a moisture grid is shown, the readings are laid out on the surface they were taken from. The pattern is diagnostic. Moisture rising from the ground declines with height, a localised patch points to water entering at that point, and a band with an abrupt upper edge usually means plaster carried too low rather than groundwater.

Use of this report as an example

We publish anonymised examples of our work so that people can see what a Vigilant survey report actually contains before they book one. We do that only with the written agreement of the client the report was written for, and only after they have seen the exact version we propose to publish. The name, the property address and the postcode are removed, along with any photograph showing anything personal. This copy is published on that basis.

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Readings are comparative %WME. Green below 17, amber 17 to 19, red 20 and above.