



Confidence in surveying

[www.challengers.co.uk](http://www.challengers.co.uk)



## Challengers

We are often asked why the name of the practice is Challengers. Well the founders chose this because of their interests in ships and craft that go to sea, and having established their offices in the Medway area with its long established sea connections it seemed natural to find a name that linked the two. We discovered that in the 1930's a survey ship was built for the Royal Navy at Chatham, and the vessel was called HMS Challenger which became an obvious choice as the practice name.

With our offices in Rochester Challengers are in an ideal position. We benefit from the inspirational qualities of this historic cathedral city. Our clients gain from our close proximity to the excellent motorway and rail links that serve Kent, London, the South East and, of course, the Channel ports and London City or Gatwick airports for ready access to Europe.



We specialise in looking after buildings and everything that concerns them.

To dispel, for example, any concern by architects that our work competes with theirs, be re-assured it does not. On the contrary, architects and other fellow professionals are amongst our very varied clients.

We offer a complete service with regard to buildings and their systems whether or not they are residential, commercial, industrial or public.

## Building surveys/valuations

### Why do I need my own survey?

The best way to reach an informed decision on such an important investment as a home is to have a professional survey and valuation of the property which interests you. Before you decide to go ahead and commit yourself legally, you can minimise the risks by asking a qualified surveyor to answer these questions for you:

- ✚ Is the agreed price reasonable?
- ✚ Are there drawbacks I don't know about?
- ✚ If so, what do I need to do about them?

Commissioning your own survey is the simple, economical way to avoid unpleasant - and perhaps costly - surprises after moving in. In some cases, the surveyor's report may enable you to renegotiate the price.



### A building survey (formerly called a structural survey)

A building survey is suitable for all residential properties and provides a full picture of their construction and condition. It is likely to be needed if the property is, for example, of unusual construction, is dilapidated or has been extensively altered - or where a major conversion or renovation is planned. It is usually tailored to the client's individual requirements. The report includes extensive technical information on construction and materials as well as details of the whole range of defects, major to minor.



## Homebuyer surveys & valuations

### The Homebuyer survey & valuation (usually called 'The Homebuyer service')

By contrast, The Homebuyer service is in a standard format and is designed specifically as an economy service. It therefore differs materially from a building survey in two major respects.

It is intended only for particular types of home: houses, flats and bungalows which are:

1. Conventional in type and construction
2. Apparently in reasonable condition

It focuses on essentials: defects and problems which are urgent or significant and thus have an effect on the value of the property - although is also includes much other valuable information.

The Homebuyer unlike a building survey, provides not only a survey but also a valuation as an integral part of the service.

What else should I know about the Homebuyer service?

The Service - the inspection, the report and the valuation - are all explained in detail in the accompanying description of the homebuyer service, but the highlights are:

This is an economy package. Because of the practical limits on the type of property and on the scope of its coverage, The homebuyer service is priced mid-range - more expensive than a mortgage valuation, but less than a building survey.

The surveyor's main objective in providing the service is to assist the prospective homebuyer to:

1. Make a reasoned and informed judgment on whether or not to proceed with the purchase
2. Assess whether or not the property is a reasonable purchase at the agreed price
3. To be clear what decisions and actions should be taken before contracts are exchanged.

The surveyor also gives his or her professional opinion on the particular features of the property which affect its present value and may affect its future resale.

## Building defect reports

Defects arise within buildings of any age. It is occasionally necessary for a chartered surveyor to carry out a diagnostic report on a particular defect. This could simply be a query raised by a mortgage valuer or a defect noted during occupation. This service occasionally leads to us acting as expert witness where a dispute may arise. We will always endeavour to conciliate and resolve the dispute at an early stage to the reasonable satisfaction of those involved. We will be happy to discuss any building defects you may have.

## Schedules of condition dilapidations

It often necessary to record both in writing and by way of photographs the conditions of property and land prior to occupation or completion of occupation and also where other matters may affect the environment. We carry out schedules of conditions and dilapidations on many different types of property but in particular specialise with residential properties.



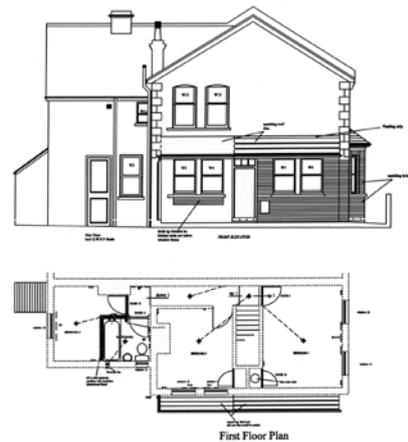
## SAP energy ratings

The Government has recognised the damage caused by CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Standard assessment procedure (SAP) has been introduced to evaluate energy ratings for buildings. We particularly carry out SAP ratings for existing properties for private owners and housing associations to establish existing ratings and where effective upgrading is possible. This service is carried out in house and reports can be generated fairly quickly. SAP ratings have become a necessary part of various mortgage valuations.



## CAD drawings and schedule of works

We carry out measured surveys and provide plans for existing and proposed buildings which are often complemented by detailed schedules of works. These in particular are used for contract administration. They may also be used for planning applications and building regulations applications for schemes such as conversions and extensions.



## Party wall advice

The party wall act requires certain procedures to be followed when considering works to or near a party wall, in certain circumstances. We here at Challengers provide party wall advice and act as both building owner's surveyors and adjoining owner's surveyors. We will be happy to answer any queries you may have.



## Schemes

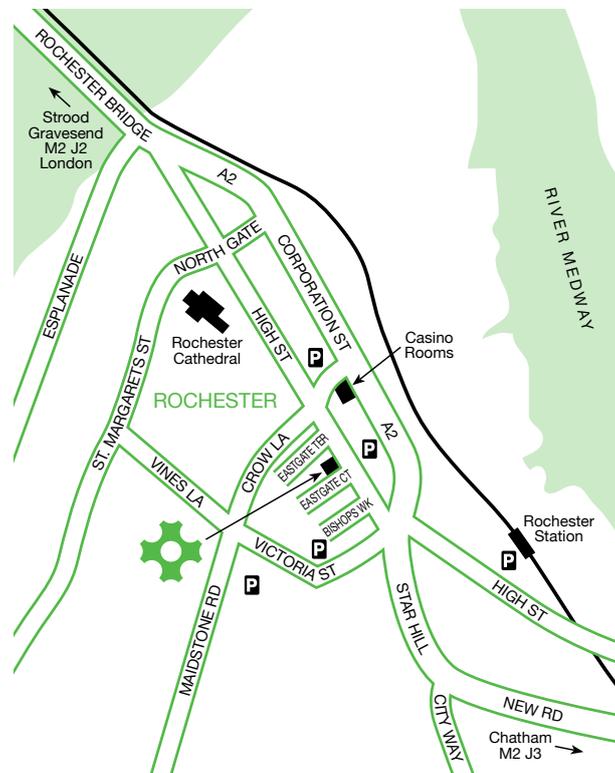
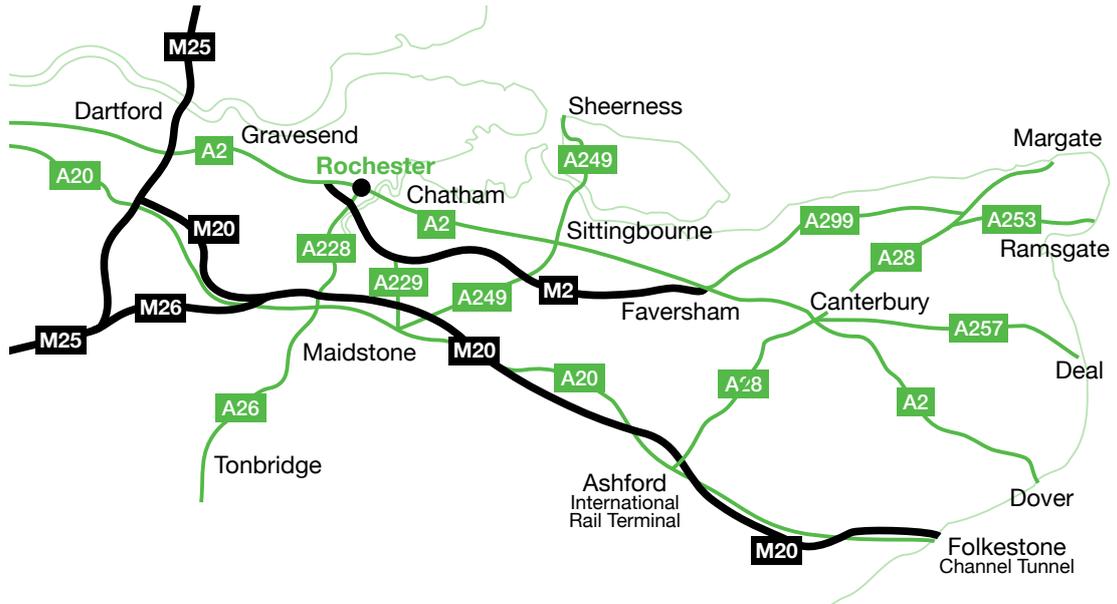
### Contract administration

We at Challengers are often appointed to provide a contract administration for clients, in particular housing associations, to deal with refurbishment, modernisation and alterations to existing residential buildings. Our services as contract administrator involves the preparation of all relevant paperwork and involving a building contractor right through to agreeing final account and completion of the project. It is often necessary to prepare detailed drawings and schedules of work along with necessary local authority applications. Sample schemes can be provided on request.



### Employer's agent

We at Challengers are frequently appointed by clients, particularly housing associations, to act as employer's agent in respect of new build housing schemes. Section 106 planning agreements often require elements of sites to be affordable housing, which is and has led to an increase in the scope of service for employer's agent on their behalf. We have also completed many schemes as employer's agent for specific affordable housing. This is an expanding service within the practice. We will be happy to provide sample schemes should these be required.



160 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1ER  
**T** 01634 407676 **F** 01634 407685  
**E** info@challengers.co.uk **W** www.challengers.co.uk

