

Improving your service

21 October 2015

Graham Ellis explains the changes to RICS Home Surveys and Homebuyer Report and new marketing initiatives

The establishment of RICS Home Survey and the 3 survey level services within it [the Condition Report (1), Homebuyer Report (2) and Building Survey (3)] mean they can all be recognised as distinct consumer-facing survey-only products that acquaint homebuyers, sellers and occupiers with the condition and environs of a residential property. RICS successfully promoted the message that 'a valuation is not a survey' through a [video](#) released earlier this year. RICS members and affiliated firms can copy and paste the video or link to it on their company website and many have incorporated it on their home page.

Homebuyer Report

RICS is determined to clearly differentiate between a valuation and a survey. Accordingly, the valuation element is removed from the standard Homebuyer Report, which will become a survey-only service as are the Condition Report and Building Survey. The revised Homebuyer Report is virtually the same as the previous version, except it does not refer to valuation matters or the Red Book. RICS residential surveyors who are not registered valuers may now offer the Homebuyer Report.

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RICS recognises that members who are registered valuers may want to continue to offer a valuation and survey, and so has created the Home Surveys Additional Service ? Valuation, which must be part of the parent RICS Home Survey; it can be used with the Condition Report and Building Survey, which also gives members who are registered valuers the opportunity to offer it with these services. It requires separate terms of engagement and will be mandated by the latest edition of the Red Book, which is based on Section K in the former Homebuyer Report. Licence holders should be aware that they can make an additional charge above the fee for the survey-only service.

Marketing support

The flyer, [A valuation is not a survey](#) , explains in plain English the RICS survey that potential clients might need. It can be downloaded and shared on your website, by email or printed copies can be sent out.

This web link also offers practical tips on how to raise your profile in your local market and make valuable connections with businesses that could supply you with future leads.

New initiatives

RICS has also launched new marketing tools that include:

- [isurv WorkSmart](#) : an online report-writing tool that can save time and produce high-quality reports by working to a standard RICS format with a user-friendly template. It offers an option to use more than 1,000 RICS standard phrases, a library of your own phrases, company logos, photos and supporting documents. These reports highlight property findings and any actions clients need to take. It is free to register and there is no subscription fee; prices start at ?4 and you only pay for the reports you produce
- [isurv ProForm](#) : allows you to complete your reports online; these can then be printed and sent to your clients
- **Licensed third-party suppliers**: a number of software providers are licensed to support the RICS Home Surveys. Check with your regular software provider
- **Find a surveyor**: can be used to raise your profile and promote your services. Contact the team on 020 7880 6221

Further information

- If you would prefer to use an MP4 video file of the Home Survey video, email digital1st@rics.org or ellicence@rics.org , or call customer services 0247 686 8555
- Related competencies include: [Business planning](#) , [Inspection](#)
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