Warmth & Moisture Assessment Report

SOUTHERLEIGH
Property Maintenance

Understanding your home's warmth, comfort and moisture performance - and what you can do to improve it.



PREPARED FOR
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PROPERTY
1 Any Street, Mount Victoria, Wellington

HOME VISIT
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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Why this report has been prepared

New Zealand has a long-standing problem with homes that are cold, damp and difficult to keep healthy. Many owners know that something is wrong, but are left uncertain about which problems matter most, what is causing them and where limited money will make the greatest difference.

This report is intended to help you make sense of your home's warmth, comfort and moisture performance. It brings together what you told us, what we could observe during the visit and what those findings may mean for the way your home performs.

Our approach is objective and independent. We aim to explain the evidence clearly, distinguish what is known from what still needs checking, and communicate in plain English rather than technical jargon. The purpose is to help owners and occupants solve the right problems first - and avoid being trapped in a cycle of uncertainty about what to fix next.

How to read the report

We describe the conditions we observed and the concerns you raised. A finding may help explain why a room feels cold or damp, but it does not always confirm the cause. Where further checks are needed, we explain what should be investigated and why.

DO NOW	Practical actions that can be undertaken now. These may include no-cost changes and modest improvements that provide useful benefits while larger work is being planned.
DO NEXT	Work worth planning and budgeting for, or work that should wait until another investigation or prerequisite has been completed.
WORTH CONSIDERING	Optional ideas that may help reduce household energy or water use. They are not necessarily responses to a problem identified in this assessment.

The recommendations are guidance, not a quotation or a guarantee of a particular result. Before starting work, confirm the actual condition, scope and cost with the person carrying it out.

YOUR HOME

The house and how it is used

The property is recorded as a single-storey bungalow, likely dating from the 1920–1940 period. The floor area is approximately 300 m^2 and the house has four bedrooms. There are four occupants.

The living room faces west, while the bedrooms face east. Neighbouring buildings sit about two metres from the east and west boundaries, so they are likely to restrict direct sunlight to some windows, depending on their height and the time of year.

We understand that the roof was fully replaced about 10 years ago and that ceiling and wall insulation were partly upgraded around that time. The windows fall into three broad age groups: the original timber sash windows, later timber windows thought to be around 60 years old, and aluminium windows installed about 30 years ago. The assessment also indicates that the house has not been reclad, and that there has been no floor replacement, ground vapour barrier installation or double or secondary glazing.

The concerns raised include a cold house in winter, condensation on windows, windows that do not close properly, cold air around windows and doors, general draughts, cold bedrooms, and a long time taken to warm the house. Bedrooms 3 and 4 are not currently used because they are too cold. You also drew our attention to holes in the floor.

The visit took place on a cool, cloudy day with light rain and a strong southerly wind. These conditions may have made draughts and cold surfaces easier to notice.

YOUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A practical way forward

The recommendations below reflect the conditions we found in your home and the improvements that may help. We have separated practical steps that can be taken now from work that needs planning or further checking. The cost ranges are broad guides only, not quotes. The right scope and price will depend on what is found when the work is carried out.

Do Now | Do Next | Worth Considering

The plan is staged, not a rigid timetable. Structural safety and weather-tightness may constrain later work, but smaller, low-cost measures can still provide relief while larger projects are scoped and funded. “Worth Considering” items are optional household choices, not necessarily remedies for an observed fault.

PRIORITY	AREA	RECOMMENDATION	COMMENT	APPROX. COST
Do Now	Rainwater management	**Repair the leaking gutter joint.**	The joint is leaking. Repair it and check that the gutter is properly supported, has a suitable fall and carries water away without leaking or overflowing. Check the timber below for signs of continued wetting.	Low
Do Now	Supporting structure	**Arrange an assessment of the deteriorated piles and underfloor structure.**	The visible deterioration needs to be checked before anyone enters the underfloor or plans insulation work. The assessment should establish how widespread the damage is, whether the house is adequately supported and what is needed to make access safe.	Low
Do Now	Cladding & coatings	**Arrange an assessment of the damaged exterior cladding.**	The visible damage needs more than a surface repair. Establish which areas can be repaired, which need replacement and whether framing or insulation behind the cladding has been affected.	Very low
Do Now	Ventilation & moisture	**Repair or replace the broken extractor fan in Bathroom 1.**	The Bathroom 1 fan is not working. Repair or replace it, then check that it removes air effectively and discharges outdoors.	Very low
Do Now	Ventilation & moisture	**Check the Bathroom 2 extractor system before using it.**	The grille was covered and we do not know why. Establish the reason, then check the fan, wiring, duct and outdoor discharge before removing the cover or using the system.	Low
Do Now	Ventilation & moisture	**Use a working bathroom extractor during and after showers, and wipe down wet shower surfaces.**	This helps remove moisture where it is produced. Leave the fan running until the room has cleared, for example when the mirror is no longer misted. This depends on a safe, working fan that discharges outdoors.	None
Do Now	Windows & doors	**Repair or adjust timber windows that do not close properly.**	Start with the windows that do not close fully. Check the hardware and alignment so the sashes close securely before adding weather strips.	Low
Do Now	Windows & doors	**Renew missing or deteriorated putty on sound timber windows.**	Renew the glazing putty where the timber frame is sound. Traditional putty needs to be painted within 4–8 weeks, following the product instructions, to protect it from the weather.	Low
Do Now	Windows & doors	**Seal gaps in aluminium window-frame joints.**	We found gaps at the joints in the aluminium frames. Use a repair detail compatible with the window system and keep any designed drainage paths clear.	Low
Do Now	Windows & doors	**Renew failed seals between aluminium frames and glass.**	Check the glazing perimeter separately from the frame joints. Renew failed gaskets or perimeter seals using a method suitable for the window system.	Low
Do Now	Windows & doors	**Fit adhesive weather strips where gaps remain around operable sashes.**	Fit strips only where a gap remains after the window has been adjusted and closes properly. They do not repair failed frame joints or glazing seals.	Very low
Do Now	Draught control	**Seal unintended gaps at floorboards and wall junctions.**	Seal confirmed gaps at floorboards and wall/floor or wall/ceiling junctions with a product suited to the gap and expected movement. Do not block intentional ventilation or drainage paths.	Low

PRIORITY	AREA	RECOMMENDATION	COMMENT	APPROX. COST
Do Now	Draught control	**Replace badly damaged floorboards that cannot be sealed effectively.**	A damaged board may not provide a sound base for draught sealing. Check for moisture or subfloor problems before replacing it.	Low
Do Now	Draught control	**Use a door sausage between the warmer living area and colder entrance or hallway areas.**	This can reduce cold air movement between rooms when the door is closed. It does not seal the outside of the house, and should not create a trip hazard or obstruct an escape route.	Very low
Do Now	Draught control	**Use substantial rugs over cold or draughty floorboards where suitable.**	Rugs can make the floor more comfortable underfoot. They do not repair gaps or address any moisture problem below the floor.	Low
Do Now	Window coverings	**Improve the living-room curtain edge closure.**	The curtains leave gaps at the edges. Improving the closure can reduce air movement behind the curtains and make the area near the cold glass more comfortable.	Very low
Do Now	Heating	**Use a portable fan heater to warm Bathroom 1 briefly before showering.**	A fan heater provides a quick burst of warmth. Use it only where it can be operated safely, well away from water, towels and other combustibles, and follow the manufacturer's instructions.	None
Do Now	Heating	**Use the portable electric column heater for occasional warmth in Bedroom 3 or 4.**	A non-fan column heater is more suitable for occasional use in a spare bedroom than a fan heater. Position it securely with clear space around it and switch it off when the room is not occupied.	None
Do Next	Cladding & coatings	**Repair or replace damaged cladding once the extent of deterioration is known.**	The repair scope depends on what is found behind the damaged areas. Local repairs may be suitable in some places, while widespread deterioration may require broader replacement.	Medium to Very high
Do Next	Supporting structure	**Carry out the pile or underfloor repairs identified by the structural assessment.**	The assessment should establish whether selected components can be replaced or whether broader re-piling is needed. The appropriate option cannot be chosen from the visible edge alone.	High to Very high
Do Next	Windows & doors	**Repair or replace timber windows that are too decayed or distorted to make sound and weather-tight.**	Repair sound frames where possible. Replace only those that cannot be made reliable, rather than assuming every older window needs replacing.	Low to High
Do Next	Insulation	**Reposition, repair or tidy existing ceiling insulation after safe access and checks.**	The insulation is present but uneven, with gaps. Restore a continuous layer where material is sound, and replace material that is wet or damaged. Check clearances and roof-space safety first.	Low
Do Next	Insulation	**Install or top up wall insulation if investigation confirms it is absent or inadequate**	Only proceed if a suitable retrofit method is identified after checking the wall construction, existing insulation and moisture history. The method must suit the wall construction. Cavity filling is not suitable for every building.	Medium
Do Next	Heating	**Assess heating capacity against the heat loss of rooms the household wants to use.**	Cold bedrooms do not by themselves prove that the heaters are undersized. Check room heat loss, heater output, controls and heat distribution before choosing new equipment.	Low
Do Next	Heating	**Consider a through-wall heat-transfer fan only where the living room has surplus heat and the colder room has a return-air path.**	This can move some warmth from one room to another, but it does not create heat or correct excessive heat loss. Check noise, privacy, moisture transfer and fire/smoke separation.	Low
Worth Considering	Window coverings	**Consider honeycomb blinds for selected cold windows.**	These may improve comfort around cold glazing. Suitability depends on the window, moisture exposure and whether the blind can be kept clean and dry.	Low
Worth Considering	Hot water	**Consider suitable low-flow shower heads.**	This may reduce hot-water use if the spray remains comfortable and the fittings work with the instantaneous hot-water system.	Very low
Worth Considering	Hot water	**If it suits the household, reduce shower duration towards 3–5 minutes.**	This is an optional household choice that may reduce hot-water use. It is not a substitute for effective bathroom extraction.	None

PRIORITY	AREA	RECOMMENDATION	COMMENT	APPROX. COST
Worth Considering	Hot water	**Use the cold-water laundry setting where the detergent, fabric and hygiene requirements allow.**	This may reduce hot-water use for suitable laundry loads.	None
Worth Considering	Solar gain & shading	**Open curtains on windows receiving useful winter sun, then close them as the room cools.**	This makes use of available sunlight. It only helps where the sun actually reaches the window.	None

AT A GLANCE

The main things affecting this home

The main things affecting warmth and comfort are the cold single-glazed windows, draughts around windows and floors, uneven ceiling insulation and limited heating in some rooms. The exterior also needs attention, particularly the cladding and supporting piles.

AREA	WHAT WE FOUND	WHY IT MATTERS
Guttering	A leaking joint, with algae, paint damage and deteriorated timber below.	Repeated wetting can damage fascia, soffits and other timber. Some deterioration may extend behind the visible surface.
Supporting structure	Deteriorated piling was visible. The underfloor could not be safely accessed.	The piles support the house. If they move, movement can be transferred through the framing and may create gaps in cladding or joinery, allowing water to enter. This possibility needs to be checked, not assumed.
Cladding	Peeling and bubbled paint, broken boards, timber decay and gaps between weatherboards.	Damaged cladding may allow rainwater behind the outer wall. Concealed framing or insulation may also be affected, but the extent is unknown.
Windows	Single glazing throughout. Some timber windows are deteriorated or cannot close fully, and some aluminium joints have failed.	Glass and aluminium transfer heat readily compared with well-insulated building materials. Single glazing, conductive frames and gaps around windows all contribute to heat loss and discomfort.
Draughts	Gaps around doors, windows, floorboards and a kitchen wall-to-ceiling junction.	Cold air entering the house can make rooms uncomfortable and increase the amount of heating needed.
Ceiling insulation	Insulation is present but unevenly laid, with gaps and mixed materials.	Gaps and displaced insulation interrupt the insulating layer and allow more heat to escape into the roof space.
Ventilation	Bathroom 1's fan is not working. Bathroom 2's fan grille was covered.	Bathrooms need effective extraction to remove moisture and reduce condensation on cold surfaces.

As the Improvement Plan explains, there are useful steps the household can take now. The larger structural and exterior projects still need to be planned, but smaller improvements can make the home more comfortable while that work is being scoped and funded.

01 / RAINWATER MANAGEMENT

A leaking section of guttering is wetting the exterior

WHAT WE FOUND

The corrugated steel roof appeared to be in good condition in the areas visible from the ground. We understand the roof was replaced about 10 years ago. The uPVC guttering is generally serviceable, but one joint is leaking. Algae beneath the gutter, nearby paint damage and deterioration to fascia, soffits or bargeboards suggest that these areas have been getting wet repeatedly. Some damage may extend behind the visible surface.

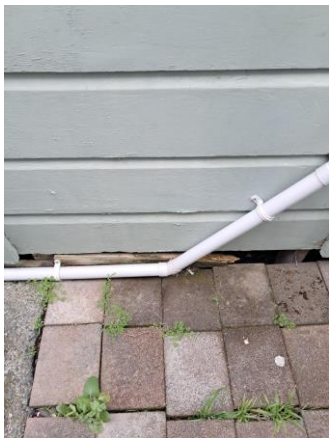
WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Arrange a repair to the leaking gutter joint. Check that the gutter is properly supported, has a suitable fall and carries water away without leaking or overflowing. Inspect the timber below and behind the leaking area for further signs of dampness or damage.

DO LATER: If the timber has deteriorated beyond a minor repair, obtain a separate scope for the necessary carpentry and coating work. Repainting alone will not solve the problem if the timber is still getting wet.



Roof in good condition



Water on ground under leaky pipe

02 / SUPPORTING STRUCTURE

The deteriorated piles need to be assessed before underfloor work

WHAT WE FOUND

We could see deteriorated piling at the accessible edge of the underfloor. The underfloor could not be safely accessed, so we could not inspect the remaining piles, bearers, joists, flooring, plumbing or insulation. Piles support the house. If they move or lose support, movement can be transferred through the framing and may create gaps or distortion in cladding and joinery. Those gaps can allow water to enter. We have not established that this has happened here, but it is one reason to assess the piles before finalising the exterior repair work.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Arrange an assessment by a suitably qualified building professional or structural engineer. The assessment should establish the extent of the deterioration, whether the house is adequately supported and what is needed to make underfloor access safe.

DO LATER: Once safe access has been established, arrange a closer inspection of the underfloor, including the piles, bearers, joists, plumbing, ground moisture, ventilation and any existing insulation. Only then decide whether underfloor insulation or a ground vapour barrier is suitable. Do not enter the underfloor until access has been confirmed safe.



Deteriorated piling

03 / SOLAR GAIN & SHADING

Nearby buildings are likely to limit winter sunlight to some windows

WHAT WE FOUND

The living room faces west and the bedrooms face east. Neighbouring buildings are less than two metres from the east and west boundaries. They are likely to reduce direct sunlight reaching some windows, although the effect will depend on the height of the neighbouring buildings, the window position and the season. We did not measure sunlight through the year.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Make the most of any useful winter sun by opening curtains while sunlight reaches the room. Close them again as the sun moves off and the room begins to cool.

DO LATER: No major shading work is recommended from this visit alone. If a room becomes too hot in summer, first establish when and where overheating occurs. Then consider shading that reduces summer heat without unnecessarily blocking useful winter sunlight.



View from West



View from East

04 / CLADDING & COATINGS

The exterior walls need more than a repaint

WHAT WE FOUND

The timber and plywood cladding is in very poor condition in several areas. We saw peeling and cracked paint, pinholes, bubbles beneath the paint, broken boards, timber decay and gaps between weatherboards. These defects reduce the wall's ability to shed rain. Water may have reached the materials behind the cladding, including framing and insulation. We cannot confirm the extent of any concealed damage from a visual inspection, but the condition of the exterior makes this an important part of the investigation.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Arrange a building-envelope assessment. Establish which areas can be repaired, which need replacement and whether framing, building paper, cavity details or insulation behind the cladding have been affected. Ask for a scope that deals with junctions and weatherproofing details, not just the visible surface.

DO LATER: Coordinate the cladding project with the findings of the pile assessment. If the piles have moved, that may have affected the framing and opened gaps in the cladding. The available information does not yet establish whether local repairs or broader recladding will be appropriate.



Peeled paint and rotted weatherboards



Variety of claddings, with deterioration

05 / WINDOWS & DOORS

Single glazing, poor window closure and aluminium frames are all contributing to heat loss

WHAT WE FOUND

All assessed windows were single-glazed. The house has three broad groups of windows: original timber sash windows, later timber windows thought to be around 60 years old, and aluminium windows installed about 30 years ago. The living-room aluminium windows have failed joints, surface deterioration and visible gaps. The timber windows in Bedrooms 1 and 2 show decay or softening. The timber windows in Bedrooms 3 and 4 are distorted and cannot fully close. The original sash window has missing or deteriorated putty. Glass is a poor insulator, so heat passes through single glazing readily. Aluminium also conducts heat readily, while gaps around frames and sashes allow cold air to enter.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Renew missing or deteriorated putty where the timber frame is sound. The glazing should be properly secured and sealed. Traditional glazing putty needs to be painted within 4–8 weeks of renewal, following the product instructions, to protect it from weather.

DO LATER: Where a timber frame is too decayed or distorted to repair reliably, plan replacement. Once frames are sound and weather-tight, consider removable secondary glazing, insulated glazing units or other suitable upgrades for selected windows. A whole-house replacement is a major project and is not automatically necessary for every window.



Original sash window with missing putty



Gaps in window frames



Black mould on aluminium frames

06 / WINDOW COVERINGS

Bedroom curtains could do more to retain heat

WHAT WE FOUND

The curtains are generally in good physical condition, but several could do a better job of keeping warmth in the rooms. The living-room curtains leave a wide gap at the side, have no pelmet and would work better if they reached the floor. Bedroom 1 also has a wide side gap and curtains that do not reach the floor. Bedrooms 1 and 2 have short, single-layer curtains, and none of the assessed bedroom or living-room curtains has a pelmet. Gaps at the sides and top allow air to circulate behind the curtains, reducing their effectiveness.

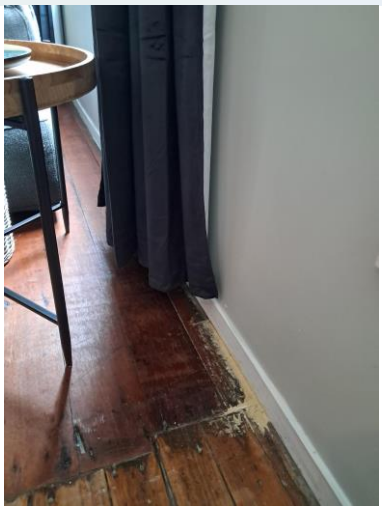
WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Improve the living-room curtain edge closure. Attach Velcro or another suitable fastening to the curtain edges and the wall so that, when closed, the curtains reduce air movement at the cold window and retain a more stable layer of air between the covering and glazing. Check the actual side and top gaps, length, lining, overlap and ability to close. The benefit depends on consistent use and suitable window geometry.

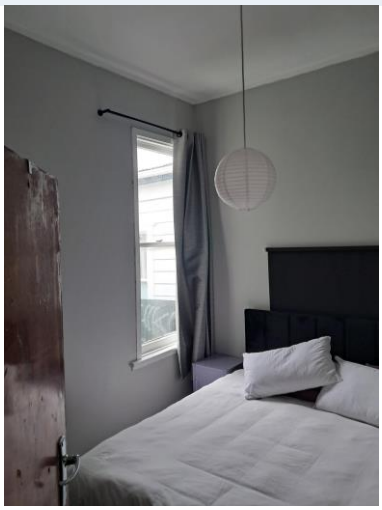
DO LATER: When practical, replace or upgrade the curtains in Bedrooms 1 and 2 and the living room with full-length, lined or layered curtains. Improve side closure and consider a pelmet or another way to close the gap above the curtains. Well-fitted curtains help prevent warm air reaching cold glass, but they are not a solution for defective frames and are not equivalent to double-glazing. Maintain heater clearances, safe egress and any required ventilation.



Living room curtains - wide gap, no pelmet



Living room curtains - best if touching the floor



Bedroom 1 curtains - wide gap, do not reach the floor

07 / DRAUGHT CONTROL

Draughts are a problem in many parts of the house

WHAT WE FOUND

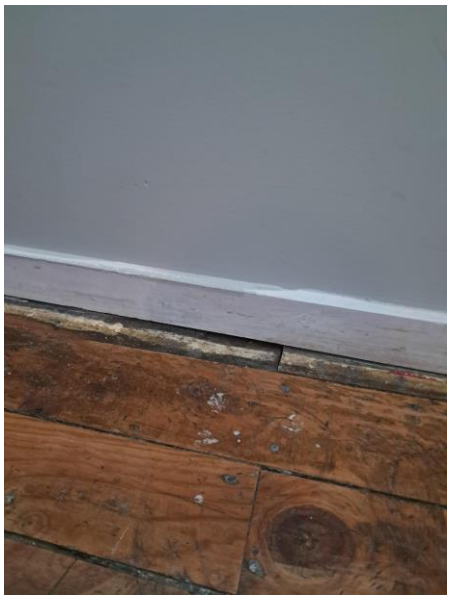
Draughts were identified around doors and door frames, window frames and sashes, floorboards and skirting boards in several rooms, and at the kitchen wall-to-ceiling junction. The bedrooms and entrance areas are particularly affected. These gaps allow cold air to enter and warm indoor air to escape. We identified likely leakage paths, but did not measure the amount of air leakage.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Seal confirmed unintended gaps at accessible floorboard and wall/floor junctions. Use a flexible sealant where some movement is expected. Where a floorboard is badly damaged, replacing the damaged board or section will be more reliable than filling a large gap. A substantial rug can make the floor feel warmer.

DO NOW: Use a door sausage between the warmer living area and colder entrance or hallway areas where it helps limit cold air movement. At the kitchen wall-to-ceiling junction, close the gap with a suitable flexible seal or trim once its cause has been checked.

DO LATER: Repair or adjust windows and doors that do not close properly before fitting draught seals. Do not block designed drainage, ventilation or combustion-air openings. If floor movement or structural damage is suspected, have it assessed before carrying out extensive sealing.



Gaps in floorboards and wall join



Wall-ceiling gap in kitchen

08 / VENTILATION & MOISTURE

The bathrooms need reliable extraction during and after showers

WHAT WE FOUND

Bathroom 1's extractor fan was not working, and condensation was visible on its window. The fan grille in Bathroom 2 was covered with plastic at the time of the visit. We do not know why it was covered, and could not confirm whether the fan was operating. Moist air from showers can condense on cold glass and other surfaces, particularly when extraction is ineffective. Mould was also visible on an aluminium window frame in the living room. The visit did not establish its cause. Moisture generated elsewhere in the home can contribute to indoor humidity and may contribute to mould at colder surfaces.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Repair or replace the Bathroom 1 fan and confirm that it discharges outdoors. Before removing the cover from the Bathroom 2 grille, establish why it was put there and check the fan, wiring, duct and outdoor discharge. Once the Bathroom 2 system is confirmed safe and functional, use it during showers and afterwards.

DO NOW: Use a functioning bathroom extractor during and after showering, and leave it running until surface moisture has cleared, for example when the mirror is no longer misted. Wipe down wet shower surfaces. This depends on a safe, working fan that discharges outdoors.



Covered exhaust fan vent



Black mould on aluminium frames

09 / INSULATION

Ceiling insulation is present but unevenly laid

WHAT WE FOUND

The roof space contains polyester and glass-fibre insulation. The material was assessed as generally in good condition, but it is unevenly laid, with visible gaps and some glass-fibre batts placed over existing polyester matting. The recorded thickness varies from about 100 to 500 mm, and coverage is partial. Insulation works best as a continuous layer. Gaps, compression and displacement reduce its effectiveness. We understand that some wall insulation was installed about 10 years ago. Given the deterioration in the exterior cladding, there is a real possibility that wall insulation in affected areas has been exposed to water and may have lost some of its insulating performance. This has not been confirmed because the walls were not opened.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Once safe roof-space access is available, arrange for the existing insulation to be inspected and mapped. Reposition suitable material to close gaps and restore a more continuous layer without compressing it. Check for moisture, roof leaks, wiring, downlights, flues and other heat-producing equipment before moving or adding insulation.

DO LATER: Consider topping up the ceiling only after confirming the existing materials, their condition, compatibility and required clearances. Include the wall insulation in the cladding investigation. If it has become wet or damaged, establish whether it needs to be removed or replaced and identify a suitable method before specifying any work.



Unevenly installed insulation

10 / HEATING

The living room is well heated, but other rooms need more warmth

WHAT WE FOUND

The living room already has a heat pump installed within the last five years, and its capacity is more than adequate for that space. The difficulty is keeping the other rooms comfortable. Fixed heating in Bedrooms 1 and 2 is not sufficient, while Bedrooms 3 and 4 have no fixed heating and are left unused in winter because they are too cold. The bathrooms also have limited heating. The household has a portable fan heater and an electric column heater that can provide useful short-term or occasional warmth in the rooms where they are needed.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: Use the portable fan heater to provide a short burst of warmth for Bathroom 1 before showering. Keep it outside wet areas, well away from water, towels and other combustible materials, and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Do not use an ordinary portable heater where it could be splashed or exposed to moisture.

DO NOW: Use the portable electric column heater when Bedroom 3 or 4 needs occasional warmth. A non-fan heater is more suitable for an occasionally used spare bedroom than a fan heater. Place it securely with clear space around it and switch it off when the room is not occupied.

DO LATER: If the household wants to use Bedrooms 1 or 2 regularly, assess the heat loss of each room and compare it with the output of the existing heater before deciding whether fixed heating needs to be upgraded. Reduce avoidable heat loss first, then choose heating that suits the room and how often it is occupied.

DO LATER: A through-wall heat-transfer fan may help move surplus warmth from the living room into a colder adjacent room, but only if that room is directly adjacent, the living room has spare heating capacity and the receiving room has a return-air path. It redistributes heat rather than creating it, and will not correct excessive heat loss.

The living room already has a suitable heat pump. The immediate gaps are in the bedrooms and bathrooms, so any further heating should be chosen for the rooms the household wants to use and how often they will be occupied.

11 / HOT WATER

The hot-water system is instantaneous gas

WHAT WE FOUND

The house has an instantaneous gas hot-water system. The tap temperature was recorded at about 49°C. The 10-litre flow test took 42 seconds, which is approximately 14.3 litres per minute. The assessment records one shower per person each day, with an average shower lasting about seven minutes. Laundry is generally washed on a warm setting. No hot- or cold-water leaks were recorded.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

DO NOW: No urgent hot-water system repair was identified during the assessment. Keep an eye out for leaks and arrange repairs if any appear. Continue to use hot water in a way that suits the household's needs.

WORTH CONSIDERING: If the household wants to reduce hot-water use, consider suitable low-flow shower heads, shorter showers and cold-water laundry washes where appropriate. These are optional household choices rather than repairs required by the assessment.

BEFORE COMMITTING TO MAJOR WORK

Some questions that still need answers

Some decisions depend on conditions that could not be confirmed during the visit. These checks will help avoid paying for work that is incomplete, unsuitable or likely to be disturbed by another project.

ITEM	WHAT NEEDS TO BE ESTABLISHED	WHY IT MATTERS
Piles and underfloor	Extent and significance of pile deterioration, and how safe access can be achieved.	The supporting structure must be understood before underfloor work can be planned.
Cladding	Whether framing or insulation behind the cladding has been affected, and which areas can be repaired or replaced.	Visible damage may not show the full extent of water entry.
Windows	Which frames can be made sound and weather-tight, and which need replacement.	This supports a staged plan that directs spending to the worst defects first.
Ceiling insulation	Coverage, material condition, thickness, moisture and clearances.	The existing layer should be made continuous and safe before more insulation is added.
Bathroom 2 fan	Why the grille was covered, and whether the fan and duct discharge outdoors.	The fan needs to be safe and functional before it can remove shower moisture.

A final word

There are worthwhile improvements this household can make now, even while the larger projects are being planned. The first steps are to deal with the leaking gutter, have the piles and cladding properly assessed, and make the most of the windows, curtains and heating already in place. The aim is to make the home more comfortable in manageable stages, with each decision based on what the house needs and what the household can reasonably take on.

SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

What this report can and cannot tell you

The visit was a visual, non-invasive assessment. We did not open walls, remove cladding, dismantle windows or carry out destructive testing. We could not enter the underfloor because access was unsafe. As a result, some conditions remain unknown. In particular, the condition of concealed framing and insulation behind the cladding, and the condition of the underfloor beyond the visible area, have not been established.

Some information about the property's age and past improvements was provided by the occupants. People may not know the exact age, extent or specification of earlier work. Where we rely on that information, we have used cautious wording such as “we understand” or “approximately”. It should be checked before major work is specified.

The report does not replace a full building inspection, structural engineering assessment, invasive moisture investigation, energy audit, electrical or plumbing inspection, or a compliance assessment. It does not certify that the building or any component complies with current requirements. Where specialist assessment is recommended, obtain advice from a suitably qualified person before proceeding.

Recommendations are based on the information available at the time of the visit. Their suitability and cost may change once materials are opened up, measurements are taken or contractors inspect the work. Costs are indicative rather than quotations. Before committing to work, confirm the scope, price, relevant approvals and any required professional design or installation. Do not proceed with work that may affect structural support, weather-tightness, electrical safety, plumbing or ventilation without appropriate advice.

We cannot guarantee a particular reduction in energy bills, indoor temperature, condensation or mould. Results depend on the home's actual construction and condition, the quality of the work, the heating and ventilation systems, weather and how the household uses the home. The report provides practical guidance to support decisions, not a promise of a specific outcome.

ABOUT SOUTHERLEIGH

Practical property knowledge, applied to home performance

Southerleigh Limited is a Wellington-based property maintenance and home renovation business. Our work is focused on helping homeowners look after, repair and improve the homes they live in. That practical experience means we see how building materials, weather exposure, maintenance and repair decisions affect a home's condition over time.

Home Performance Advisory builds on that foundation, with a different purpose. Rather than carrying out the work identified, we help homeowners understand how their home performs in terms of warmth, comfort and moisture, what may be affecting it, and which improvements are worth considering first.

The aim is to provide objective, personalised advice grounded in good science and best practice, explained in plain English and focused on the homeowner's interests. The advisory service is intended to help you make an informed decision. It is separate from the decision about who carries out any recommended work.

Home Performance Advisor certification

In October 2026, Mike Underhill was certified as a home performance advisor by HPA Ltd, a collaboration between Beacon Pathway, Community Energy Network (CEN), and Toimata Foundation. HPA is a for-purpose organisation, independent of any product or brand, and their training supports advisors to provide personalised, independent guidance to households.

