

PE2152/A: Review and update the Home Report system to ensure it protects both the seller and the buyer

Scottish Government written submission, 8 May 2025

Thank you for your email of 27 March 2025 seeking the Scottish Government's views on the action called for in Petition PE2152.

The petition calls on the Scottish Parliament to update the Home Report system to require Home Reports to be updated every three months and to ensure surveyors are held accountable where they are found to have assessed a property inaccurately.

The view of the Scottish Government is that this would be inappropriate for the following reasons:

- The scope and limitations of the home report survey are outlined at the beginning of the report. The Home Report is aimed at providing an assessment of all elements that can be accessed in the property at the time of inspection, based on a visual, non-invasive inspection/survey. The surveyor is not expected to move any obstructions within the property and externally is expected to carry out the inspection from ground level.
- A review of the Home Report is currently underway. The group leading the review are updating the Home Report guidance to ensure the limitations are clear to buyers, along with providing information about other steps they can take to assess the condition of the home they are considering buying.
- Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, only members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) can carry out the single survey and valuation in the home report. A home report must be signed off by a fully qualified member of RICS who is also a registered valuer. To gain qualification to the RICS the valuer must have passed the appropriate examinations or hold an accredited degree and will have passed an Assessment of Professional Competence based on relevant work experience. Members of the RICS who carry out a home report must have in place a complaints handling procedure, offer independent 3rd party recourse to complaints, including Alternative Dispute Resolution by The Property Ombudsman (TPO), and carry professional indemnity insurance (PII).
- There is no evidence to support the request for Home Reports to be updated every three months while a property is on the market. This would have no impact on the accountability of the surveyor, would not have addressed the issue raised by the petitioner, and would be costly for sellers.

Better Homes Division