

1. **Intro** - Section introducing the Chartered Surveying profession and in particular Bruce Shaw Property Consultants Limited. Explain the role of the Chartered Surveyor with a Building Specialism to the readers. The article would also include a bullet point list of all the subjects to be covered over the following weeks.

# The Property Doctor

...are you looking after your investment?

*Written by Colin Bruce, Director, Bruce Shaw Property Consultants Limited*

With the advent of an ever increasing popularity of property related shows on TV such as '**Location, Location, Location**', is it any wonder that most of us would like to consider '**Trading Up**'. After all, we are forever hearing that the property market is potentially topping out and that the buy-to-let market is nearing saturation. However, prices keep going up! Do we truly make the most of our situation? The '**House Doctor**' for instance, a show primarily about presentation, indicates that many are not achieving the best price for their houses, primarily because they fail to maximise the available potential.

All these programmes and magazine equivalents flourish because many of us wish to see what can be achieved. Some of us will happily stand back and admire the efforts of others whilst others cannot help but to get involved and either develop, refurbish, alter or amend an existing property. Financially at least, there has never been a better time to undertake one of these adventurous courses, even though interest rates have stabilised and begun to move upwards recently, many of us can remember the days of the 15% mortgage and this is heaven by comparison.

In considering either your own property or for that matter any other, both in terms of its present condition and future potential, many of you may have either taken the advice of a builder or a professional in the past. Some of you will have heard of a Chartered Surveyor, others may even have heard of a Chartered Building Surveyor, but what you might not realise is that the latter is a Property Doctor. As Consultants we inspect, diagnose and indeed prescribe remedies ensuring that the 'patient', in this case your home or office, are brought into good health by the most efficient means. As with your own health there is often more than one treatment and we can discuss and advise upon the various remedies open to you.

All too often, building owners fail to act quickly enough, leaving their property (our patients in waiting!) to deteriorate involving higher costs to remedy what might be a simple defect. Never was 'a stitch in time saves nine' more relevant than in our own homes or offices. As Property Doctors, our skills can also often provide a solution to what many of you have accepted as either long term or even terminal ailments. As with your medical Doctor, we have undertaken many years of study dedicated to understanding inside out the building technology that goes into making your home.

My Co-Director, Brian Shaw and I each have 20 years experience in the Public and Private sector providing advice to property owners throughout Scotland and beyond. We recently set up our business in Dalgety Bay to provide the Fife market with a 'Property Doctor' service. Over the next few months we will feature a series of short articles covering subjects relevant to both new and old properties alike. These articles will aim to dispel common myths and answer as many questions as space permits. We hope to raise the profile of the 'Property Doctor' and encourage debate on the way we treat, what is for most of us, our most valuable asset.

The forthcoming articles will include:

- energy efficiency
- types of survey
- structural issues
- elevations
- windows & doors
- roofs
- maintenance & repairs
- dampness & condensation
- rot & woodworm
- snagging
- planning & building control
- insurance & legal issues
- external grounds/boundaries
- plumbing & electrics

If you have any queries, or need to consult the Property Doctor please contact either Colin Bruce or Brian Shaw on 01383 824450 or by mobile (24 hours) on 07900 913975, Bruce Shaw Property Consultants Limited, 6 Forth Reach, Dalgety Bay, Fife KY11 9FF or visit us on-line at [www.bruce-shaw.co.uk](http://www.bruce-shaw.co.uk)