

Advice Guide: Selling Your Home

When selling your home, one of the most important decisions is choosing an estate agent. Our guide outlines the selling process with handy hints and tips.

Preparing to sell your home

Your home is probably your largest financial asset. As with any investment you want to ensure that you are able to get the best return possible and the best service from your estate agent.

Fix little problems like leaking taps, chipped paintwork or sticking doors. It won't take long to do and could well pay dividends in the long run. It's important that your home makes a good first impression.

De-clutter your home, garage and even the garden shed! It's important that your home is presented in the best light and by removing clutter you can emphasise the space. It also allows potential buyers to imagine themselves in your home.

Choosing your estate agent

Do your research. Use the property pages of your local paper and property websites to find out which agents have sold similar properties to yours in your area. Look for a local Relocation Agent Network member estate agent. Relocation Agent Network is made up of estate agent members, who are handpicked by Cartus, the premier provider of global relocation services, after thorough checks. Cartus moves more than 163,000 customers worldwide per year.

Appointing your estate agent

There are various ways an estate agent can act for a seller; as sole agent, your home is placed with one firm of estate agents; joint sole agent, two estate agents act in co-operation to market and sell your home; or multiple agent, your home is placed with two or more estate agents.

Check which membership body or trade association the estate agent belongs to for example the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) or the Ombudsman for Estate Agents (OEA). Find out if the agent has any other accreditations or awards and what these have been awarded for. It is also a good idea to ask your estate agent for references.

When you ask an estate agent to sell your property for you and they have agreed, you are entering in to

a legally binding contract, so it is important to make sure that you are happy with the estate agent and

that you have checked all the terms and conditions of the contract and have sought independent legal advice.

Questions to ask

- What evidence does the estate agent have to support their suggested price for your home? It's tempting to pick the estate agent that quotes the highest likely price for your home but it is important to make sure that they have evidence of similar properties that have sold for the same price.
- How often will your property be advertised and where?
- Will the estate agent's fee be a percentage of the sale price or a set sum based on the valuation?
- Will the estate agent show potential buyers around your home?
- If there is anything that you do not understand in the contract or you are not clear about ask the estate agent to explain and obtain independent legal advice.

What will your estate agent do for you?

Once you have selected and appointed an estate agent to sell your property there are a number of things your estate agent should do.

Your estate agent will ask you to sign a document which sets out the terms of their instruction, the contract. The contract with the estate agent will include the fees or charges and when the payments will be due. It will also include the terms of the estate agent's instructions. They will then agree an asking price with you.



the connection is the difference

The estate agent will visit your home and take details of its size and features. These will form the property particulars. The property particulars should include photos of your home, inside and out. A buyer's first sight of your home may be from the estate agent's property details, so it is important to choose an agent who will really take the time to present your home in the best possible way.

Once you have confirmed you are happy with the sale particulars and that the information is accurate your estate agent will arrange for your property to be advertised in local and/or national newspapers, on the internet, and within their offices. They will also contact potential buyers registered with them, to discuss viewing your home.

Your estate agent will manage the viewings, accompanying potential buyers on viewings (if requested), and collect feedback from the viewings.

A good estate agent will always give you honest feedback so be open to any suggestions they have as to how to improve the saleability of your home.

When a buyer expresses an interest in your home and makes an offer, your estate agent will check the buyer's ability to proceed and their timescales for moving. Your estate agent will contact you to inform you of the offer and the potential purchaser's situation. The estate agent will then negotiate the best offer for you. The estate agent will then work with all parties to ensure a successful exchange and completion of contracts.

What do I need to do?

Make sure that you keep your home well presented both internally and externally throughout the selling process. If you know that you have viewings booked, avoid cooking strong smelling food which might leave a stale smell in the property. If you have pets, consider shutting them away during viewings because they may distract potential buyers.

Show off the features of your home. During the autumn and winter months, have a fire, consider lighting it to show it works and create a cosy feeling. If you are selling during spring or summer and have a garden, make sure it is well tended.

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