

# SELLING *your* PROPERTY

We want the selling of your property to run as smoothly as possible. So we don't start or stop with finding you a buyer. **We'll be with you every step of the way;** from preparing to sell and presenting your property for photography, to helping you find the right mortgage advisor, solicitor and surveyor and liaising with them all the way to completion.

First things first, here's a brief guide to selling your property. This will get you up to speed with the process and point out things to consider and what to prepare. Take the time to read through it, as it could save you more time further down the line.

## 1. Consider your target market

Before putting your home on the market consider who the property will most appeal to. If it is most likely to attract a professional couple dress the property to **meet their needs**; if it's a family home do likewise. For example, if you use the second bedroom as an office, decide whether this suits your buyers needs or if it will better appeal as another bedroom

## 2. Prepare your home

It's easy to ignore those little jobs that need doing when we live somewhere, but it is always best to deal with these before going on the market. A coat of neutral paint, some new tiles, replacement handles on cupboard doors, and new lino, can make the world of difference to kitchens and bathrooms.

- Repaint the front door and smarten the hallway – these are a potential buyer's first impression of your home.
- Take down heavy curtains; lighten up dark paint work in small rooms, and place flowers and plants around the house.
- Most important of all **de-clutter**; a buyer needs to be able to feel it could be their home by picturing their possessions in it.

## 3. Spring clean

It is essential the house is spotlessly clean. **Hiring in a professional cleaning firm has proved for many to be money well spent – especially before launch days.** If this is a route you'd like to go down, we have firms we can recommend. Gleaming windows, carpets, upholstery, and even the dreaded oven, can all enhance your chance of selling at the best price. Put fresh white towels out in the bathroom and polish the taps, try not to hide everything in wardrobes and cupboards – if they're

built-in, buyers will open them to see how much storage there is. Finally, **tackle the garden, for most buyers this is viewed as another entertaining space,** so at the least they expect it to feel smart, neat and ready to use

## 4. Instructing an Estate Agent

Don't necessarily go for the agent with the highest valuation, or the one you want to buy through, or the one with the lowest fee – remember, you don't pay an agent anything unless they find you a buyer who offers you a price you're willing to accept. Also consider the length of the contract on offer – if an agent asks you to sign a 16 week contract, what does this say about their confidence to sell your home. **Look at what they can offer in terms of marketing and how they will approach the marketing of your home.** Take time to discuss their strategy to find the best buyer, at the best price

## 5. Instructing a Solicitor

Preparation at the beginning can save a lot of time later on, so it can be prudent to choose your solicitor early. **Ask them to prepare a draft contract and apply for the title deeds.** It is also a good time to get together all the paperwork that might be required (see checklist on next page). Having this information to hand will also help your agent answer buyer's questions accurately and quickly, which in turn can speed up how quickly you secure a buyer.

*“These guys were great. They made selling our house practically stress free. They were honest, straightforward and kept us in the loop every step of the way. We have already recommended them to friends looking to sell.”*

Jeremy (Seller)

## 6. Prices

Unfortunately it is sometimes necessary to reduce the price on a property. Don't be afraid to do this, and don't be afraid to do it quickly. The first two or three weeks on the market are crucial and this is the time when most homes sell. Don't let yours get stale, it's always tempting to wait 'just one more week', meanwhile your competitors are reducing the price on theirs. If the price is too high for too long, you're more likely to end up selling below market value.

*We wanted to say how wonderful we think everyone at Q is. Their knowledge, pragmatism and efficiency were heartily appreciated, but most of all their honesty and availability to talk things through made all the difference when selling our flat. We cannot thank them enough for being so totally different from every other estate agents we have ever come across, and would recommend them unreservedly.*

Naomi (seller)

## 7. Let the world know you're selling

It is always best to put a board up, and don't worry if your neighbours know you're moving – it can only help, as you never know who they may tell about it, they may have some friends or family desperate to move to the area. Word of mouth is sometimes the best marketing tool available.

## 8. Viewings

As tempting as it is to show the house yourself (and understandably so – after all, who knows it best?) don't do it. It is always recommended to go out for viewings and let the agent manage them. You're paying an agent for their expertise – they know how to best answer buyer's questions and what you are and aren't allowed to say, and most importantly they know how to get constructive feedback. Also, the fewer people in the property, the larger the property feels.

## 9. First impressions count

Make your home inviting for viewings.

Turn on lights and the heating, leave pets with neighbours or friends (if possible). Don't smoke or cook strong smelling foods before viewings. If you have a driveway, leave it clear. These are all little touches that buyers pick up on.

## 10. Accepting an offer

When you receive an offer on your property make sure your agent has found out as much as possible about the buyers position. Your agent should do all they can to confirm that they can proceed with the sale, including checking affordability, have they got a mortgage in principle and what the chain details are. **The highest offer is not always the best choice.** Cash buyers are preferable but find out where the cash is coming from, is it dependent on the sale of investments and how long will that take. First time buyers have no chain but are inexperienced. If the buyer needs to sell a property don't remove yours from the market until they are under offer. Also consider what you want to take with you for your next home and what your prepared to leave behind; curtains, furniture and white goods can all be useful bargaining tools and help secure the price you want.

## 11. From under offer to moving home

Now you've secured a buyer the hard work really begins. In an ideal world you will want the sale to go through quickly. **Exchanging contracts as soon as possible decreases the chances of the sale falling through.** Make sure that you speak with your solicitor on a weekly basis and work with your agent to try and head off any likely issues with the sale. Try to be as flexible with completion dates as possible – **it is the exchange date that really matters as this ties all the parties in.** Don't book holidays during your sale – the rest of the chain may not think it's reasonable to delay moving for two weeks while you're 'finding yourself' in Ibiza. **Most of all, try to relax and enjoy the experience, within a few weeks of moving into your new home you will have forgotten all the stress of selling.**

### SOLICITOR DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

- Energy Performance Certificate (we can provide this)
- Title deeds
- A copy of the lease and maintenance charges (if selling a leasehold)
- Any planning consents and building certificates
- Guarantees and warranties for work carried out
- Plan your fixture and fittings list

# A *rough guide* TO THE SELLING PROCESS

*Congratulations, your property is now under offer....*

By this point you should already have a solicitor in mind but if you don't then feel free to ask as we can put you in touch with one who is tried and tested.

1. Now that you've accepted the offer and once we have received solicitor's details from both you and your buyer you will receive a **Memorandum of Sale**. This confirms to you, the vendor and both solicitors, the terms of the sale. It will also include any conditions of sale, such as time frames for exchange.  
***Please check the Memorandum of Sale carefully, although it is not legally binding, mistakes can slow the process.***
2. If your solicitor hasn't already requested them then at this point you will need to fill in a number of forms which will have been sent to you by your solicitor which will include; the **Property Information Form** (also known as the Protocol Form), Fixtures and Fittings form and, if your property is leasehold, the Lease Information Form. Your solicitor will then prepare the **draft contract** from the Deeds and Land Registry.
3. At this point, once your solicitor has passed the draft contract to your buyer's solicitor, your buyer's will be arranging for a mortgage valuation **survey** which will be carried out by their lender (if buying with a mortgage). They may also choose to carry out a homebuyers or building survey. Their solicitor will have also lodged '**Searches**' which are commonly; a drainage search, an environmental search and the 'Local Search' by the Local Authority.
4. If your property is leasehold, your solicitor will ask your freeholder/managing agent for a copy of any expenditure, service charge schedule and buildings insurance. Please note that your managing agent may well charge a fee for providing the **information** and usually won't produce any documentation without being paid first so it is imperative that you make sure your solicitor is in funds.
5. Your buyer's solicitor will most likely have questions following the results of the searches and receipt of the **contracts**. It's important you liaise with your solicitor to ensure these are answered.
6. Once your buyer and their solicitor are satisfied with the responses a **completion date** will need to be agreed between both you and your buyers, your solicitor will confirm this via their solicitor. Once this is agreed your solicitor will send your contract, you will need to sign and return this to your solicitor. Read through it carefully and raise any questions with your solicitor.
7. Your solicitor will now request a settlement figure from your mortgage lender (if applicable). At this point it's a good idea to book your **removals**, as they can get booked quite far in advance.
8. Once both you and your buyer have signed and returned the contracts the buyer will transfer the deposit, usually 10% of the sale price and the solicitors will **exchange** contracts. The sale is now legally binding.
9. Before the sale can complete you will need to sign the **transfer deed** (TR1), which will be sent by your solicitor.
10. Once the completion has happened, you will receive the balance of the money, with deductions for the outstanding mortgage loan, estate agent fees and solicitor's fee.

*The service you get is head and shoulders above other high street estate agents, who treat you like a statistic.*

Heather (Seller)

# OUR *complete* SERVICE

Below is the elements of a typical package we provide. However, our service is bespoke, so we will sit down with you and discuss any other marketing techniques that will help you reach the widest audience and benefit your particular sale. We always welcome feedback and if there is anything you feel we could add to our service we will go away and research that for you. Our success is dependent on working with you to make your sale happen at the best price.

- Wide Angle Photography
- Floor plans
- Energy Performance Certificate
- 360° Virtual Reality Tour
- Social Media Marketing
- Latest Homes & Latest TV Advertising
- Advert in Portfolio Magazine
- Advert in Brighton & Hove Independent
- Eye-Catching Window Display
- Launch Days & Open Houses
- Evening & Weekend Viewings
- Rightmove & Zoopla Premium Listing..... All the above included for FREE
- Independent Property Stylist ..... Subject to requirements
- Full Page Editorial in Latest Homes ..... Subject to Availability
- Cover feature in Latest Homes..... Subject to Availability
- Editorial in Portfolio Brighton ..... Subject to Availability

*The photos Q Estate Agents took were fantastic - everybody said so - the viewings happened with minimal disruption to us, they took care of all the scary stuff, and answered all our (sometimes many) questions. On top of all that they managed to get a higher sale price for us than we'd ever dreamed of.*

Emily (Seller)

## Our Advertising

Coverage is everything and we are confident that our advertising range is second to none.



*As an investor its crucial to me the agents are on the ball. James was always ahead of us all. They got me so many viewings we were turning them away!*

Louise (Seller)

