

A
guide
to

Selling



SALES

DIVISION

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What is Sales Division?

Sales Division is a centrally-based agent, working in partnership with local letting agents. We handle several aspects of the sale process, over-seeing the steps and ensuring that everything runs as smoothly as possible. Our property-selling knowledge and expertise comes from years of experience within the property sales market and combined with the excellent local knowledge of your lettings agent, we can offer you a service that is second-to-none.

FACT – today most properties are initially viewed over the web. This is why Home subscribe to the country's leading property portals (in fact we use approximately thirty websites) and therefore millions of people can view your property details. So if you are thinking of buying a property, call for more information.



PREPARING TO SELL

People have different reasons for selling, from disposing of an investment property to simply moving home.

Once you have decided to sell up, think about what you want to include in the sale. Normally, fixtures and fittings such as fitted storage heaters are included in the price but other moveable things can be up for negotiation.

If you are getting rid of items you no longer need, do it before you start marketing your property as the less clutter you have the faster your house will sell. Many councils take large items away, sometimes for free.



Energy Performance Certificates

By law, sellers must now have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), within twenty-eight days of putting a property on the market. We can arrange this for you.

Apart from the requirement for an EPC, give us any other useful documents and facts about your property, which they can mention to potential buyers, such as:



- ◇ Gas and electrical certificate checks.
- ◇ Building regulations certificates.
- ◇ Council tax, utility, buildings and contents insurance bills - so potential buyers can estimate running costs.
- ◇ Service charges and ground rent bills (for flats).
- ◇ In addition, check with us if it's worth going one better and giving potential buyers other information (which could also speed up the conveyancing process) such as:
- ◇ Environmental Searches. These provide useful information such as the flood risk, radon levels or if there are local mines in the area.

◇ A Home Condition Report - provides more information about the condition of your property, although your buyer will probably still need to get their own survey done.

HOW MUCH IS YOUR HOUSE WORTH?

There are several ways to help you determine how much you should put your house on the market for:

- We can offer expert advice to help you determine a realistic asking price. Use the House Price facility on Rightmove to check out average sold house prices in your area or use Aboutmyplace.co.uk to search using a map.
- Get an accurate picture of trends in your area, as well as national change from the Rightmove House Price Index. Produced monthly, it analyses asking prices of properties that have just come on the market, breaking them down into regional averages.
- Search for similar properties for sale in your area and see what they are currently being marketed for.

Did you know that we can provide you with a personalised Best Price Guide for your property? This is the most comprehensive market appraisal and price comparable tool available anywhere, combining access to over 10 million Rightmove and Land Registry current and historic prices.





SELLING THROUGH AN ESTATE AGENT OR PRIVATELY

It is possible to sell your property privately, but there are significant risks attached. For most people, selling a home is the biggest and most important transaction they will ever make. Using professionals for each part of the process provides you with expert knowledge and legal protection. Besides, selling on your own can be expensive and time-consuming.

You will be responsible for:

- Setting the price
- Organising an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Marketing
- Arranging viewings
- Negotiating the offers
- Progressing the sale through solicitors and conveyancers.

Private sale websites are usually only popular with one type of person - other sellers. There is not usually enough property stock on these websites to lure serious buyers and keep them there. In order to give buyers and sellers the best possible protection and service, Rightmove for example does not accept property advertisements from private sellers or private landlords. The Property Misdescriptions Act 1991 makes it an offence for an estate agent or property developer to make false or misleading statements in the course of their business. The Act is enforced by Trading Standards Officers. Find out more on the DTI website.

We can apply their expertise, local knowledge and marketing power to add real value to your sale.



The advantages of using an estate agent

The staff at your agent and Sales Division spend all day, every day dealing with property and as a result have built up a vast knowledge and expertise in the whole process. We will conduct a valuation on your property, handle viewings and negotiations on your behalf, make sure your property is marketed properly and arrange a Energy Performance Certificate. We will strive to achieve the best possible price for your property and the best buyer, thereby avoiding disappointment and stress from less serious potential buyers.



On top of this we will also be able to offer you plenty of advice along the way. This includes guidance on conveyancing and financial services.

How to choose the right agent

Make sure your estate agent comes with a glowing reference. Ask your family, colleagues, friends and neighbours about their recent selling experiences.

Pick an estate agent with a proven track record in selling - a quick look around your local area looking for 'Sold' boards is a great indicator for this.

Once you have chosen your agents, they will visit your property

and recommend an asking price. We will advise on marketing your property. We will invest in marketing on behalf of the seller, take photos of your property and compile the description; so be very wary of those that ask you to do this yourself.

Finally, **check the small print**. Once you have selected your agent, make sure that you check the **terms of appointment**. It is your responsibility to know what you have agreed to before signing anything legally binding.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF VIEWINGS



Now you have signed a contract with an estate agent and they have arranged your Energy Performance Certificate, you need to get your home ready for viewings and give your house the best chance of selling. First impressions count so put yourself in the buyers' shoes and think about how you can enhance your property's draw.

Consider its "kerb appeal"; the first thing potential buyers will see before they even get past the front door. Here are some things to look out for:

- Does the front of your house need smartening up?
- Could the front garden be tidier?
- Would the front door look better with a fresh lick of paint?
- Could the front windows do with a clean?

Look at the inside with a critical eye too:

- **Keep it clean and tidy**. De-clutter and use sensible storage. Potential buyers will want to visualise how they can fill the space
- Undertake any **minor repairs** that need doing so buyers will need to really try hard to find any negatives
- If you want to re-decorate, go for **neutral tones**, which will appeal to a wider audience
- Make your house **comfortable**, cool on hot sunny days and warm if it's winter
- Banish smoke or pet **odours**. Open the windows, brew some fresh coffee and add finishing touches such as fresh flowers, to brighten the place up



Bring out the **best features** such as fireplaces and use mirrors to increase the sense of space.

NEGOTIATING OFFERS

Once you have received an offer, be prepared to negotiate. But remember, you don't have to sell to the highest bidder. A lower bidder might be better if they:

- Are paying cash (so don't have to wait for mortgage approval)
- Already have a mortgage "agreed in principle"
- Don't have to sell a property first (they could be first-time buyers or investors) or are in a short chain
- Can fit in with your timescales better than other buyers



If you are buying from a developer, see if they will offer a part exchange to buy your property from you.



Gazumping and gazundering

A term used to denote a situation where the seller has accepted an offer but subsequently accepts a higher offer from another purchaser. This is legal and ensuring the property is taken off the market is one way of reducing this risk. Gazumping happens most frequently in a seller's market. Gazundering is the term for when a buyer reduces their offer just before the contracts are exchanged in the hope of forcing the seller to accept less for the property. Again this is considered legal.

If it's not selling...

- Talk to us about why we think it's not selling. What's the feedback from viewings?
- Ask us about 'freshening up' your property details with better photos and a more engaging description?
- Was the exterior photo clearly taken a long time ago in a different season? If so, we will take a new one
- Do you need to reduce the price?

If a survey revealed a problem that led a buyer to pull out or renegotiate, consider getting repairs done.

We advertise properties on over twenty property websites, this increases the attraction of your property by up to ten times.

ENSURING THE SALE GOES SMOOTHLY

Conveyancing, the process of transferring the legal ownership of property or land from one person to another, is very time consuming and complex, so you will need to employ either a solicitor or a licensed conveyancer to do it for you. Here are our top tips on choosing and using a conveyancer:

1. Get at least three conveyancers' quotes. Ask friends, family and us for recommendations.
2. Tell your conveyancer if you want answers to any specific questions in advance
3. Let them know when you would like to exchange contracts and complete. Tell them you will require regular updates of how the sale is progressing
4. Try to negotiate a no sale - no fee deal, so if the deal falls through you don't pay anything
5. Check and compare quotes carefully making sure they are like for like.

Once you have appointed a conveyancer, you will need to...



- Give them some basic information to get started such as your mortgage roll number - so they can check you own the property and proof of your ID
- Complete a detailed questionnaire on the property, covering things like who owns the boundaries and whether you have had any disputes with neighbours. It is a legal requirement to answer truthfully
- Complete a form showing what fixtures and fittings are included in the sale

Answer conveyancing queries as soon as you can. Use registered post or deliver documents by hand.

Exchange of Contracts

In England and Wales, when copies of signed contracts are exchanged between the buyer's conveyancer and the seller's conveyancer, it is the last stage of the legal process after which a buyer cannot pull out (without losing their deposit).

A date for **completion** is usually set for at least two weeks after the **exchange date**, giving you time to arrange removals. Your conveyancer will call your agent to tell them when the buyer's money has arrived so they can give the keys to the new owner.



Check the conveyancer's completion statement carefully - it should reflect the original quotation.

PREPARING FOR MOVING DAY



It is unusual to hear from someone who didn't have a stressful time moving but being organised is the trick to minimise your stress levels during this time. Here are some tips to make moving day as smooth as possible:

- Use a good removal firm - seek recommendations from friends. Look for members of the British Association of Removers.
 - If possible, try to stagger moving days so you don't have to do everything all in one day.
 - This can also give you time to do any essential work to the new property such as carpet cleaning or any decorating that needs to be done before all your belongings arrive
- Try to avoid Mondays and Fridays which are the busiest days on the roads.
 - Save time and cost by doing some of the packing yourself.
 - Check out the best value utility contracts for your new property well in advance and read the meters in both properties on moving day.
 - Redirect post well beforehand - this is especially essential to protect yourself from identity theft.
 - If your new place has any appliances left behind, download the instruction manuals from the manufacturer's website.





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