

Our guide to selling your home



Before you put your property onto the market, here are a few tips to get your home in the best possible shape for a sale:

- 1. Have you or the previous owners carried out any structural work?**
If so, check historic planning applications concerning your property (on the H&F Council website) to ensure planning was approved.
- 2. Check your paperwork/Building Control Completion Certificate**
If any structural work has been carried out you should have a Building Control Completion Certificate.
- 3. Growth potential**
Is there scope to extend? If you think there is then seeking a professional opinion from an architect/builder could prove a valuable aid when marketing your home to make it an even more attractive proposition for potential purchasers.
- 4. Party Wall Agreements**
If structural work has been carried out affecting your neighbouring properties ie side return, basement etc. then you should have a Party Wall Agreement.
- 5. Are your windows up to scratch?**
Upgrading single glazed windows to double glazed windows would improve the EPC rating but will also require paperwork. You may need planning permission from the local authority so please check with your local authority planning department for confirmation. Windows that have been replaced since 1st April 2002 must be supported by a FENSA certificate or a building regulations completion certificate to show that they legally comply with Building Regulations.
- 6. Leasehold properties – Management Pack**
If you don't have this already, request the Management Pack well ahead of time as it will show Management Accounts that the buyer's solicitor will need to see. You should also request a copy of the building's fire and asbestos assessment documents from your Management Company.
- 7. Management Company**
Establish a good relationship with your management company - be it a company or individuals – as this will allow you to be fully up to speed on the running of the building that can be passed onto the future buyer of your property.
- 8. Lease length**
If your lease is less than 99 years you will need to extend it before marketing the property. Buyers purchasing with a mortgage will have difficulty as some Lenders do not offer mortgages on such leases, so it is critical that you commence the paperwork for a lease extension prior to selling the property or it could impact the value of your home.
- 9. A Share of Freehold flat**
If your flat is a 'Share of Freehold' it will still have an underlying lease length, check the length is over 99 years and ensure your agent has the correct details.
- 10. Choose a solicitor**
A good one who will communicate with all involved and keep the sale moving! This is vital to achieve the smoothest process possible.
- 11. Fixtures and Fittings form**
Your solicitor will send this form to you; you need to complete the document and return it as soon as possible as it needs to be sent to your buyer's solicitor. White goods (fridges, washing machines and dryers) and curtains and blinds are frequently expected to be included in the sale price so do let your agent know ahead of time what will and won't be included to avoid complications during the negotiation discussion.
- 12. Property Information form**
Similar to the Fixtures & Fittings form you are required to complete it to the best of your knowledge – if you don't know the answer to a question about your property you can simply state that you don't know! This is a legal document and any recorded disputes etc must be declared.
- 13. Have a timeline but be patient**
Speak to your agent about when the best possible period would be to put your home on the market. The market changes from month to month and whilst a quick sale might be achieved in April or May it may take a little longer in November/December so your patience with these market fluctuations is always appreciated!

The next steps Please consult the glossary of terms on the back page

IMMEDIATELY/WEEK 1:

1. ID and Anti Money Laundering

As part of the legally required compliance procedure we will request your ID (passport), proof of address (no more than 3 months old) and signed Terms of Business (as agreed with you). We will not show any prospective buyer your property without these documents as it is against the law to do so. Any agent that does so is breaking the law which we simply will not do.

2. Viewings

Once viewings are under way we will update you on feedback received whilst also keeping you updated on current market performance.

3. Offers

All offers will be confirmed to you in writing. We will then discuss and guide you through the negotiations and provide expert advice on both the positives and negatives of each offer.

YOU'VE ACCEPTED AN OFFER – WHAT NEXT?

4. Memorandum of Sale

We will issue the Memorandum of Sale (MoS) to all parties which sets out both the seller's and buyer's details together with both acting solicitors and in addition to any special terms and usually the proposed exchange and completion timeframe. Please instruct your solicitor to keep Finlay Brewer in the loop at all times.



5. Certificates & Guarantees

Please send your solicitor any certificates and guarantees for works you've had done including FENSA (window replacement) certificates, proof of planning permission and Building Control Completion Certificates.

6. Enquiries

Your solicitor will send you various enquiries which have been invariably raised by the buyer's solicitor and/or the buyer(s). Please respond to these promptly in order to expedite your exchange of contracts.

7. The Survey(s)

The buyer may require surveys on your property including a mortgage survey/valuation on behalf of the lender and a building survey on behalf of the buyer(s). We would recommend that you make the following documents available for the building surveyor which they will reference and/or request:

- Details of planning applications
- Copies of guarantees
- Gas safety and electrical certificates
- Documentation of any recent works

8. Common issues that arise on Building Surveys

Issues commonly arising from a survey:

- Damp issues (rising damp and/or penetrative damp from broken seals etc)
- Age of boiler
- Condition of roof and windows

AFTER APPROXIMATELY 4-6 WEEKS:

9. Solicitors & Contract

Your solicitor should report to you, in advance of sending you the contract for signature, and confirm exchange and completion dates.

10. Exchange & Deposit Funds - Almost there!

In readiness for exchange of contracts your solicitor will ask the buyer(s) to transfer the deposit funds which is usually 10% of the purchase price. At the point of exchange of contracts the **Completion Date** must be confirmed before exchange can take place.

After exchange of contracts

1. Book your removals

If needed, reserve parking bays well in advance (you can do this via the council website). The Council require at least 2 weeks' notice so that neighbours can be notified.

2. Re-direct your post

Fill in the postal form to re-direct your mail (it takes approximately 3 weeks to be actioned) but we don't recommend you do anything until you've exchanged and the completion date is set.

3. Home/building insurance

Your buyers are required to have building insurance from the point of exchange but we recommend that you do not cancel your own building insurance until the day of completion.

4. Read Meters

On the day of completion read your meters and log them with your utility providers to avoid being overcharged. We recommend you photograph them so you can clearly see the meter numbers and the meter reading.

5. Gather all sets of keys

Ensure you have ALL SETS of keys including those that you may have given to friends/family/neighbours/cleaners etc. Let us know where you are going to leave these in the property – we usually hold a set for viewings that we pass to the buyer(s) on completion.



6. Time to move on

Together with your solicitor, we will indicate the approximate time that you need to have vacated the property as completions usually happen between 12-3pm. We will not release the keys to your buyers until your solicitor has confirmed receipt of the completion funds. You legally have to be out of the property at this time so be organised and be ready to vacate sooner rather than later on the day of completion. Don't forget to have your property cleaned/leave it clean for the new owner!

7. Move out

You've done it - now crack open the Champagne!

If you are buying an onward property, update your agent and read our 'buying guide'.

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Finlay Brewer have not disappointed

I've used Finlay Brewer twice and both times they have not disappointed, they have exceeded my expectations. Paul and the team are unlike any other estate agents and thank goodness for that!

They don't just rely on the usual on-line platforms to generate viewings, they are pro-active. They're match makers for property and an absolute joy to work with. If I were selling or buying in London again, Finlay Brewer would be my first and only call.

Google Review

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Wow! They made that look easy

Paul came and gave us a valuation, and advised how to present the property in its best light, even the time of year where it would sell best. We got a great offer at the first viewing and just 5 weeks later we exchanged and completed one week later. Can't recommend Finlay Brewer highly enough, people said they were good but I wasn't expecting this good. The support throughout from the team has also been amazing, keeping us up to date with clear instructions as to what we needed to do to keep the legal part of the process on track.

By One Happy Seller (Vendor)

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The energy performance of your property

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is a legal requirement for anyone renting or selling a property.

The certificate provides an A to G rating showing energy efficiency with A being the most efficient and G being the least. This certificate is valid for 10 years provided no further works have been carried out. They will also produce an Environmental Impact graph showing the Carbon Dioxide emissions of the property with the same grading.

Failure to obtain one may result in a fine for you the seller as well as any agent instructed on the property. Your solicitor will also require a copy of the EPC.

Finlay Brewer can arrange the EPC for you through our recommended contractors who will contact you directly to arrange payment and book a suitable time to visit your property.

If we hold keys the surveyor can arrange to collect keys from our office. If you already have a valid EPC please email it to a member of the sales team. If you wish to obtain your own EPC we will need to receive it prior to marketing your property.

Glossary

AML - Anti Money Laundering:

This is where our Compliance Officer verifies you as the owner(s) and your buyers. This is a legal requirement.

Completion:

The balance of the purchase price is paid and the sale is complete.

Exchange:

Contracts are signed and deposit funds are transferred to your solicitor's client account – this is usually 10% of the purchase price.

Fixture & Fittings Form (TA10):

Details the items in the home that are either included/excluded/available to purchase.

Local Authority Searches:

Specific background information about the property and the area that surrounds it.

Memorandum of Sale:

A document listing all parties involved in the purchase, the purchase price, conditions of the purchase and a time frame for which the purchase is to be completed.

Mortgage Valuation Survey:

Homebuyers Report: The surveyor acting for the lender is required to support/approve the purchase price.

Property Information Form (TA6):

Completed by the seller (to the best of their knowledge) to provide details about the property that is being sold; the garden; the neighbours and the area.

Structural Survey:

A building survey (formerly known as a Full Structural Survey) – the surveyor will check the structure of the property and point out any issues of concern or items they feel need to be looked at in more detail.

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