

## How to speed up the conveyance process

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### Getting that SOLD! sign up faster in a soft market

Describing the current housing market as 'soft' is a polite way to say it's tough out there. Belts are tightening, mortgage lenders are asking a lot more questions and delving deeper into your financial history before saying yes to a loan, and bricks and mortar simply aren't moving as quickly as before. House prices are still growing (mostly), but at a considerably reduced rate compared to 2016 PB (Pre-Brexit).

You can make your property as attractive as possible to buyers by making sure you have great photographs, utilise online sellers as well as traditional agents, and even brew up some fresh coffee or bake some cakes to make it smell 'homely' when viewers come around.

However, if there's one thing that really puts the brakes on a house sale, it's the paperwork. So how can you speed up the conveyancing process and get that SOLD! sign up, even in a soft market?

#### Know the pinch points

There are several pinch points that can slow up your house purchase or sale, including:

- **the conveyancing process**
- **a chain**
- **surveys**
- **leasehold agreements**
- **finances**

While each of these can act as a roadblock to a successful sale or purchase, the top pinch point must be conveyancing. Let's take a more detailed look at why this can be such a problem to vendors.

### What is Conveyancing?

Conveyancing gathers together all the information you need to make a transaction. That can include information on planning permission, the title deeds, probate, and gathering information from local authorities, who are not usually known for their laser-fast processing skills. You must also bear in mind that your conveyancer is not just working on your property sale/purchase, but a dozen others, too.

Just like a jigsaw, to successfully sell or buy a house you need to have all the pieces in place. That means ensuring you've got the finances locked in (through a mortgage or loan), you've chosen all the criteria for your ideal property, and that you've already got your conveyancer in place before you start.

#### The big slow-down

The pre-exchange period, the point at which the contracts are reviewed, really slows things down to a crawl. This is when your conveyancing expert is waiting for other people to supply them with information, whether it's mortgage agreements, a draft contract, search results, or copies of other documents such as planning permissions. Even in this digital age, 'radio silence' can happen and it's very disconcerting for the client to wait for days or even weeks without a peep from the conveyancer. If you want to avoid that nerve-racking wait then ask to be blind copied on all outgoing emails so you stay updated, as well as letting you spot any potential problems earlier.

#### How to get things moving

Cut down the delay time by finding a conveyancer as soon as you start looking for a property (as in seriously looking, not just 'weekend browsing' expeditions). Look for an

experienced conveyancer, who holds the right quality marks such as LawNet Quality Standard ISO 9001.

Get everything in place such as finances, certified identification, and make sure you have someone on your 'Phone a Friend' line who can witness signatures at short notice.

Look for properties without a chain. This can shave months off the completion time, and make things much easier for your conveyancer, as they're not left hanging while the next property in the chain finalises their mortgage arrangement or completes a survey.

Get organised! Make sure all your ducks are in a row, that you've got all the paperwork in place, and that you stay on top of the process from day one. Work with your conveyancer to speed the process up. Have all those important documents to hand so if they're needed you don't have to go searching for them.

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