

From mountain to sea

Empty Homes/ Estate Agents and selling tips



Estate Agents

In most circumstances, it is advisable to use an estate agent or solicitor to act as an agent and find a buyer. It may seem expensive, however, they will take responsibility for producing a home report, advertising, managing viewings (if required), and negotiating a price for the house along with other sale requirements. Don't be afraid to ask them plenty of questions prior to agreeing to sell with them, and make sure you understand the limitations of any services offered and what is included in the fees. For example, some estate agents will have in-house conveyancers to do the legal work, but some will not, and this may be an extra cost.

Select a shortlist of estate agents

These are a few suggestions in helping to shortlist some estate agents.

- Make sure the agent has experience of selling a property like yours – check there are properties similar to yours in their window and/or online.
- Look at the agent's website at the properties advertised. Are the pictures high quality and the descriptions detailed, clear and engaging?
- It would be useful to get quotes from several agents so you know what is included in the fees and contract of services. Cheapest is not always best.
- Be aware that some will value the home higher than others to win your custom. This doesn't mean the highest price is always achievable.
- Ask for recommendations from people you know that have used them.
- Does the estate agent belong to any professional associations?

What is their marketing strategy?

- Do they only use their own website and how good is it? Do they use other portals such as Zoopla, OnTheMarket or Rightmove?
- Are they active on social media platforms? Which ones? Nowadays, more people look for, and share, properties on social media.
- Do they utilize virtual viewings or promote open house viewings?

Remember: The Estate Agent works for you

As the seller, you are in a strong position with estate agents – they need properties to sell to make commission. Contact them regularly to ensure they are doing all they can to sell your property. The important thing to remember is that the Estate Agent is there to work for you and sell your property.

Prompt them for answers if your property is not attracting viewers – it is what you pay for.

Attracting Buyers

Photographs

Do not underestimate the power of a photograph – these persuade people to book viewings so ensure the Estate Agent has produced high quality photos. If you are not happy with the photos, ask for them to be changed - they can make all the difference to attracting buyers. However, good quality photographs cannot sell a property if it is not presented at its best. The following hints will assist in making sure your property looks more saleable which may lead to a faster sale and/or a higher sale price.

De-Clutter

Show the space and not the furniture. People need to imagine the room as theirs. People often find this difficult, so make it easy for them to see all the fantastic living space you're offering them. Consider removing any bulky furniture that makes the room feel small.

A Fresh Lick of Paint

Giving your walls a fresh lick of neutral paint will make your home seem lighter and bigger. It will assist viewers to imagine how they can use the space better than bright, bold colours. Although there's a wide range of paint colours available, there is nothing wrong with plain white or magnolia.

DIY – Repair the Cracks

Make any minor repairs necessary. Finish off small DIY jobs - touch up chipped woodwork, fill small cracks and holes and replace washers on dripping taps.

Tidy up the Garden

Cut bushes back, weed the garden, mow the grass and clean the patio, pathways and furniture of lichen and dirt. It may not add value but a photograph of a tidy garden suggests the house was cared for, and will attract more interest than an unkempt property.

Contact Aberdeenshire Council if you have an empty home and would like further advice: emptyhomes@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Working in partnership with

