



## Understanding Conveyancing - Tips for a smoother conveyancing process

Moving home is always high on the list of stressful life events. Here are some tips for a smoother conveyancing process:

### **Choose the right conveyancer**

- Find a conveyancer you can contact directly rather than going through to a general “conveyancing team” so you know you’re not going to be passed from person to person.
- Ask them about their current workload and notify them at the outset of any time constraints to check they can realistically meet your deadlines.
- Using a conveyancer who has local knowledge of the area is helpful as they won’t be raising unnecessary additional enquiries which can cause delays.
- If your conveyancer has been recommended by your estate agent, find out whether there is a referral fee involved. Sometimes, the agents “recommendation” is purely based on them receiving a fee and not based on merit.
- Your choice of conveyancer can make a big difference to the smoothness of the process. Look for a firm with experience in handling similar transactions and good reviews on TrustPilot.

### **Get your paperwork in order**

Getting your paperwork sorted early on will save you and your conveyancer a lot of time in the long run. Documents you will be required to provide include:

- **ID** – You will be asked to provide your passport or driving license (or other photo ID) and also proof of address such as a utility bill or bank statement dated within the last three months.
- **Proof of Funds** – If you are purchasing, you will be required to prove where your funds are coming from and where they have been over at least a three month period.

When selling, you will be asked to complete a Property Information Form which includes details of any building works, boiler installations, electricity works etc. By locating these documents at the outset, you will save additional enquiries needing to be raised which in turn will speed up the conveyancing process.

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The most commonly requested documents include:

- New Home Warranty documentation
- Planning Permissions and Building Regulation Completion Certificates
- Boiler Building Regulation Compliance Certificate (Gas Safe/HETASS etc.)
- Windows and Doors Building Regulation Compliance Certificates (FENSA/CERTASS etc.)
- Electrical Works Building Regulation Compliance Certificates (NICEIC/ELECSA/NAPIT etc.)
- Any Guarantees or Warranties for works such as damp proofing, works to the roof, woodworm treatment etc.

### **Be Realistic**

How long the process will take is dependent upon a lot of things (many entirely out of your control) including the length of the chain, whether you need a mortgage and whether you are purchasing a freehold or leasehold property, to name a few. Your conveyancer should be able to give you a general idea of timings at the outset, but it is hard to say until further into the process once all documentation has been received and reviewed.

The typical conveyancing process usually takes between 8-10 weeks. However, this can be shorter or longer depending on the properties. As tempting as it is we always advise that you don't book removals or set plans in stone until contracts have been exchanged, as this only puts more stress and pressure on you and can in some instances prove costly.

### **Get a Survey**

A property is probably one of the biggest investments you will ever make, so make sure you are investing in something that will not cost you more than you budgeted for.

An important thing to note is that a Mortgage Valuation is NOT a Survey. At best the lender will send in a valuer to take a brief look around the property and to make sure it is still standing and has the right amount of bedrooms in it. Some lenders just send somebody to drive past it (known as a "drive-by") to make sure it exists! And more recently it is common for many high street lenders to carry out "Desktop Valuations" which they do from the comfort of their office!

A survey can vary in complexity and cost so it is important to speak to a few surveyors to find out the best survey for the property you are purchasing and to compare quotes. We have had clients who have discovered works costing tens of thousands of pounds being needed to a property that were not visible upon initial inspection and which were not discovered by the mortgage valuer. By spending a few hundred pounds at the outset, you can save thousands in the future. One further warning though – check your chosen surveyors own liability clause to ensure they are adequately insured and professional findings supported by a warranty so you have suitable recourse to them if their survey proves defective or inadequate.

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### **Agree your preferred method of communication**

If you prefer your updates by email, would rather receive papers in the post or an update via a weekly catch up call then let your conveyancer know. We don't want to send you emails if you won't read them, but equally daily phone calls can be disruptive and time consuming for all, so if a call works best for you then agree a regular time slot to get a comprehensive update.

### **Be prepared for delays and proactive in resolving issues**

While you may be keen to complete the transaction as quickly as possible, it's important to be prepared for delays and be patient and flexible. If any issues arise during the conveyancing process, be proactive in resolving them.

### **How can we help?**

We've helped generations of clients buy and sell their homes and are proud of our unrivalled reputation of excellence.

Our award winning residential conveyancing service is provided from both our Thame and Princes Risborough offices, helping clients buy and sell their homes in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and across the UK. So whether it's your first home, new home or retirement home you'll be in safe hands.

At both our Thame office and Princes Risborough office, you will have a dedicated, experienced and qualified Conveyancer or Solicitor acting on your behalf from day one until the day of completion.

## Your Residential Conveyancing Team



**Louise Hazell**

Head of Conveyancing  
Princes Risborough/  
Licensed Conveyancer



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