

HOW TO MAKE A DECISION ABOUT WHICH ESTATE AGENT TO USE?



When you go to a restaurant and have a superb meal, then you know how good it was. You can go again in say, one month's time, knowing what to expect. If you use an Estate Agent and find out they are good, or that you have made a mistake and they are not good, it is probably going to be another 10-15 years before you are likely to need them again. There is little chance to "try before you buy". You can change agents, but that can be a painful experience, one you would prefer to avoid. What clues are there therefore, that can help make your final decision, the right one?

- 1. How long have they been in business?**
This brings experience and knowledge, which cannot be reproduced in the short term.
- 2. Look around your area. Note the numbers of boards and more importantly, the number of "Sold" boards.**
- 3. Look at the property Portals for your area (in our case that would be Rightmove and OnTheMarket) and click the 'filter' box to include 'sold' properties, as well.**
- 4. Testimonials. Look at a reputable site, such as Feefo and read what others' experiences have been.**
- 5. Listen to the experiences of friends and family who have sold in the past few years.**
- 6. Leave a telephone message, either during the day or out of hours and note how promptly you receive a call back, after the office re-opens.**
- 7. Lastly, call into an Agent's office, on the basis of a casual enquiry and judge how the staff treat you, because this is how they will treat your prospective buyers. Ask them how flexible they are on viewing times and if they do out of hours appointments. Also ask them if they do viewings for individuals that have not yet placed their house on the market, as some agents will block these viewings without advising their clients.**

Using all, or some of these hints, will help ensure that you enjoy an "excellent meal" when you take that important step.



WHAT PITFALLS TO LOOK OUT FOR, WHEN CHOOSING AN ESTATE AGENT



What you shouldn't do, is decide by the lowest fee. You are not buying an item like a washing machine, which will be the same if you buy it in the High Street or on-line, you are buying a service, which is much more. Would you go to the cheapest doctor, accountant, solicitor or builder? Would you want to entrust your major asset and your future home life to someone, because they were the cheapest?

In reality, the difference in fees between a good professional Estate Agent and a cheap one, is relatively small, even more so when you realise that you could be talking in tens of thousands of pounds in the final sale price of your property.

That is just part of the story, it is a long and bumpy road between agreeing a sale and moving, and this may involve some expert input following survey, Building Society, private, or both. As both Directors of Kelvin Francis are Fellows of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, surveys can be discussed with them, where further expert input is required to ensure you obtain good advice on your side at all times. Some Estate Agents are cut price because that is the only way they can compete. These firms will often give you an over inflated valuation of your property, all to persuade you to instruct them. You and your property are far too important to fall into that trap.

Also, never indicate your own view of price at the valuation. A good Valuer will make his/her own judgement based on comparable evidence, research and experience. So, if an Agent asks you for your opinion first, they are clearly not confident in valuing your home at the optimum price. With regard to contracts, be cautious that you do not lock yourself into a 12, 16 or 24 week contract. We can offer a zero week contract to demonstrate that we are confident in being able to sell your property and the service that we can offer.