

Selling your empty home: Estate agents

Please note that the following list does not constitute a recommendation of any of the companies listed; is not exhaustive (being compiled from online research in April 2014); and is solely for use as reference material for making your own decisions.

Why use an estate agent or solicitor?

An estate agent or solicitor can manage the whole process of selling your property, from valuations, to marketing, negotiating the sale price, and the financial and legal processes.

They will also provide professional advice on issues such as appropriate asking price, what type of buyer is likely to be interested in the property, and whether there is anything you can do to increase the chance of a sale. If a property is not selling, they can tell you if there are any particular issues that are putting buyers off, and can advise on what you should do to remedy them.

It is a good idea to build a good relationship with your estate agent/solicitor, and to contact them on a regular basis to request updates on viewings and level of interest. This will ensure your agent keeps your property at the top of their mind throughout its time for sale.

Costs of selling your property

If you put your property up for sale, you will have to budget for the following costs:

- A Home Report (this can be arranged by your Estate agent or solicitor);
- Estate agent's/Solicitor's fees for marketing the property (the sales brochure, online advertising, arranging viewings, etc);
- Estate agent's/Solicitor's fees for the conveyancing (legal process of selling).

Some agents charge a percentage of the sale value of the property while others charge a flat rate, but as a ballpark figure the combined costs of all of the above can be in the region of £2,400, of which about £1,500 is paid upfront.

Some agents offer payment packages that delay these costs until the sale of the property so that you don't have to have the money upfront to put it on the market.

Choosing an estate agent or solicitor

Local estate agents/solicitors

The benefit of using a local agent is the increased opportunity for regular face-to-face meetings.

Both Rightmove and the S1 Homes website contain lists of local estate agents:

- www.s1homes.com/estate-agents-in-Ayrshire_South
- www.rightmove.co.uk/estate-agents/find.html?locationIdentifier=REGION%5E61470

You can find solicitors details in both the yellow pages and The Law Society Scotland website:

- www.lawscot.org.uk/wcm/lsservices/find_a_solicitor/Core/directory.aspx?
- www.yell.com

Deferred costs packages

If you cannot afford the upfront costs of putting your empty property on the market, you may wish to select an agent offering a deferred costs package where you pay the full sum only when you receive the money from selling the property. Not all agents are willing to offer this type of package, although it is always worth asking whether they would consider it.

Alternatively, the following companies operate across Scotland, and offer deferred payment packages.

- Marshall Forbes, 01463 64 10 20, www.marshallforbes.co.uk
- McEwan Fraser Legal www.mcewanfraserlegal.co.uk/sellingwithus
- Move Quick, 0800 0748585 www.movequick.com
- Your Move (Home reports only) www.your-move.co.uk/scotland/home-reports

For further information please contact your Empty Homes Officer:

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