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Making Your Home look its best

Our goal as your Estate Agent is not just to sell your home but to sell it for the best possible price within your required timescale. That is why we have published this exclusive guide to help you present your home for sale. Remember you are selling a lifestyle as well as a home.

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"Creating a lifestyle that sells"

First Impressions Count

First impressions are lasting. It is vital to create the right impression as potential buyers form an opinion of your home fast - in fact often within 20 seconds of arriving to view! Here are some suggestions on how to achieve it.

Exterior

The first sight of your home is when the buyers arrive. You must make sure that every part of this visual picture looks at its best. If the interior is beautiful they may never see it if the exterior is shabby. The street in front of your home should be swept clean if necessary, any weeds that are growing in the pavement cracks removed, unsightly bins hidden and any litter picked up.

Your Front Gate

A newly painted fence gives your home a fresh look. Never let a peeling, shabby fence or a rusty front gate come between a potential buyer and good first impressions.

Garden

Well tended borders and a recently mown lawn can give the impression of a low maintenance garden which is an encouraging factor to most prospective buyers. They want to see themselves relaxing in the garden and their children playing safely so help create the impression for them. You may consider talking to your local garden centre for additional general advice.

Front Path

Like the pavement, the path to your front door should be free from weeds and clean. If sections are badly cracked then have them repaired.

Driveway

Make sure your driveway is clean and free from weeds. If you think your car spoils the look of your house, or if you have more than one car and it looks cluttered, park one on the street so as to give a clear view of your property.

Repair and Decor

No one wants to inherit a leaking roof. Make sure your roof and rainwater goods are in good condition and consider replacing any missing or broken tiles. Attend to any obvious repairs as otherwise they may not even ring the door bell.

The front door is often what a buyer will focus on while they are waiting to be let in. Therefore, it is essential to clean and repaint the front door if necessary and polish any brass hardware. Also ensure your house name or number is clearly visible - if they can't find it they can't buy it! A fresh coat of paint can be one of the best investments you can make to increase the value and most important the saleability of your home. This one improvement can transform the look of your home.

Replace any cracked or broken glass and make sure the windows are cleaned both inside and out. It may be appropriate to add window flower boxes and apply touch up paint where appropriate.

Appeal to the senses...

An appealing and saleable interior can be created for surprisingly little cost. You could watch one of the many home improvement TV programmes for tips. Four main sensory tools that can have an enormous impact are:

Colour

Colours should be light and neutral when selling your home. Suggested colours for the exterior are white, cream and grey. For the internal walls shades of white, off-white and very light pastels give rooms a light and airy atmosphere. Bright colours should be used sparingly to accents like flowers, curtains and accessories if appropriate.

Light

Studies prove that people react more positively to properties with good lighting. The following steps should help lighten your buyer's spirits. Mirrors can be used to magnify the feeling of space and light, and curtains opened to create a light cheerful atmosphere. Prior to viewing ensure all the lights in the house are on to help achieve a light cheerful setting.

Sound

Try to create a quiet peaceful atmosphere in your house. Make sure there are no sounds from mechanical problems such as banging pipes and avoid the use of dishwashers and washing machines when buyers are around. Try to keep children amused and get teenagers to turn music down (sounds impossible - try bribery, it sometimes works) to help create a peaceful atmosphere.

Smell

Smell has more impact than you may think. It can work for or against you. A clean smell is important, particularly in Kitchens and Bathrooms and the use of furniture polish can also add to create the right atmosphere. Fresh flower, pot pourri and fresh coffee smells can help. Avoid unpleasant smells such as damp, cigarettes, pet odours and cooking oil.

Presenting your interior...

Clutter

Remove it! Without a doubt this is the best course of action. You can dispose of it but if that is too painful why not put it into temporary storage. (We can give advice regarding where!) Have a good look at your furniture. If it is too big for the rooms then it will make them look small. You could remove some till you move but sometimes a modest investment in new furniture before you move (don't worry, it will look great in your new home) can make a big difference.

Hall

Your Hallway is where a buyer's first impression of the interior is formed. Here you have the chance to make a large statement in what is usually a small area. Our Advice here is to make sure your hall is well lit, with fresh flowers where possible, clean and smelling fresh.

Living and Lounge Areas

Most people like to have an impressive and elegant room to live and entertain in. Hanging a mirror over your fireplace or opposite the window will make your room appear larger and brighter and the use of uplighters can also create dramatic visual effects behind furniture or large plants.

If there is a fireplace then show it off with a warm inviting fire. In the spring and summer months it may be appropriate to decorate the fireplace with dried flowers or healthy plants. Make sure all carpets and rugs are clean and that any cosmetic plaster cracks are repaired, this applies to any room in the house. Finally, it always helps to fill the rooms with fresh flowers and plants.

Kitchen

The Kitchen can be the most important room in the house when it comes to selling. Its condition has a direct effect on the value of your property. If it is in bad repair it may be worth making extensive improvements. The following ideas can increase your kitchen's appeal without spending a fortune. First and foremost, ensure the room is spotlessly clean and smells fresh. Banish small appliances and any clutter from work surfaces. Out dated light fixtures can be replaced by new spotlights for maximum impact and it may be appropriate to give the kitchen cabinets a face lift by installing new door furniture or hardware or even painting old doors and cupboards.

Most potential buyers like to check the cupboards, it would therefore be sensible to organise your cupboards to show how much space there is (remember - remove clutter). Finally, consider replacing badly worn flooring with a neutral vinyl covering or scatter floor mats.

Bathroom

Bathrooms are a major selling point and there are many ways you can improve an old Bathroom sufficiently to add interest. Again it is important to freshen the air and hide all the personal clutter. Remove any mould from showers and baths and consider replacing old towel racks and fixtures with new brass and chrome ones to match your decor.

Bedrooms

The bedroom is just as important. As before make sure bedrooms are spotless. Rugs should be clean the air filled with fresh smells and remove any excess furniture. Consider the use of co-ordinating bedspreads and curtains and the use of cupboard organisers to utilise every inch of space effectively. Bedside lamps can brighten a room and add atmosphere and your bedroom can seem larger with mirrored wardrobe doors and carefully placed wall mirrors.

Showtime!

When showing your home avoid having too many people present as your potential buyers may feel like intruders and hurry through the house without seeing its best features. Never apologise for the appearance of your home after all it has to be lived in. Make sure pets are not at home as not everyone likes them and from a security point of view make sure valuables are kept from room view.

Allow buyers to enter the rooms first, especially if they are compact, as this increases the sense of spaciousness. Don't forget to mention the best features as they may not see everything first time. Remember not to overpower them. Some things that are important to you will not matter to them. It's best not to talk money during viewings. Refer them to us as we will negotiate on your behalf.

Summary...

You can dramatically increase your property's market potential by paying attention to detail. Potential buyers need to be able to visualise themselves living in your house. You are selling a lifestyle as well as a home. We hope some of the ideas presented in our guide will help you prepare your home for the market. Between us we will be successful in selling your property ensuring you can move on to your new home.