

Selling in summer made simple

EXPERT
ADVICE
INSIDE



Come Live By The Sea

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Hello,

I'm Damien Cooke, Managing Director at Cooke & Co.

If you're reading this guide, it's most likely because you plan to sell your home in the summer.

If this is the case, then we have good news: summer is a great time to sell because one crucial element is working in your favour – the weather.

Your property will look its best in the summer sunshine (especially if you have a garden that's in bloom). Bathed in natural light, your home will stand out in the marketing photographs and feel warm and welcoming when buyers view it in person.

And, of course, the days are longer and lighter – giving you plenty of scope to arrange viewings.

In the past, there was a tendency to avoid doing property business in summer because many people go away on holiday. But the internet has changed that.

Most buyers conduct their initial research online, so even if they go abroad for a week or two, they'll still check social media and property portals daily. They can easily arrange a viewing for when they return if they see something they like.

So, what's next if you're a summer seller?

Well, read this guide, which is full of useful tips and advice, and then get in touch with us here at Cooke & Co.

We're here to answer any questions you might have about any aspect of selling your home.

Thanks for your time.

Damien Cooke

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*Disclaimer: The information in this guide does not constitute legal or financial advice.

Our home-selling jargon buster

During the selling process, you may come across all sorts of words and phrases you've never heard before.

Don't worry; getting your head around property jargon can take time. To help you out, here's a handy guide to explain a few of the terms some estate agents may use.

Chain-free

This has nothing to do with jewellery. When a seller isn't reliant on buying another property to move, they're 'chain-free'. Similarly, first-time buyers are 'chain-free' because they're not caught up in another deal. In theory, a person who is chain-free should be able to move quicker.

Completion

When the deal is finally done and dusted! The paperwork has been signed, the funds transferred, and the sale has gone through.

Conveyancer

A person who handles the legal stuff when you buy or sell a property. A lawyer can do conveyancing work, but a conveyancer doesn't have to be a lawyer.

Exchange

This is where both parties exchange contracts and is a sign of real commitment. It means it's VERY likely the sale will go through.

Mortgage in principle

An indication from a lender of how much a person can borrow. It's not an ironclad guarantee, but having a mortgage in principle shows a buyer is serious about purchasing a property.

Mortgage offer

When your lender officially gives you a nod, wink and a piece of paper to say that you have the funds approved to buy the property.

Sold subject to contract

An offer on a property has been accepted, but there are still a few contractual hoops to jump through first.

Sole agent

An agency which has exclusive rights to sell the property.

Vendor

Not a Harry Potter villain, but the person selling the property.



Seven summer selling tips

1. Declutter

If you're serious about achieving your asking price, then have a good clear-out. You want your property to look and feel spacious in the bright summer light, so put bulky furniture into storage.

Remove photos, paintings and ornaments from view (buyers don't want to see personal items) and bin or sell unwanted belongings you've accumulated over the years.



2. Minor repairs

Now's not the time for major refurbishments, but it's undoubtedly worth sorting out any minor DIY issues you've been putting off for a while.

Buyers will be unimpressed if they walk into your home and see damp, mould or fixtures and fittings in a poor state of repair. It will also make them worry that there could be more serious maintenance and repair issues that you've ignored.

Once everything is in order, give tired-looking rooms a lick of paint in a neutral colour, as this will freshen them up and make the space feel bigger.

3. Have a clean

Roll up your sleeves and get scrubbing (or get a professional cleaner in to do it for you). Your cleaning checklist should include all the obvious areas, such as the kitchen and bathroom, as well as light fittings, cabinet kickboards, carpets and mirrors.

And don't forget to clean the windows. On a bright day, the sunlight will accentuate dust and fingerprints, so make sure your windows are sparkling.



Seven summer selling tips (continued)

4. Garden blitz

If you're fortunate enough to have a garden or courtyard, ensure buyers see it in all its summer glory. You needn't worry about major landscaping works, but it's important to weed, trim and remove any rubbish.

Also, ensure your garden is well-watered, as plants can quickly dry out in the warmer months – you want the space to feel lush and fresh. You could also plant some extra blooms to add a pop of colour. Carefully arrange garden furniture to emphasise the concept of outdoor living.

5. Kerb appeal

Most buyers drive or walk by a property and have a good nosy before viewing it, so making a good impression is essential. First, clear away any rubbish, leaves and cobwebs. Then turn your attention to your front door.

Give wooden doors a coat of paint and brighten uPVC doors with a good wipe-down (avoid using bleach or scouring pads as they can cause damage). Clean your windows, clear out the guttering, and add a few hanging pots to make your home look welcoming.

6. Be choosy

Selling a property can be stressful, so you must choose an experienced agent to help you through the process. Go for an agency with an exemplary track record of achieving results for their clients and good communication skills.

Remember, selling a home isn't just about negotiating a good price (although that's crucial); it's also about getting the deal across the line. Once an offer has been agreed, a top agent will keep the transaction ticking along by staying in touch with all relevant parties to ensure the sale progresses.

7. Dress for success

Dressing your property can increase the sale price and help you sell quicker, so it's worth doing. Discuss with your agent who your target market is and how to present your property to appeal to them.

The key is to ensure each room has a clear function. For example, a bedroom should have a bed on display in it, and a home office should be set up with a desk and laptop, not loaded with storage boxes. Extra touches like cushions, flowers and mirrors can provide an added lift.



Preparing your home for viewings

So, your home looks amazing in the marketing photographs (thanks to all your cleaning and decluttering), and now buyers are queuing up to view it for themselves.

Will they be wowed when they see it in person? Or feel underwhelmed and unwilling to make an offer?

That partly comes down to you and how well you prepare for viewings. It may feel like a lot of effort to get your home 'ready for show' before each viewing, but it really will pay off in the long run. You never know if the next buyer to step through the front door will turn out to be 'The One'.

Here's a helpful to-do list for preparing your property for a summer viewing

- Maintain a general level of cleanliness all the time so that if a viewing is arranged at short notice, you can be ready. It would be best if you weren't worrying about big jobs like cleaning windows or removing mould on the day of a viewing.
- On the morning of the viewing, give the plants a good soak, so they look well-hydrated.
- Have a quick tidy-up and remove muddy shoes, coats, toys and laundry from view.
- Wipe down the kitchen surfaces and remove dirty dishes from the sink. Make sure all food items are put away, except for a bowl brimming with (fresh) fruit.
- Make the beds and pick up rogue toys or clothes from the floor.
- In the bathroom, wipe down the sink and the shower, and check no hidden surprises are lurking in the loo, especially if you have younger kids.
- Let the light in (in summer, there should be plenty of it) by opening curtains and shutters.
- If it's a hot day, open windows just before a viewing to let the fresh air in.
- If you have a garden with dining furniture, set the table for an al fresco meal so buyers can picture themselves entertaining friends on a warm midsummer evening.
- Remember to empty the bins, as on a hot day, waste odours can intensify and be a real turn-off.

Ten questions to ask an agent

1. Do you invest in the two largest property websites – Zoopla and Rightmove?
2. Do you include video advertising as part of your fee?
3. Are accompanied viewings included in your fee?
4. How do you ensure the right people are viewing my home?
5. Do you have a social media strategy to sell my home?
6. On average, how close to the asking price do you get for your customers?
7. How long, on average, does it take to sell a home?
8. How many people within the agency will be dedicated to selling my home?
9. How will you keep me up to date with my property sale?
10. Once you've found a buyer for my property, what happens next?

