

Home Reports & what you need to know

**Raeburn
Christie
Clark &
Wallace**

Solicitors & Estate Agents
for life & business

You may have read in the Press that from 1st December 2008 a Home Report is required by Law for every property coming on the market for sale or Lease in Scotland (subject to certain limited exceptions). The Report has to be in place before the property can be placed on the market. At Raeburn Christie Clark & Wallace we have prepared thoroughly for the introduction of Home Reports on 1st December 2008 and our staff are trained to assist Sellers with the new legislation.

A Home Report consists of three things:-

- 1. The Single Survey.** This is prepared by a Chartered Surveyor acting on instructions from the Seller and contains detailed information about the condition and value of the property. It is intended to assist prospective Purchasers before they make an offer.
- 2. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC).** The EPC gives information on the property's energy efficiency rating, its environmental impact by way of carbon dioxide emissions. It is prepared on the Seller's instructions by the Surveyor at the same time as the single survey. The EPC may make recommendations as to improving the energy efficiency of the property and help save fuel costs.
- 3. The Property Questionnaire.** This detailed questionnaire is completed by the Seller prior to the property going on the market. It is intended to give basic important information to home buyers about the property such as alterations that have been made to the property, Council Tax banding, Factoring Charges, Utility Suppliers, etc.

Considering Selling?

If you are considering selling your property, why not call our Sales Staff at any of our offices to arrange a free no obligation valuation. We will advise on the likely sale price of your property and provide you with a quote for all Estate Agency and Legal fees, including a quotation for the cost of providing a Home Report.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR SELLERS.

Q1. Who pays for the Home Report?

- A. The Seller pays for the preparation of the Single Survey and Energy sections of the Home Report prior to release of these by the Surveyor.

Q2 Who compiles the Home Report?

- A. Although as a Seller you are responsible for providing the Home Report, a Chartered Surveyor (or other approved provider) will produce the single survey and energy report sections of the Home Report and you as the Seller will be required to complete the property questionnaire. It is important that the questionnaire is completed accurately.

Q3. What if there are mistakes in the Home Report?

- A. Once the Surveyor's fee has been paid and an Inspection carried out a draft Home Report will be sent by the Surveyor or the instructing Solicitor to the Seller who will get the opportunity to comment if there are any factual or obvious discrepancies i.e. a garage might mistakenly be described as a single garage when it is in fact a double garage.

Q4. How is a copy of the Home Report provided?

A. Any prospective Purchaser can request a copy of the Home Report from the Seller's Solicitor or Estate Agent and must be given a copy of the Home Report within 9 days of the request. Solicitors are entitled to make a charge for providing a paper copy. However the majority of Home Reports will be available to view online with Aberdeen Solicitors Property Centre at ASPC.co.uk. The ASPC will make an electronic version of the Home Report available to genuinely interested parties at no cost.

Q5. How long is the Home Report valid for?

A. Whilst the Home Report document must be no more than twelve weeks old when the property is marketed, there is no "shelf life" or validity period for a Home Report. From a purchaser's point of view, however, a Report more than twelve weeks old may not be suitable for use by their Lending Institution.

Q6. What happens if the Survey identifies a problem with my home?

A. Sellers have various choices and will be alerted to any such problem when the draft Report is sent out to them for approval. On receiving the draft Report they can: - (a) fix the problem; (b) decide to do nothing and market the property with the problem obvious to any Purchaser; or (c) they can obtain information on the cost of fixing the problem and make that available to the Purchaser.

Q7. How much will a Home Report cost?

A. The cost of the Home Report will vary according to the size of the property but is likely to be in the region of £500 - £900.

Q8. How long will it take to get my home on the market?

A. The new legislation means that it will not be possible to market your property as quickly as it has been in the past. Although a Surveyor can quickly be instructed to prepare the Home Report, it will take time for the inspection to be arranged and the draft Report prepared and sent out for approval. Once you as the Seller have seen the Report and approved it, the Surveyor will issue the final Report. Allow a minimum of one week before the day you wish your property to go on the market for the necessary arrangements to be made.

EXCEPTIONS

A Home Report is not required in the following cases:-

- a) New houses sold "off plan" to a first Purchaser or occupier.
- b) Newly converted premises.
- c) New conversions not previously used in their converted state.
- d) "Right to Buy Homes" which do not involve marketing by the selling body.
- e) Seasonal and Holiday accommodation.
- f) A property which is sold along with one or more other homes as part of a portfolio of residential properties.
- g) Mixed sales where a home is sold with one or more non-residential properties.
- h) Dual use properties used for both residential and commercial purposes.
- i) Unsafe properties which are marketed as unsuitable for occupation in their present condition.
- j) Properties marketed with the necessary consents for demolition and re-development.

We appreciate that the advent of the Home Report brings substantial changes to the marketing of property in Scotland and you may well have questions which are not dealt with in this Guidance Note. Please simply contact our Property staff at any of our offices and they will be happy to assist.