



B I G G L E S W A D E | S T N E O T S | H U N T I N G D O N | S T I V E S

Sellers Guide

Prepare to be Moved...

harveyrobinson.co.uk



Moving home can be a life-changing experience

So what should you expect from your estate agent?

- *a professional service?*
- *experienced, friendly and enthusiastic staff with a high level of expertise and local knowledge?*
- *to achieve the best possible price in a time-scale to suit your needs?*

... well yes, especially in terms of achieving the best price; however these should be your standard expectations of any estate agent.

You should also expect your estate agent to listen, so as to understand the motivation behind the move, and in doing so offer the best possible advice specific to your circumstances.

Your estate agent should respond in a timely fashion, provide excellent levels of communication and remain both positive and dedicated throughout the whole process. They should remain true to the cause, telling you what you need to hear, even if at times this may not be what you were hoping to hear. Honest feedback is vital and as a straight talking estate agency, we are here to assist people in the sale of their property and will always treat the situation with the respect it deserves.

Within this guide, we will briefly run through the selling process and the service we offer. There are a few suggestions and useful tips, and if having read this guide, you have any questions, please get in touch.





A quick glance at what we can offer

- ✓ A Friendly and welcoming team
- ✓ Advertising of properties on all major property portals including Rightmove, Zoopla, Primelocation & OnTheMarket
- ✓ Professional photography and eye catching brochures included as standard
- ✓ Interactive Floorplan
- ✓ Instant feedback following a viewing
- ✓ A fortnightly catch up to provide you with an effective marketing update
- ✓ Local newspaper advertising
- ✓ Multi device friendly & responsive website
- ✓ Property alerts by email & social media
- ✓ Longer opening hours to carry out more viewings
- ✓ Prominent Office locations with stand out window displays
- ✓ Independent 'whole of market' mortgage advice
- ✓ Local conveyancing referrals

Getting started

Preparing an effective marketing plan and pricing strategy will help gain maximum exposure and the best price for your property.

Market & Property Appraisal

Pricing plays an important role with a number of factors to consider, such as the speed in which a seller needs to complete and the level of competition currently in the marketplace. We offer an independent assessment of your property carried out in person by our Valuation Expert, free of charge and with absolutely no obligation. You may want an idea on value without being sure about selling, perhaps as part of an intention to a re-mortgage. We are more than happy to help, our Market & Property Appraisals are genuinely free with no fear of the pressure or constant pursuing often associated with such appointments.

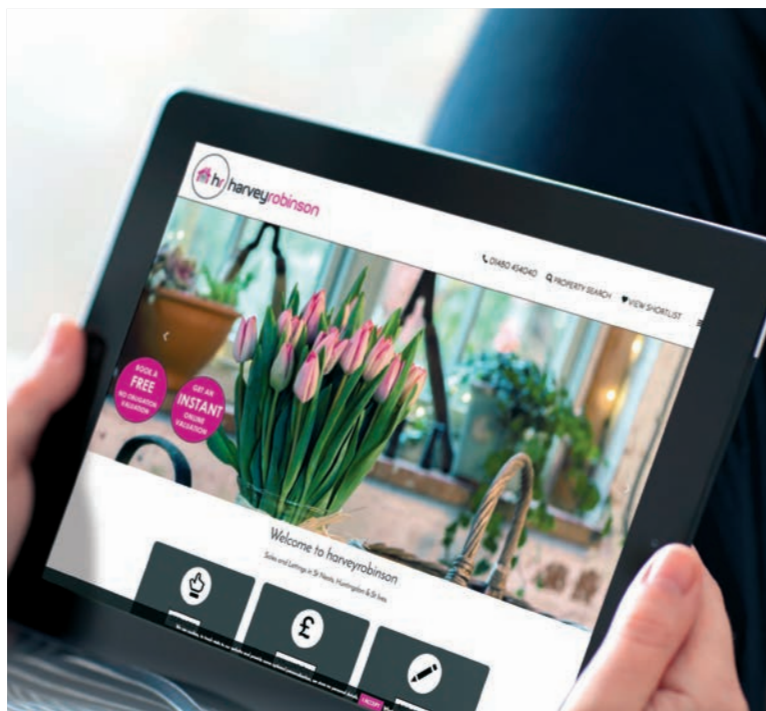
During the visit we explain how the market is performing, advise you of potential climate changes and offer advice and guidance on how to maximise your sale price. When

suggesting a price, we use our expertise, sold price data, recent activity on properties similar to your own, and information gained from our continual market research activities.

If you are new to the business of selling property, there will be plenty of opportunity, before, during and after the appointment, to ask questions and discover more about the selling process.



Professional photography as standard



Effective marketing

When you decide to sell, we will discuss various marketing plans and find the one best suited to you and your property.

At harveyrobinson we use the very latest technology and proven marketing techniques to promote your property. We advertise on all major property websites including **Rightmove**, **Zoopla Primelocation** and **OnTheMarket**.

Your property will also appear on our website **harveyrobinson.co.uk** which is fully responsive for compatibility with smartphones & tablets and further coverage via social media through facebook & twitter. We will also feature your details in our office window on a backlit display meaning it is visible night and day to passing pedestrians and erect one of our prominent “for sale” boards. The more exposure your property receives the wider audience you can expect to attract, giving a greater choice of buyer.

Once instructed, our proactive team of sales professionals will immediately contact our database of registered buyers by telephone and e-mail. All potential buyers are pre-qualified and if the situation dictates,

and upon your request, we will only put forward buyers suited to your requirements. For example, if in need of a quick sale in order to facilitate a purchase of your own, then those buyers with a property to sell but not yet on the market, or those who are part of a lengthy chain, may not present you with the best choice.

Professional photography, property brochures (physical and digital versions) along with floor plans can help promote your property in the best possible way; however a seller can play their part and later in this guide we offer a selection of property presentation tips.

Professional recognition

Since 2004 we have been a member of The Property Ombudsman and this level of professionalism is carried across our whole business.



Offers and sales progression

Whilst the estate agent is employed to attract buyers to your property, there is much more to our service than simply marketing and accompanying viewings.

Offers

Depending on market conditions, pricing strategy and style of marketing plan, the offers we receive on your property may arrive one at a time or in volume. In a strong seller's market it is not uncommon to receive multiple offers on a property following an open day event. It may seem obvious to go with the highest offer; however in such circumstances increased offers should of course first be sought to establish the most each party is willing to pay. Other factors to consider include:

1 What is their buying position?

If you need to move within a certain timeframe, e.g. school holidays or a deadline to complete on the property you are buying, then the buying position of the person making the offer could be very important. A first time buyer with nothing to sell offers a less complicated transaction than a sale dependent buyer, especially if they have yet to put their property on the market and/or their required sale price is unrealistic.

2 Cash or mortgage?

Most buyers will require a mortgage and their level of borrowing could have a significant bearing on your decision. A buyer needing to borrow 85% of the sale price may struggle if the surveyor employed on behalf of the bank down-values your property. If, in this example, the buyer's available funds are completely tied up in the 15% deposit, stamp duty and other moving costs, it could leave them unable to proceed at the agreed price and, more importantly, you in need of a new buyer.

If a buyer purports to be a cash buyer, then naturally evidence of this must be requested – sometimes cash suddenly becomes anything but, e.g. "I'll have the cash once my partner finds a buyer for their house".

3 Genuine buyer?

You may end up receiving two very similar offers from two buyers who are in the same buying position, both with significant levels of deposit. If one buyer began the process by offering particularly low, only increasing to a sensible level when increased offers were encouraged, it "could" suggest a higher chance of them seeking a price reduction at a later date. Genuine buyers usually come in with a sensible starting offer and whilst ultimately the seller will decide which offers to accept, the advice and guidance of an experienced estate agent will prove particularly helpful when a less than obvious choice presents itself.

Proper communication between the seller and their estate agent is of paramount importance, which is why our sellers are given all the information they need to make an informed decision about accepting or rejecting an offer.

Once you have accepted an offer

With a sale price agreed, both you and your buyer will need to employ a conveyancing solicitor. Their expertise will help guide you through the process, taking care of the legal aspects of the transaction. Mortgage brokers may also become involved. Just because you appoint an experienced solicitor, operating a manageable workload,



it does not mean everybody else involved in the process is going to be as efficient.

Anyone balancing a heavy workload can find themselves short on time and it's our role to help keep things moving. Throughout the process we are in communication with various parties, such as the buyer's solicitor, their mortgage broker, surveyors, the buyer themselves and of course you and your solicitor. We are the central point to all those involved.

When part of a chain, the number of "involved" parties can rise significantly. More buyers, sellers, solicitors, mortgage brokers, surveyors and estate agents, all seeking the best outcome for themselves or their client. We are here to monitor all developments, to keep you fully updated and to chase third parties as and when required. In the event of a complication resulting in possible re-negotiation talks, perhaps following the results of a survey, we will handle these for you. To the eyes of a buyer, first timers especially, a detailed survey, such as a homebuyers report, can make for a worrying read. Time and understanding, along with past case study examples, will help us quantify such findings and point out the various minor defects one should expect to come across when buying a pre-owned property, especially if it was built over 100 years ago. Handled with care most problems can be overcome ending in a fair and satisfactory solution.

Managing both the sale and people's expectations with the ability to solve problems are necessary skills for the modern day estate agent and in our experience finding the buyer is simply the first part of the process.



Key features to our service

Here is a brief overview of the service we offer



1 Free market and property appraisal

Our no pressure “any time, any reason” approach makes it easier for people to communicate with us. Whether you require an initial valuation, an in-depth service discussion or are ready to sell... we’re at your service and happy to help.

2 Meet the team

When you are ready to sell, we take full details, such as measurements, descriptions and photographs, allowing us to prepare your marketing material. Every member of our sales team will visit your property. Whilst in time this would happen anyway, through viewing activity, how can the estate agent fully explain your property unless they have seen it for themselves? It also gives you a chance to meet the team.

3 First impressions count

By using professional equipment and skilled photography, we are sure to present your property in the best possible light and to capture the key features that will appeal to your target audience.

4 Full colour property brochures

Our colour property brochures highlight the best features of your property and provide buyers with information such as floor plans, EPC ratings plus a ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ section.

5 Shout it from the rooftops

Maximum exposure of your property is paramount. We want to reach as many potential buyers as possible. Specific time is allocated to contacting our extensive database of buyers and your property is uploaded to the major property websites, as well as our facebook and twitter account. A For Sale board will generate extra enquiries, which when coupled with our prominent office window displays provide for additional 24 hour marketing tools.

6 Keeping you informed

How many viewings have I had? What did people say about my property? When is my buyer having their survey? Our philosophy is to provide answers before you need to ask the questions. We offer Instant feedback following every viewing so that you don’t ever have to ask.

7 Longer opening times

Most of our viewing activity takes place outside of normal working hours, with Saturday our busiest day of the week right through from morning until late afternoon. As you may imagine, e-mail and internet activity is constant so we are structured to be available, and adequately staffed, when we are needed the most.

8 Leave it all to us

As you'd expect from a professional agent we accompany all viewings and host open day events (if applicable). This enable us to interact with the people viewing your property. It's best to let us handle this to avoid you being asked awkward questions such as *"how much do you want for the house?"*, *"why don't you want to live here anymore?"* If people knock on your door simply tell them to speak with us, it's what you are employing us to do and will help protect you from over-keen property dealers, or people trying to buy your property on the cheap.

9 Mortgage Services

We have partnered with "Expert Financial" to offer a whole of market in-house solution to you and your buyers needs. Offers made on your property will have been financially qualified prior to being discussed with you so that you are able to make an informed decision. The mortgage consultants advice is completely free of charge.

10 Third party recommendations

Using a local solicitor is always a plus, they know the area, the local authority and as such will be experienced with typical area specific enquiries often raised by the buyer's solicitor. We can recommend local solicitors to both you and your buyer as well as suggest local removal and home staging companies should you require them.

11 Seeing the job through

Getting you to the end is what it's all about, which is why our selling fee is payable at the end of the process. From start to finish our aims are clear. Achieve the best possible result for our seller, by listening and being there for them every step of the way. When the job is done, we are then paid and, having made sure your experience was a good one, you will tell others where to come when they need to move.

12 Considering Letting?

At harveyrobinson we also have a lettings department managing in excess of 300 properties across Cambridgeshire & Bedfordshire. If you would like any advice on all things lettings we would be happy to provide you with free advice and a copy of our Landlords Guide.





harveyrobinson

SALES & LETTINGS



Presenting your property for sale

Most buyers form an opinion within the first 15 seconds on entering a property. There are affordable improvements you can make to your home that will significantly enhance the buyer's experience.

Years of busy family life, entertaining and general wear and tear is more easily noticed by someone entering a property for the first time. However, preparing your property for sale doesn't need to be expensive.

The exterior of your home is the first view buyers have of your property; a freshly cut lawn, scrubbed path or driveway, trimmed hedges and an inviting entrance will help create a positive first impression.

Here are a few suggestions and tips to help maximise the selling potential of your home:

* Now where's that tool box?

Sensitively repair or remove tired or broken fixtures and fittings and attend to any small DIY jobs. Sometimes it's as much about what does not get noticed as what does. Tend to broken door knobs, cracked tiles, kitchen cupboards and anything else that can be easily repaired.

* Keep it clean

Regardless of the time of year give your property a thorough spring clean. Tackle lime-scale build up, heavy staining and any grotty grouting around your kitchen and bathroom tiles. If they look old and worn, then renew your sink and bath seals.

* Show off your space

Declutter where possible to avoid your home appearing smaller than it is. When we visit to take photographs this will make all the difference and we can always visit over two days if you need to move boxed up items from one part of the property to another in order to accommodate the photography. If you have outgrown your home you could consider temporary storage. If your property is tenanted, perhaps offer your tenant a day's free rent for making an extra effort to tidy and better organise the property in readiness for our photography.

* Smells, odours and (even) allergies

This is something we're sure everyone has heard before but it can help. Avoid any strong smells being present when people are viewing your home. Cooking, smoke and pet related odours may be off putting to some people. Cat or dog hair may even cause an allergic reaction, and with it the potential to lose a could-be buyer, so a quick vac around the house to pick up any loose hair is a good idea.

* Give your property the "live here feel"

Too often people worry about removing **all** trace of personalisation; however give this a little more thought as many buyers want to experience that all important "I could live here" feeling so a homely feel is a good thing. For vacant properties we would suggest using a home staging specialist. Prices are not as high as you might expect, especially in a market where property usually sells quickly.

* Flowers, mirrors and candles

Collectively these can create a feel good factor, help with odours and direct more light around a room.

* Freshen it up

Partial redecoration to some rooms is certainly worth considering, especially if one area in particular is overdue a fresh lick of paint, maybe the hallway? If you can do this yourself, it's simply a case of time and buying the materials. Why not look at the front door too as this will most certainly help to create a good first impression – newly painted front door, plant pots or a hanging basket? If you feel unable to undertake any redecoration there will be plenty of decorators happy to help. Small jobs such as these needn't be overly expensive.

* Don't freeze or overheat your buyers

In the winter keep it warm, in the summer keep it cool. You want prospective buyers to feel comfortable when viewing your property; not left shivering to the bone or in danger of overheating. If the property is vacant set the heating/cooling system accordingly.

* Don't forget the garden

If you have a shed use it. Clear everything from the garden to make it neat and tidy. Remove potential hazards, such as panes of glass or loose bricks and paving slabs, the last thing you want is a personal injury claim. If the garden is overgrown and out of control, use the services of a local gardener to give it a general overhaul.

* Put your house in order

Allow your buyer to picture themselves in residence and show each room to highlight its purpose. If your dining room is full of work papers or exercise equipment, return it to its original purpose for viewings.



Other useful tips

When selecting your estate agent there are various points to consider.

Where is their focus?

Make sure the estate agent valuing your property is focusing on what they can do for you, not telling you what another estate agent can or cannot do. It could be a sign of bully-boy tactics or simply a general lack of experience in the area. It is certainly not very professional. There's little doubt the long established estate agents in your area can all do a job for you, otherwise they wouldn't still be here. Just make sure the person seeking your business knows what they are talking about and doesn't run out of ideas or information about their own services. Their focus should be on you and your property.

How long do they need?

Most estate agents will require some degree of commitment from you, after all you wouldn't want them rushing to find any old buyer through fear of early dis-instruction. On the other hand, do they really need 6 months in order to prove their worth? Make sure you agree a timescale you feel comfortable with, and never sign an agency agreement unless you understand the notice arrangements and how long you are "really" tied in for. Also we make sure that you are left with a copy of the agreement.

Sole agent, multiple agent or sole selling rights?

There are several types of estate agency agreements/contracts. The most common being the sole agency agreement whereby you appoint one agent to act in the sale of your property. Watch out for a sole selling rights agreement, which is far more restrictive and of no benefit

to you the seller, only of benefit to the agent. Multiple agency is usually more expensive and many sellers make the mistake in thinking it will help their chances of achieving a better result. In fact to a buyer it can give the impression of a property that is having, or has previously had, problems selling, perhaps due to hidden problems.

Realistic asking price?

Whilst every seller wants to achieve the best possible price, care should be taken to ensure the agent is not overstating the price in order to gain your instruction, especially if they also seek a long tie in period. Check on-line to see if the agent has a reputation for lowering their asking prices. The easiest way for an estate agent to win business is by giving an overinflated valuation. They may then seek a price reduction midway into a lengthy agency agreement. At best you sell after the price reduction kicks in; at worst you may end up selling for less having lost the impact a property has when it first comes to the market. Undervaluing can also be a problem so make sure you deal with experienced professionals with good local knowledge.

Know who you are dealing with

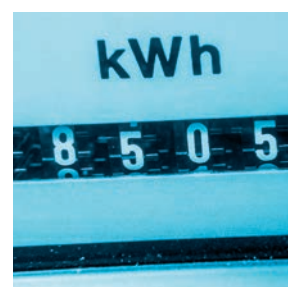
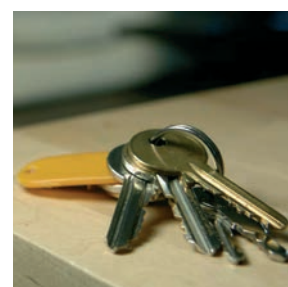
Putting your property on the market is the first step of what can be a lengthy process, ranging from several weeks to several months. Be sure to establish your main point of contact and understand who else will be involved in the various stages of the selling process. It's important you feel comfortable with the person looking after you later in the process.



Seller's checklist

Selling your property is a big step and, as with anything else, it's better to be prepared. Here is a short checklist to help you with this.

- ☐ Choose a reputable agent with a track record for success, don't feel pressurised
- ☐ If you are moving home, research the area you are moving to, ask your selling agent to help with this
- ☐ Think carefully before signing an agency agreement and make sure you are comfortable with the terms
- ☐ Prepare your property for marketing to ensure it is viewed in the best possible light by your buying audience
- ☐ Secure the services of a local solicitor. It's advisable to do this early on as they cannot act for both you and your buyer (so get in there first)
- ☐ Check your documents are in order, such as your lease, and make sure any ground rent and service charges are paid up to date
- ☐ Speak to your bank to make sure your mortgage is portable and whether there are any charges, e.g. early redemption penalties
- ☐ Commission your Energy Performance Certificate before you market your property
- ☐ Check the property details making sure they are correct as items listed will be perceived as being included in the sale price
- ☐ Don't leave your removal arrangements until the last minute. Do your homework, obtain quotes
- ☐ Once you have a completion date, make arrangements to transfer your utilities and take meter readings on the day
- ☐ Ensure all keys are ready to be handed over to the new owners, including window keys



the cost of moving

Marketing price £

Estate agent fees £

Solicitors fees £

Removals £

Total cost of selling £

Purchase price £

Solicitors fees for buying £

Survey fee £

Stamp duty £

Total fees for your new home £

All fees are approximate.
We recommend obtaining quotes from our approved panel of solicitors and obtain advice from our independent mortgage adviser to confirm exact cost.



Selling isn't right for every situation. Maybe you could consider letting?

It is surprising how many of our Landlords never considered keeping their existing home as an investment and releasing some equity to make an onward purchase.

At harveyrobinson we have a lettings department managing in excess of 300 properties across the local area and are happy to provide you with advice including how to structure your finances enabling you to keep your existing home and buy another.

If you choose to go down this route we are able to offer a service to take care of the day to day management or provide a "Tenant Find" service for those Landlords who have the time to take a more "hands on" approach. Please take appropriate advice on possible tax implications.

Expertise at your service

Are you looking for help with finding and screening suitable tenants? Perhaps you want the peace of mind and convenience of a comprehensive round-the-clock letting and property management service that takes care of everything? Whatever level of support you need, we can provide the service that is right for you.

We have more than a decades experience in letting properties in Cambridgeshire. Our clients range from private landlords with one small rental property to buy-to-let investment landlords with a property portfolio.

As standard we have 2 different levels of service:

1 Fully Managed Letting Service

2 Tenant Find Service

Both our services can be tailored to suit your individual needs and we will provide a written quote with absolutely no obligation.



Why busy landlords choose harveyrobinson

- ✓ Experienced, attentive and knowledgeable staff
- ✓ Flexible service options, competitively priced
- ✓ Open and transparent fees with no hidden charges
- ✓ Up to date legal documents and advice on property rental matters
- ✓ Independent property appraisals and achievable rental valuations
- ✓ Extensive internet advertising on the UK's top property website
- ✓ A pre-qualified database of waiting tenants
- ✓ Comprehensive tenant referencing service with full credit check
- ✓ Professionally produced inventories
- ✓ Full client money protection
- ✓ Registered with the government-backed mydeposits
- ✓ Database of expert and reliable tradespeople on call

Excellent speedy sale, super communication. Very professional service and staff. Would definitely recommend and use harveyrobinson again for sales and purchase. Dawn

Service has been superb. Advertised within hours of valuation, and sold within 3 days! Never had to chase them for information. Would highly recommend. Mrs Barnes

harveyrobinson were simply the best that I could have hoped for. Totally professional and supportive throughout the whole process of my house sale. Nothing was too much trouble. I received immediate feedback from my house viewings and regular update calls. More than anything though I always felt that harveyrobinson were on my side and that they wanted the best for me. I would recommend harveyrobinson to everyone. I received a total high quality and personable service. M Doherty

Extremely high standard of customer care – calls promptly returned, fortnightly updates received, very professional and courteous attitude of all staff. Very impressive! Highly recommended. S Bannister

Grant and Justin did everything they could to make a very difficult transaction go as smoothly as possible with excellent communication and support. Photographs in the brochure showed very accurately what the property actually looked like. Very impressed with the 'space planner' facility offered on their website of properties for sale. R&M

Great communication – reassuring and helpful. At no point did I feel uninformed or anxious – would not hesitate to recommend or use again. K Purdon

A highly professional yet informal experience. They are a friendly group and I can't praise enough on their high level of communication. Would recommend every time. G Evans



These testimonials have been shortened. These and more can be found at allagents.co.uk

Our clients are our **best advertisement**

Putting customers first is what we do best – but don't take our word for it: read what our customers say.

All our staff undergo regular training and we regularly reward evidence of 'excellent' customer service. We ask every single one of our customers to provide feedback and rate our service performance.



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