

whitegates



# Our Guide to Selling Your Home





## Welcome to Whitegates

We're proud to have been serving local property markets and communities across the Midlands, North Wales and the North of England for over 40 years.

We have an unrivalled knowledge of your local neighbourhood, and we use this to support our clients each time they move home.

We are the property sales experts you can trust. Our job is to find the right buyer for your home as quickly as possible, to get you the best price, to make the process smooth and easy, and to deliver a top-quality cost-effective service.

So, if you have a home to sell, or are thinking of making a move, why not visit our office, give us a call or drop us an email? We'll be delighted to help.

## Why choose Whitegates?

At Whitegates, we always put people first. The service we provide is all about understanding what's important to you, where and how you want to live and how we can help you sleep easy about those big decisions.

We've been on the high street since 1978. Our local business owners have more than 400 years of estate agency experience between them, and some of our customers have been with us through three generations of families moving homes.

We put our heart and soul into building relationships with our customers, because we greatly appreciate the trust you put in us. We'll work with you consultatively, to pitch the price just right for your timeframe and stay hands-on all the way through for a fast and successful move.

We're always looking for a better way to do things. We were among the first agents to offer free valuations, and 40 years on we're still shaking things up.

We've invested in highly experienced, expertly trained staff, using the most modern technology and the latest marketing techniques to get the best outcome for you. Being part of a leading UK property group adds national strength to our local connections.

We are also on hand 24/7, offering support and guidance whenever you need it through our website's Live Chat.

There is no corner cutting with Whitegates: we make sure you always receive straight-talking, efficient and courteous service.



# Selling your home

Selling a home can unquestionably be one of the most stressful experiences we go through in our lives.

That's when you need support, and at Whitegates, our local experts are on hand to help ease the burden.

Here's our step-by-step guide to selling your home, and how we can help make the process run as smoothly as possible for you.



# Arrange a valuation

It's important to understand what people are likely to pay for your property, which might be less or more than you had hoped.

Whitegates offers a free and instant online property valuation. Our Hometrack reports are used by most of the UK mortgage lenders and you can download yours free of charge from [whitegates.co.uk](http://whitegates.co.uk).

In addition, Whitegates sales experts have access to the latest property data in your area, and will visit your property to carry out a free, no-obligation appraisal. We also carry out detailed market research, and our market intelligence reports are in high demand.

Together with our local knowledge, it means we can give you a detailed view of how your local property market is performing.

With this wealth of knowledge at hand, we can ensure your property is on the market at a price that both suits your financial needs and maximises your chances of a quick sale.

Deciding on an accurate asking price is a very important first step as this could affect the amount of interest you receive from house hunters.

## When helping you to come to a decision on asking price, we will consider:

### Overall market trends

The time of year, as well as economic conditions such as interest rates, income fluctuation and job stability can have an impact on property prices.

### Properties sold in your area

We'll look at what people have paid recently for similar properties in your neighbourhood. This is a good indicator of what offers you can expect for your home.

### Location of the property

Buyers are looking for lifestyle as well as a perfect new home. That means they will look at proximity to schools, public transport links, shops and other amenities. Being close to these can have a positive effect on your asking price.

### Condition of the property

The value of your property can increase if it's well presented and requires no or little work, compared with those where repairs and renovations might be necessary.

## Run your numbers

Before agreeing your asking price, find out exactly how much your outstanding mortgage is and, more importantly, if there are any early redemption penalties. These could hit you hard in the pocket, so some forward planning before putting your home on the market is time well spent. It will help make sure your property is on the market for a price that works for you.

## Speak to the lenders

Once you are certain your move is achievable financially, speak to mortgage lenders about how much they would be able to lend you towards your next property. It's important to seek guidance on the options available. An independent broker can provide valuable advice and guidance on the best mortgage for you.



# Find the right agent

**There is much to consider when looking for the right estate agent to market your property - and it's not necessarily down to the lowest commission rate or who says your house is worth the most!**

How flexible is the agent's availability to show potential buyers around your property? How will they market it through digital media? What services do they offer? Will they go the extra mile for you?

It can be tempting to go for the agent offering the lowest commission rate or highest valuation for your home. But consider that valuations above the market level can mean fewer viewings, longer sale timeframes, and even not getting a sale at all. An agent on a lower commission rate is also unlikely to have the same drive and passion to sell your home.

We have strong expertise to help you sell your property in the right time frame for the best price and offer a strong marketing package to get it the exposure it deserves.

Once an offer is accepted, we carry on working for you by letting you know how the sale is progressing and helping you navigate around any obstacles. Taking stress like this out of selling your home is priceless, and that's what we aim to do at Whitegates.



## Find a solicitor

Once you have made the decision to sell and have chosen an agent, the to-do list moves on to finding the right conveyancing solicitor. Your local Whitegates office can recommend the most suitable solicitor for your sale, opening up those key lines of communication and ensuring a smooth sales process.

Although a conveyancing solicitor might not officially come on board until you have accepted an offer on your property, it can save time and a headache if you have them at the ready when you accept an offer.



## Research your purchase area

Of course, it's always wise to have an agreeable offer on the table for your property before looking for your next one, but it can be worth doing some advance research into potential areas and postcodes beforehand.

Why not speak to your local Whitegates office who will be able to suggest options within your price range?



## Organise an Energy Performance Certificate

This is a legal requirement when selling your home. The certificate rates a property from "A" to "G" for both Energy Efficiency and Environmental Impact, with "A" being the best. It also shows how a property could potentially better its rating after making improvements.

Let Whitegates take the strain of arranging this, so you can focus on finding your dream home.

## Decide on a type of contract

Choosing which type of a contract you sign depends on what type of property you have and the current market conditions:

- **Sole selling rights** means that the estate agent has the exclusive right to sell your property during the time period stipulated. You'll be required to pay fees to that estate agent, even if you find your own buyer.
- **Sole agency** means that the estate agent has the exclusive right to sell your property during the time period stipulated, but fees will only be payable if the agent introduces a buyer. If you find your own buyer, you won't have to pay anything to the agent.
- **Multiple agency** means that you may instruct more than one agency, and only pay commission to the one who sells your property.



# Preparing your home for sale

## Picture perfect

First impressions are key, but even more so when your property is listed alongside other homes in the area on websites like Rightmove and Zoopla.

Whitegates experts use the latest photographic technology and know the best ways to take photos of your home to make it stand out from the crowd.

We'll help you stage your property correctly, and arrange photography to create a portfolio of images.

We'll also create a set of accurate floorplans to help potential buyers understand the layout of your property.

It's crucial, though, to make sure your property is 'dressed for success' before the camera starts snapping.

Here are the things you should do before your home is photographed:

- ✓ Thoroughly clean your home inside and out.
- ✓ Touch up wall paint and fix peeling wallpaper.
- ✓ Repair any cracks in walls and ceilings.
- ✓ Clean the windows and make any minor repairs.
- ✓ Repair any leaky taps and other plumbing issues.
- ✓ Make any minor repairs to doors and floor boards.
- ✓ Keep the garden tidy and lawn mown.
- ✓ Make sure all outdoor and indoor lights work and replace frayed door mats.

## First impressions count

We'll be honest with you about the presentation of your home and if we feel improvements can be made, we'll tell you!

In most cases, a little elbow grease is all that is required, but this can pay big dividends when it comes to selling your home.

De-cluttering and removing personal items out of sight can enable those viewing your home to visualise themselves living there, so roll up those sleeves and get stuck in!

Here are five more key pieces of advice when preparing your home for viewings:

- ✓ Keep the property clean and tidy, paying special attention to the kitchen and bathrooms.
- ✓ Remove all unnecessary items and create a sense of space to showcase your property's best features.
- ✓ Give all rooms a purpose to help potential buyers visualise what each room could be. For example, if you are marketing the room as a bedroom, make sure it has a bed, a wardrobe and drawers.
- ✓ Keep the property bright: let the light in by opening the curtains, clean the windows and switch on the lights where necessary.
- ✓ Try to keep pets, as well as their bedding and toys, out of sight.

## What stays and what goes?

Even before you have an acceptable offer on the table, it's worth making an early start on decisions regarding fixtures and fittings. What will you keep and what will you take to your new property?

Providing your agent with this information early in the sales process means they can give potential buyers a true picture of your property from the start.



# Marketing your home

No buyer is the same and house hunters use many sources to search for property. So, it's very important to maximise interest from them across all marketing media channels.

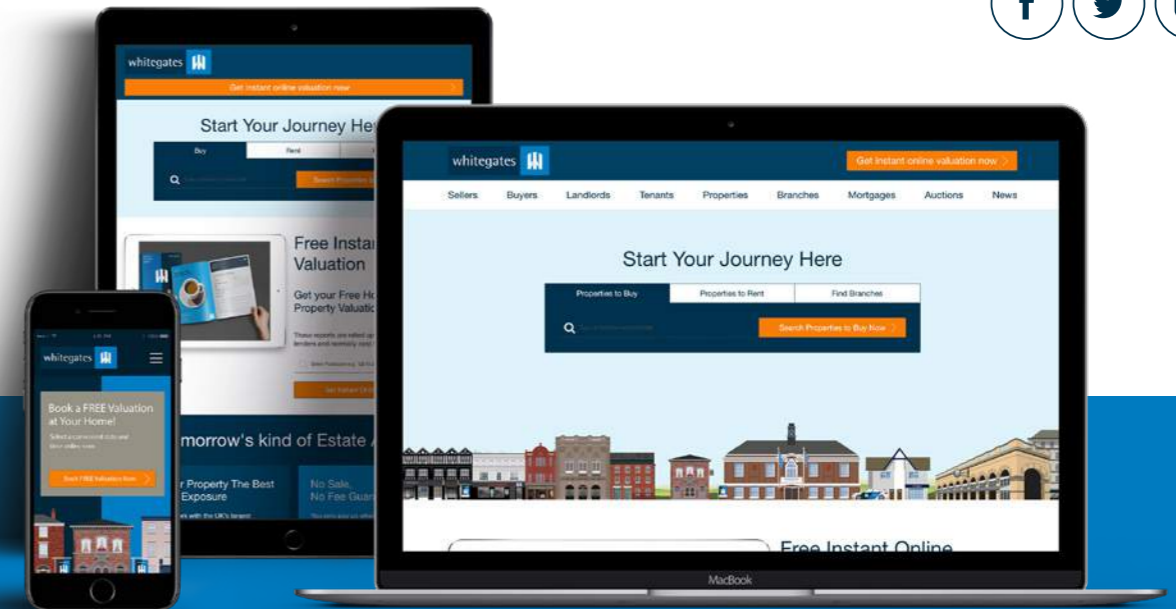
Research suggests that 90% of buyers start their property search online. That's why Whitegates have heavily invested in online technology for promoting and selling property.

Our website is optimised to present properties exceptionally well on mobile, tablet and desktop devices, and it also allows potential buyers to chat with us 24/7. So no matter when or how people are looking, we are working to sell your property.

With links to the UK's largest property portals, it offers a sophisticated but simple-to-use method for buyers to access the details of your property.

Whitegates also communicates with potential buyers across social media platforms, including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, to ensure your property gets maximum exposure.

On top of that, we'll proactively notify potential buyers on our database as soon as we take on your property. We also prepare professional property listings and brochures with property description, photos and floorplans, as well as display a 'For Sale' board next to your property to attract maximum attention.



## Let the viewings commence

Once your property is on the market, we'll start getting potential buyers through the door. Most importantly, we'll monitor interest levels and always provide you with immediate feedback and honest opinions from the people who view your home.

## Offers

Any offers you receive on your property should always be communicated by your agent both verbally and in writing. Whitegates will never deviate from this.

Take your time to consider any offers and whether they work for you, both in terms of your sale property and your next home.

Whitegates is always on hand, as your agent, to listen and answer any worries or concerns you may have.

We also take the reins when it comes to establishing a buyer's ability to proceed and will pass on your feedback directly to the buyer, whether the offer is acceptable or not.

## It's acceptable!

Once you have accepted an offer, you'll want to move forward quickly. Our experts will immediately draw up a memorandum of sale and confirm the price with all parties, as well as provide relevant information to the solicitors.

We are also on hand to advise on searches and enquiries, including preliminary deeds, title deeds and fixtures and fittings confirmation.

As soon as all the legal work has been completed, the buyer's mortgage offer finalised, searches and surveys carried out and all enquiries agreed, both parties will be ready to exchange contracts and agree on a completion date. We'll work to move this along for you. At this point, we can also help with the recommendation of a removals company.

And that's it! You've sold your home - time to celebrate and enjoy the next chapter in your life!

## We set high standards



As part of one of the UK's largest property groups, we pride ourselves on maintaining the highest regulatory standards, with recognised codes of practice that include data protection and money laundering.

We are members of The Property Ombudsman (TPO) scheme. We also offer ongoing training programmes to our teams and many of our offices are members of NAEA Propertymark, which signifies best industry standards and qualifications.

**At Whitegates, we're the property sales experts you can trust. We are confident that our unrivalled local knowledge combined with our personal service and decades of experience will ensure a quick sale of your home for the best price possible.**



Visit us at [whitegates.co.uk](http://whitegates.co.uk)  
to find your nearest branch



Whitegates is a franchise group and each office is independently owned and operated under licence from Whitegates Estate Agency Ltd.

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