



**ELAA - UK**  
Estate & Letting Agents Association UK

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## Improve the value and saleability of your home

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### Decorating/DIY projects

It is always better to appoint a professional to complete works on your home, particularly if you want these jobs to add value as you often won't have the tools and experience to finish the job to the same high standard as a professional would so, if possible, always consider getting quotes from reputable tradespeople rather than doing it yourself.

If you do have works or diy projects underway try to have these finished before getting your property valued and especially before viewings as most people will be put off by unfinished or unsatisfactory repairs and decorations. If viewers of your property do want to make an offer you will that usually they will lower their offers if they see that they will have to do a lot of work to either finish or correct work around your home.

Please always ensure that any electrical and gas works are carried out by qualified and registered professionals, if you require help finding such tradespeople please visit our website for assistance ([www.elaa-uk.org/our-partners/](http://www.elaa-uk.org/our-partners/))

### Décor

Although we appreciate that you probably want your home to reflect you and your personality we would advise that any overly vibrant colours on walls or other such features are toned down in order to make your home as appealing as possible to the widest spectrum of possible buyers. Neutral colours are almost always recommended as they allow potential buyers to imagine living in the property and to envisage what they could do to add their own personal touches. The exterior of your property should also be neutral and blend in with it's surroundings, properties that are too different or too vibrant on the outside compared to those around it tend to be less appealing.

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## Windows and doors

The condition of your windows and doors is very important when looking to sell your home. Ensure your windows and doors are all clean and flake free, if possible try to replace any old or damaged windows/doors with new double glazed units.

## Front garden

Your front garden provides potential buyers with their first impression so keep it tidy. If you have lawn on your front garden then make sure you keep it well maintained and don't let the grass overgrow, especially not over to the actual driveway or footpath. If you have a hard driveway or footpath keep it clean, maybe use a pressure washer to remove any marks or stains. If you do not have a front garden then consider putting a pot of plants near the front door to make it looking bright and appealing.

## Rear and side gardens

Gardens can be a huge selling point if presented well but unmaintained or messy gardens can have a very negative effect on your property and even its value. Keep your garden clean, put away any kids toys such as bikes, scooters, footballs, etc. If you have fencing make sure it is clean and maybe give it a new coat paint. If you have a hedge then keep it trimmed and tidy. Always keep your lawn well maintained, make sure it is not overgrown and make sure it does not overgrow around the edges. Ensure that all hard surfaces such as patio areas or decking are clean (maybe use a pressure washer to clean these) and don't forget, if you have a side garden or even just a footpath on the side, keep these areas in good condition also.

## Front doors

Front doors are very important and should not but underestimated. The front door is one of the first things potential buyers will see and they will spending quite a bit of time their whilst you or your agent come to open the door. Any stains, flaky paint, dust or dirt around the edges, groves or glass panels will be noticed and can create a poor impression of your home.

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Make sure your front door is clean especially around any ridges, groves and glass panels. If your front door is painted make sure the paint is not flaking or faded, if so then consider painting it before viewings, it will make a better first impression.

### Clutter and mess

Clutter and mess are big negative point for potential buyers. It can make your rooms seem smaller and many buyers will find it more difficult to envisage how they can make this their home if your items are cluttering up the place. We always recommend that you put away any unrequired items and make your home feel as open and airy as possible when people are viewing it. When your home is clutter and mess free people can see the full potential of the property and it is easier for them to see how they can make their own home.

### Furniture

Make sure your furniture is placed in the best way to show the full potential of your home. You may find that re-arranging some of your furniture can really open the space available and make it easier for viewers to see what your home really has to offer.

### Light

Light attracts people and makes most people feel more positive. A dark property will be less appealing than a light and airy property. It is important to allow as much natural light into your property as possible. If you have large trees or hedges blocking the light into your property consider trimming these down to allow more light to come in. If your home still feels a bit dark then it may be a good idea to turn on the lights in your home during viewings.

### Mould or damp

If you have any mould or damp issues we recommend that you fix these prior to any viewings as mould and damp can be very off putting for potential buyers. Mould and damp are both also bad for your health. If your home has issues with mould or damp you should try to find the cause of the problem and fix it as soon as possible. Usually the cause of damp or mould can be something simple to fix such as blocked gutters or pipes or wet, unventilated bathrooms. Ensure you keep your home well ventilated, keep bath/shower rooms and kitchens dry. Unblock your gutters and downpipes and make sure seals around windows and doors are not damaged. If you can not find the cause of the problem or cannot fix the problem seek professional advice.

Once you have fixed the problem remove any visible mould or damp marks, you may need to consider painting over these if the stains are difficult to remove.

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## Cracks

Any cracks in the walls should be carefully inspected and whilst some small cracks may be due to something simple such as paint cracking other cracks could be signs of a more serious problem. If you suspect a serious problem such as subsidence then you should have these investigated by a qualified expert and have the issues fixed if possible. If cracks are superficial then you should fill these in and maybe repaint the wall(s) effected as cracks can be very unappealing to potential buyers. Please note any serious issues causing cracks such as subsidence may effect the price of your home.

## Pets

We all love our pets but sometimes others may not be so keen. If you have pets make sure you clean all surfaces and open the windows before any viewings to air your home. The smell of pets can be of putting for many people especially if they think the smell will still be there after you move out. We recommend you clean all surfaces, air the house and use a light air freshener to make your home smell clean and fresh. It is also advisable to keep your pets only in one room/area after cleaning and whilst buyers or agents are viewing your property.

## Smells

It is not only pets that can cause a home to smell, many homes can give off unpalatable smells that we, as home owners, become immune to. Unpalatable smells can lead to a negative viewing experience, in particular the smell of mould/damp, pets, wet/dirty clothes or even recently cooked food. Always give your home a good clean before any viewings, open the windows to allow your home to air and use an air freshener, scented candle or a scented cleaner to gently scent the air. It is important not to over scent a home as this can also be off putting for viewers and may make them suspicious that you are covering up the smell of something worse such as damp.

## Views from your property

If your property overlooks a busy road, commercial building or something else that may deter potential buyers you should consider installing fencing or hedging. Another way to distract the eye away from these views could be to plant some colourful plants, trees or shrubs around the border of your property.

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## Noise

Noise can be a major deterrent for home buyers. If you live in a noisy area such as near a busy road, near busy shops, pubs or just generally a noisy neighbourhood you should consider closing all the windows and doors prior to any viewings and if it is dark outside then even close any blinds and curtains to help minimise the noise inside the property. Whilst we would not recommend concealing noises these steps could help potential buyers realise that the effects of the noise inside the property are not as bad as they may otherwise assume. It may also be viable to install fencing or hedging around your property that could reduce the noise both inside your property and in your garden.

## Swimming pools & hot tubs

Whilst the idea of a swimming pool or hot tub might seem appealing and you may think these will add value to a property in reality they could have the opposite effect. Swimming pools tend to take up a lot of space and can be very costly to maintain. Potential buyers can be very deterred by swimming pools and hot tubs that are not clean and well maintained. If you have a swimming pool or hot tub make sure they are clean and well maintained especially before viewings. If you can not undertake any maintenance required them may be have them emptied and cleaned so they look presentable and appealing. It may also be worth placing some plants or shrubs around these to make them look nicer.

## Home improvements with no planning

It is important to check that if you have had works carried out on your property that it has the relevant planning permission. If you (or possibly a previous owner) carried out works that do not have the relevant planning permission this will probably be discovered during the sale process. It can have a very negative effect on your sale such as the buyers could lower their offer or withdraw from the purchase. If you suspect that any part of your home may not have the correct planning permission you should check this with your local authority and receive legal advice from a qualified solicitor. We would recommend you resolve any planning issues before selling your property.

## Japanese Knotweed

This is a very invasive species and can spread quickly. It can cause many serious issues including damage to roads and buildings. Japanese knotweed can devalue your property, especially if it is causing problems with your walls or foundations. It may also put your home at risk due to subsidence. If you suspect your property or a property nearby may have

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problems such as Japanese Knotweed you should seek the advice of a professional immediately.

If you are concerned about something that may effect the sale or value of your property or for more information on how to increase the value and saleability of your home please contact an ELAA-UK member near you (visit: [www.ELAA-UK.org/find-a-member](http://www.ELAA-UK.org/find-a-member))

For further information please visit the consumer section of our website:

[www.ELAA-UK.org/consumer-information](http://www.ELAA-UK.org/consumer-information)



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