



LEIGHTONS
ESTATE AGENCY

A guide to selling your home in **autumn**

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Welcome,

My name is Michael Leighton, and I am the founder and Managing Director here at Leightons Estate Agency.

Over the following pages, we'll share some tips and experience-based advice on how to sell your home in autumn.

These autumnal months give home sellers an ideal window of opportunity before the winter kicks in and the property market traditionally slows down (but doesn't stop).

Autumn is often a very busy period for people wanting to move into a new home.

For some, it's the attraction of settling into a new place before Christmas. (although time is certainly ticking for those who want a pre-Christmas move to happen!)

Usually, autumn movers are looking to be in their new home in the new year.

Autumn is also a time when many people who have had their homes on sale through the summer have yet to receive an acceptable offer and start thinking about changing their estate agent.

This is something we also cover in this guide. Along with tips on getting your property ready for an autumn sale and questions to ask estate agents to ensure you choose the best one.

I hope you find this guide helpful, and please get in touch with us if you have any questions whatsoever.



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

Eight awesome autumn selling tips

September to December is a time when the staging and presentation of a property can make a huge difference. Autumn isn't blessed with the freshness of spring or the warmth and light of summer, but don't let that stop you from showcasing your home to attract motivated buyers.

1. Remember the primacy effect

The primacy effect is a fancy term psychologists use. Without going all Sigmund Freud and delving into the complexities of the human mind, it essentially confirms that first impressions count.

And when it comes to selling your home in autumn, you can do several things to make your property have a positive primacy effect on potential buyers.

These include ensuring the outside of your property is clean, tidy and inviting, that windows (and don't forget those sills) are washed, that your welcome mat is welcoming, and your front door is clean. Oh, remember to get any fallen leaves tidied up, too.



2. Hallways lead to selling success

But the primacy effect doesn't end there. The wetter weather in the autumn months can mean our hallways and entrance areas of our homes become cluttered with wellies, boots, jackets and umbrellas. If space allows, keep these out of sight or at least tidy.

3. A warm welcome

So, you've successfully navigated the first impression phase. Now create the ideal temperature within your home, so would-be buyers can admire its potential and engage their imaginations rather than feel too hot or too cold (either sensation will distract them). The rule of thumb is simple. If it's too warm/cold for you when dressed in everyday clothing, you need to have another look at the thermostat.

4. Make light work

With natural light in shrinking supply during autumn, think about adding a couple of table lamps and brighter bulbs, and if you're comfortable with it, ditch the net curtains. Of course, you want to show your home in its best light (pun intended), so if you are unsure how to do that, feel free to give us a call for some expert advice.

Eight awesome autumn selling tips (continued)

5. Combat condensation

We totally understand that when your home is on the market, life doesn't stop, nor does your laundry. However, the weather now means hanging washing outside is a non-starter. Just be mindful of the Two Vs when keeping on top of your laundry. **Ventilation** – to avoid condensation, which is surprisingly off-putting for potential buyers, be aware of ventilation. Even a couple of ten-minute blasts of opening the windows can make a big difference when combatting condensation. **Visuals** – as with any other type of clutter, no one wants to see your socks and underwear hanging up in the lounge or towels over the radiators.

6. Get hygge with it

Hygge is a word in Danish and Norwegian that describes a mood of cosiness – especially important as the weather turns chillier. By getting hygge in your home by making the most of cushions, candles, warm colours and pleasant aromas, you'll help prospective buyers feel warm and fuzzy about your property.

Read the next page to discover the four questions that will help you pick a winning agent rather than a non-starter.

7. A view to a thrill

Very few of us get excited about a property we can barely see if we view it for the first time when it's dark. Therefore, it's SO important that the estate agent you select to sell your home offers viewings during the daytime and at weekends. A little flexibility around viewing times can make a huge difference when selling your home successfully.

8. Not all agents are created equally

So, you've taken the time and put in the effort to create a great first impression; you've thought about the little details, and your home has dashes of Scandinavian hygge running through it. But, unfortunately, all that effort could fall flatter than a damp firework if you've chosen an estate agent who hasn't the skill and experience to sell your home, whatever season it's on the market.



Four questions to ask an estate agent

The best agents realise selling a home in the different seasons of the year presents both challenges and opportunities.

Selling in autumn and winter often requires a focus on the home's interior comfort. In spring and summer, it's beneficial to showcase outdoor areas and a sense of light and space.

Below are four questions to ask any agent you're considering instructing to sell your home in autumn.

What do I get for the commission fee you have quoted?

Cheap fees usually mean a much lower standard of service. This can highlight itself in many ways, including the quality of your property's marketing, the support around viewings and the level of expertise and effort when negotiating the best possible price.

Do you offer accompanied viewings?

Natural light is limited at this time of year, but people do still require appointments later in the day. You need an agent who is flexible and can arrange and accommodate viewings throughout the week.

How will you present my property in its best light?

We will help you stage the property to be ready for sale using many of the techniques in this guide. The importance of your property's photography is paramount because the vast majority of buyers begin their searches online. This is why we ensure your home's photos are taken on a light, bright day. It is also important to make the most of the external photos. If your rear garden gets sunshine in the afternoon, then you need an external photo at that time, even if it means taking one of the front in the morning.

What is your plan if we do not receive an acceptable offer by the winter?

A good agent will regularly review how your property is performing in terms of interest from potential buyers. As well as reviewing, good agents will revise and refine the marketing approach based on viewer feedback, your wishes and trends in the local market. If a sale does run over into the winter months, a good agent will look to get new photographs of your property to mirror the season and not date your home in the eyes of potential buyers who begin their searches online.



Changing seasons – Changing agents

It's not just the trees and the weather that change at this time of year.

Autumn is often when many people who have had their homes on sale through the summer without selling start thinking about changing their strategy.

This usually involves reviewing the performance of their current agent.

Sometimes, a property gets stuck on the market due to bad luck rather than poor marketing or sub-standard service.

This can be caused by other parties dropping out of the sale.

But if you have a home on the market and are considering changing agents, think about asking them these questions:

- What will you do differently to attract more interest as we enter the colder months?
- How can we refresh the marketing to appeal to more potential buyers?
- Why haven't we received an acceptable offer yet?

We have been finding the correct answers to the above questions to help sell properties that are 'sticking' on the market for years.

If you find yourself in this situation, we would like to offer you a complimentary, no-obligation **Personalised Property Marketing Review**.

It's where we look at every aspect of your home's current marketing and selling strategy, and advise you on overcoming the barriers between where you are and where you want to be.

Remember to always check what your contract terms are with your current agent before making any changes.

And finally..

We hope you found our guide to selling your home in autumn helpful.

If you have any questions about this guide or anything property related, please don't hesitate to contact us.



Your moving checklist

Below is a helpful 11-point checklist to help you prepare for a sale.

- Once you are sure you want to move, contact the estate agent for a valuation. Remember, seek evidence for any valuation they provide.
- Don't just choose the agent with the highest valuation or cheapest fee. This is often a false economy.
- You'll need to instruct a conveyancing solicitor once a sale is agreed, it's a good idea to get some quotes.
- So, you've instructed the agents you feel are most capable and who you are comfortable with. What next? Working through our staging tips on pages 4-5 is a good idea. Decluttering is an important step, and local charity shops, home clearance and auction houses can all be helpful when having a major clear-out.
- Get ahead with packing. Even though you may not have a move date yet, it's always worthwhile boxing up those items you don't use much. This will make your life a little more comfortable in the future.
- Get quotes from different removal companies when you've accepted an offer and agreed on a completion date. Look for ones that are recommended and are fully insured.
- Start finishing the food in your freezer ahead of moving day.
- Remember to let all your banks, utility companies and insurance providers know and arrange to have your mail redirected.
- Start getting quotes for insurance on your new property, starting from when you are set to complete the move.
- The day before the move, create an essentials box with any items you might need quickly when you move in. For example, kettles, cups, tea and coffee always come in handy.
- On the day of the move, take any essential items or documents with you, such as medicines, passports, wallets/purses, keys and glasses.