

Home Information Packs

You may have heard of **HIPS (Home Information Packs)**. **HIPs** were introduced to provide information at the outset of the transaction, to increase certainty and inform buyers about a property before they incur costs. From 6 April 2009 this information must be available from the first day the property is put on the market.

Before a property can be marketed for sale a HIP is required and **Butcher Andrews** are well placed to organise this for you. We use a dedicated on-line service with the Law Society's preferred supplier.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions which may help you as a potential seller or buyer.

Make **Butcher Andrews** your first call when you are considering a HIP for your property.

Seller's Frequently Asked Questions

When do I have to provide a HIP? HIP's are now needed for most homes put on the market with vacant possession on or after 14 December 2007.

Those who do not require a HIP are:

- Mixed use properties (a flat and shop being sold together)
- Portfolio sales
- Leases of less than 21 years

What goes in a HIP? A HIP includes documents that are required when homes are bought and sold. Some documents are mandatory and others optional. The mandatory documents are:

An index (ie a list of the contents of the HIP)

- A sale statement (summarising the terms of sale)
- Evidence of title
- Standard searches (ie local authority enquiries/drainage/water search)
- An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Commonhold information (where appropriate)
- A copy of the lease (where appropriate)

From 6 April 2009, the pack will include the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ) as mandatory. This form should be completed by the seller and will provide simple, useful information about a property that can help the buyer decide whether to view, or make an offer.

From 1 January 2009 a copy of the lease is the only additional required document in a HIP for the sale of a leasehold property.

Who pays for the Pack? The seller is responsible for the cost of a Home Information Pack. The cost depends on the property and we will tell you the cost before the HIP is ordered.

My house has been on the market before HIPs came in. If I change Estate Agents now, do I have to get a HIP? If your house has not been taken off the market i.e. continuous marketing has occurred, then no, you will not need to commission a HIP. If however, there was a break in marketing you will need to supply a HIP.

Who compiles HIPs? As legal advisers we have your best interest at heart and unlike some of the corporate HIP providers which the large Estate Agency groups use we can meet with you to discuss the necessary documentation and advise you on the requirements to effectively prepare your HIP.

I'm selling my house privately do I need a Home Information Pack? If you are marketing your property, even if it's just by putting a 'for sale' sign in the window, you need a Pack. Sales where no marketing takes place (e.g. to a member of the family) won't need a Pack.

Buyers' Frequently Asked Questions

When should I expect to receive a Home Information Pack on a property I am interested in buying? If a property which falls within the scope of the scheme is first placed on the market during the temporary period during which marketing is allowed to start without a HIP, then the HIP must be commissioned before marketing can begin. If a property which falls within the scope of the scheme is first marketed from 1 June 2008 onwards, a HIP should be available from the time it is first placed on the market.

What can I do if a HIP isn't provided? Except in relation to properties first placed on the market during the temporary period, which ends on 31 May 2008, which are being marketed without Packs, potential buyers have a right to a copy of the Pack and this should be provided within 14 days of request. Sellers are entitled to make a reasonable charge to cover copying and postage costs and may also refuse to provide a copy in certain limited cases. These are where the seller believes that the person making the request:

- could not afford the property;
- is not really interested in buying the property
- is not a person to whom the seller would wish to sell the property - but this does not allow them to unlawfully discriminate against someone.

If you believe that you are being denied a copy of the pack unlawfully, **Butcher Andrews** can help you.

How much does a Home Information Pack cost?

Copies of Packs are free to buyers, although a reasonable charge may be made for copying and postage.

Butcher Andrews can obtain what you need on your behalf.

Should you like to discuss your HIP further at this stage please do not hesitate to contact Kit Mordaunt, David Ewings or Alex Mann on 01328 863131 for an informal without obligation discussion.



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