

Buying your home – what are searches?

When we provide you with a quote for our fees in relation to assisting you with purchasing your home, we also advise you about other expenses that are likely to be incurred such as: Land Registry registration fees, Stamp Duty Land Tax, Searches and VAT. Many people may wonder why it is necessary to have searches carried out on a property but these can help reveal any possible issues which may be of concern to a potential buyer regarding the property itself and may help avoid any problems down the line.

Local Authority Search

A Local Authority Search is submitted to the appropriate Local Authority serving a property and its content contains a standard list of enquiries which requests any information about the property within the following main areas:

1. Planning applications or decisions affecting the property.
2. Any restrictions or rights of way affecting the property (e.g. footpaths or road access).
3. Building control history on the property.
4. Whether the property is amongst a conservation area or on contaminated land.
5. Whether there are any debts owing to the Local Authority in relation to that particular property.

If you are purchasing a property with the intention to take out a mortgage against it, it is also highly likely that the mortgage lender will require a Local Authority Search to be carried out as part of the terms of the Mortgage Offer.

Environmental Search

An Environmental Search is always recommended to be carried out on a property as it provides information regarding possible environmental risks affecting a property, including: contaminated land, flooding, radon, ground stability and also energy and infrastructure. Once the search is submitted, you are provided with a detailed report of any possible defects within any of the above mentioned areas.

Water and Drainage Search

A Water and Drainage Search provides information regarding a property's water and sewage supply by submitting a set of standard enquires to the relevant water company and you will then receive a detailed report of any possible risks and information relating to water pipes, tanks, sewage pipes and potential flooding risks. The report also provides clear drainage plans surrounding the property.

Other possible searches

There are various other searches that can be carried out in addition to those above if the property in question is within a specific area and these include:

1. Chancel Check Search
2. Coal Mining Search
3. Common Registration Search

4. Highways Search.

For further information on these particular searches and to find out whether they may be relevant to your property, please contact our conveyancing department.

The benefit of using local conveyancing experts like ourselves means that we are very aware of the different searches that may be required for the location of your property and can advise you correctly as to which searches should be carried out. We are also regulated by The Law Society.

For further information, please contact our conveyancing team at Burningham & Brown:

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