

First-time Buyers

A step by step guide



Buying your first home is an exciting time but it can also be daunting. It is possibly one of the biggest financial decisions you will make.

Our residential property team are here to help and guide you every step of the way.

Step 1

If you need a mortgage make sure you have instructed a mortgage advisor to help you get a 'mortgage in principal' so that you are confident of the amount you can borrow before you start looking for your new home – this will help you to set your limits on the price of property that you can afford. Contact Farnfields and we can put you in touch with an independent mortgage advisor to help you with this.

Look out for Government schemes that may help you such as:

- The Help to Buy ISA
www.helptobuy.gov.uk/help-to-buy-isa/how-does-it-work/
- The Help to Buy Equity Loan
www.helptobuy.gov.uk/equity-loan/equity-loans/
- The Help to Buy Mortgage Guarantee Scheme
www.helptobuy.gov.uk/mortgage-guarantee/how-does-it-work/
- Shared Ownership
www.helptobuy.gov.uk/shared-ownership/
- Right to Buy
www.ownyourhome.gov.uk/scheme/right-to-buy/
(available to Council tenants and some housing association tenants).



Consider other costs such as surveyor's fees, conveyancing costs, council tax, utilities, insurance, on-going maintenance costs – to make sure that you are not stretching yourself too much. Contact Farnfields at this stage for a full breakdown of the conveyancing costs.

Ensuring that you have your mortgage in principal in place and have appointed your conveyancer shows the estate agent and the seller that you are committed and organised.

Step 2

Now that you have found the property you would like to buy and have had your offer accepted, let us know. We will take care of all the legal work for you, including checking the contract pack and carrying out searches. Make sure that you let us know the reasons you have chosen a particular property so that we recommend the right searches and ask the right questions.

It is advisable to instruct a surveyor to carry out a survey of the property. They will be able to check for any problems with the property, including those which may impact on the value of the home. Contact Farnfields and we can put you in touch with an independent surveyor.

Step 3

Now that you have had your offer accepted, your mortgage advisor can finalise your mortgage application. Your mortgage company will arrange a valuation of the property. Once all the checks have been carried out, your mortgage company will issue a mortgage offer to you and to your conveyancer. This must be in place before you exchange contracts.

Step 4

Reporting – we will report to you throughout the conveyancing process, to ensure you are fully informed at all stages:

1. At the beginning of the conveyancing transaction
2. When we receive your search results
3. When we receive your mortgage offer
4. When we are close to exchange.

We will go through the contract with you so that you understand what you are signing, and provide you with a financial completion statement so that you know how much you will need to pay on completion. At this stage we will ask you for a deposit, which is usually 10% of the purchase price.

Other considerations

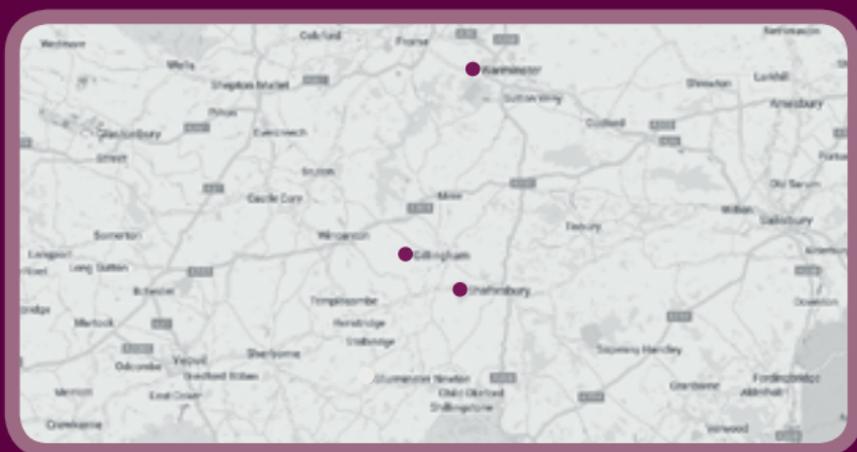
- If you are buying a property with a partner and you are not married you do not share the same legal rights as those who marry or who are in a civil partnership. This can make things difficult if the relationship breaks down in the future particularly in regards to finance and property. **A co-habitation agreement** will give you the peace of mind that however your relationship may change in the future, you will be legally protected. Farnfields can help you with this visit www.farnfields.com/services-for-you/family-law/living-together/ for more information.
- **Declaration of Trust** - If you are buying a property with a partner and you are contributing different amounts, or if family members are contributing to the purchase price, you can record and protect your interests in a **Declaration of Trust**, to avoid legal problems arising in the future. Contact Farnfields for more information.
- **Do you have a will?** If you do not have a will, or your will is more than 3 years old, or if you have had a change in circumstances, now would be a very good time to review or make a **will**. Your home may be the largest financial investment you have made, with a will in place you can have the peace of mind that your wishes will be carried out should anything happen to you. Making a will now helps avoids legal

problems arising for your family in the future. Farnfields can help you with this visit www.farnfields.com/services-for-you/wills-and-probate/making-a-will/ for more information.

Expect far more

- We will make sure that our costs are broken down and that we include everything in our initial quote so that you are not hit by hidden costs later on. We understand how important it is that you have a clear idea of your finances.
- We will keep you informed every step of the way.
- We will always work in your best interests.
- Farnfields is **Lexcel** accredited - a Law Society quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. We also carry the **Conveyancing Quality Scheme** accreditation which demonstrates that we follow best practice, meet the highest standards of technical expertise and client service.

Confused by some of the jargon? This useful jargon buster by the Money Advice Service may help : <https://masassets.blob.core.windows.net/cms/mas-mortgages-jargon-busters.pdf>



Our friendly lawyers will put you at ease and explain everything clearly using plain English.

For confidential, expert advice please email us at info@farnfields.com or contact one of the following offices:

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