

JW WOOD

COUNTY DURHAM · DARLINGTON

EST
1910

YOUR PROPERTY GUIDE

A Seller's Guide to *selling well.*

Everything you need to know about selling a property in the North East — from your first valuation to handing over the keys. Friendly, clear, and written by people who have been doing this since 1910.

JW WOOD ESTATE AGENTS
OPENING DOORS SINCE 1910

JWW.CO.UK

A WARM WELCOME

Let's get your home sold — well.

Selling a home is a big moment. It's exciting, occasionally stressful, and often tied up with a hundred other moving parts — a new job, a growing family, a life change. Our job is to take the complication out of the process and replace it with clarity, confidence, and a smooth sale at a price you're happy with.

This guide walks you through the whole journey in plain English, with the benefit of a century of local experience. Keep it to hand, dip in when you need to, and pick up the phone whenever you'd like a human answer to a human question.

The JW Wood Team

COUNTY DURHAM & DARLINGTON

A family-owned agency with deep local roots

JW Wood has been selling and letting homes across County Durham and Darlington since 1910. Five branches, one local family, and a team that lives and breathes the villages, towns and cities we serve. We don't answer to a corporate head office — we answer to you.

115+ years local

More experience of selling County Durham property than any agent in the area.

Award-winning service

Voted Best North East Agent five times by the Relocation Agent Network.

Everything under one roof

Sales, marketing, conveyancing and mortgages — one trusted point of contact.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Your guide, chapter by chapter.

We've broken the journey into bite-sized stages so you can read the whole thing through, or jump to the bit you need right now.

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THE JWW DIFFERENCE

A century of moving people on.

When you're trusting someone with one of your most valuable assets, who you choose matters. Here's what sets us apart for sellers.

Local knowledge that actually moves the needle

Pricing your home right, targeting the right buyers, and knowing which features will resonate in your street — these aren't generic skills. Our branch teams live and work in the communities they serve, from Durham City to Consett, Bishop Auckland to Darlington. That hyperlocal expertise translates into accurate valuations and sales that complete.

Marketing that makes your home stand out

Professional photography, detailed floorplans, premium listings on Rightmove and OnTheMarket, and a registered buyer database built over decades — we put your property in front of the right eyes, fast. Homes marketed properly sell for more and sell quicker.

"From the valuation onwards this has been a very very positive experience. Professional, attention to detail, friendly and great communicators."

— CLIENT REVIEW, TRUSTPILOT

Sales progression that gets deals over the line

Agreeing an offer is only half the battle. Around a third of UK property sales fall through between offer and exchange. Our dedicated sales progression team actively manages chains, chases solicitors, keeps you informed, and troubleshoots issues — so your sale actually completes.

Recognised for excellence

Voted 'Best North East Agent' five times by the Relocation Agent Network, with a 4.7/5 Feefo rating from customers. Members of ARLA, NAEA and The Property Ombudsman.

YOUR SELLING JOURNEY

Seven steps, start to finish.

Every sale is different, but the path from deciding to sell to handing over the keys generally follows the same seven stages. Here's the lay of the land — the rest of the guide unpacks each step in detail.

01

Step

Book a free valuation

Invite us over for a no-obligation market appraisal. We'll give you a realistic, evidence-based asking price.

02

Step

Instruct your agent

Choose JW Wood as your agent, agree the strategy and terms, and appoint a conveyancer early to save weeks later on.

03

Step

Prepare your home

Declutter, tidy, fix the little snags. Our photographer captures the property at its absolute best.

04

Step

Go to market

Your home launches on Rightmove, OnTheMarket, our branches and to our registered buyer database.

05

Step

Viewings & offers

We accompany viewings, gather feedback, and present you every offer with our honest view on which to accept.

06

Step

Sales progression

Memorandum of Sale issued. Solicitors engaged, searches ordered, enquiries answered — we keep everyone moving.

07

Step

Exchange & completion

Contracts exchange, a completion date is set, and on the day — keys are handed over and funds land in your account.

STEP 01

Valuation & choosing an agent.

Getting the price right, and picking the right team, are the two decisions that matter most. Everything downstream flows from here.

Why the right price matters

Price too high and your home sits on the market getting stale — buyers assume something's wrong with it. Price too low and you leave money on the table. An accurate, evidence-based valuation attracts the right buyers and generates genuine competition.

What goes into a valuation

A proper valuation isn't a guess. We look at recent sale prices on comparable streets, the condition and layout of your home, current buyer demand in your area, and the wider market picture. Online "instant valuation" tools can't do this — only feet-on-the-ground local experience can.

£ Book a free, no-obligation valuation

Our valuers will visit your home, take you through comparable evidence, and give you a realistic asking price — plus our view on how to get the best from the market right now.

Sole, joint or multiple agency?

Sole agency (one agent) is the most common and usually comes with the lowest fee. **Joint sole** splits the fee between two agents; **multiple agency** lets several agents compete, usually at a higher fee. We're happy to quote on any basis.

What to ask any agent

Before you instruct, ask:

- What fee, and is it fixed or a percentage?
- How long is the tie-in period?
- Who handles sales progression after an offer?
- Are viewings accompanied?

STEP 02

Preparing your home.

Buyers make up their minds in the first thirty seconds. A little preparation can add thousands to your asking price and shave weeks off your sale.

Kerb appeal comes first

The first photo buyers see is of the outside, and the first impression on the day is the walk up the path. Tidy the garden, wash the windows, polish the door furniture, paint the front door if it's looking tired. Clear the drive of clutter.

Inside: depersonalise, don't sanitise

You want buyers to picture themselves living there. Pack away family photos, fridge magnets, and the bolder items. Keep the home feeling warm and lived-in – but neutral enough to be a blank canvas.

Small fixes, big returns

Dripping taps, chipped paint, cracked tiles, sticky doors – buyers notice every one. None cost much to fix, and together they change the perception from "needs work" to "ready to move into".

Your EPC

Every home sold in the UK needs a valid Energy Performance Certificate. EPCs last ten years. We can arrange a new one for you if you don't have a current certificate.

Your pre-sale checklist

- Declutter ruthlessly**
Pack away anything you won't need in the next three months.
- Deep clean everywhere**
Windows, skirting boards, oven, bathroom grouting.
- Fix minor snags**
Taps, lightbulbs, loose handles, chipped paint.
- Neutralise bold décor**
A pot of magnolia is a worthwhile investment.
- Tidy the garden**
Mow lawns, trim hedges, clear paths.
- Sort the photos**
Pack away personal pictures and fridge-door clutter.
- Freshen the air**
Open windows, bake bread, add fresh flowers.
- Maximise the light**
Clean windows, open curtains, swap dim bulbs.
- Pet-proof for viewings**
Put bowls, beds and litter trays away.
- Find your paperwork**
Warranties, FENSA, gas safety, building regs.
- Get an EPC**
Legally required before marketing.
- Know your onward plan**
Where you're moving to affects your timeline.

STEP 03

Marketing your property.

Getting your home in front of the right buyers, in the best possible light, in as many places as possible — this is where a good agent earns their keep.

Photography that actually sells

The photos in your listing are the single biggest factor in whether a buyer clicks "view" or scrolls past. Our photographers shoot every property with professional wide-angle lenses, in the best available light, with the rooms prepared to show space and purpose — not just what's there.

Detailed floorplans

Listings with floorplans get up to 50% more views than those without. Buyers want to understand how a property flows before they commit to a viewing — we include a full floorplan as standard.

Compelling descriptions

A good description goes beyond room sizes. It tells the story of the home — the morning light in the kitchen, the walk to the local primary, the quiet cul-de-sac. We write descriptions that sell, and we run every one past you before it goes live.

Where your home goes

- Rightmove and OnTheMarket premium listings.
- jww.co.uk and all five branch windows.
- Direct alerts to our registered buyer database.
- Social media — Facebook, Instagram, targeted ads.
- For Sale board (subject to your preference).
- Local and regional press when appropriate.

Our registered buyer database

After 115 years in the business, we've built a substantial database of active buyers looking in specific streets, price ranges, and property types. Many of our sales agree with a buyer we've matched before a property even goes public.

Honest advice on pricing strategy

We'll tell you if we think listing at an "offers in region of" price or a guide price will work better for your property and the current market. One size doesn't fit all.

STEP 04

Viewings & offers.

This is where the market tells you what your home is really worth. Your job is to present it well; ours is to manage the rest.

Accompanied viewings, as standard

We accompany every viewing. It means you don't have to be home, awkward questions get professional answers, and we can read genuine buyer interest rather than relying on your report after the fact. It also keeps you and your home safe.

Getting your home viewing-ready

Before every viewing:

- Open curtains and turn on lights, even by day.
- Put the heating on in winter – cold homes feel smaller.
- Tidy surfaces, hide laundry, empty bins.
- Air the home and dial down strong smells.
- Take pets out for a walk if you can.

Feedback and momentum

We follow up every viewing, gather honest feedback, and share it with you within 24 hours. Consistent themes in feedback – "kitchen felt dark", "loved the garden" – tell us how to adjust strategy if needed.

When an offer comes in

By law, we present every offer to you – written confirmation within 24 hours. But a good offer is about more than the number on the cheque.

We'll check and share:

- The price.
- The buyer's position – chain-free, cash, or in a chain.
- Their funding – mortgage-in-principle and proof of deposit.
- Their preferred timescale.
- Any conditions attached to the offer.

The highest isn't always the best

A chain-free buyer with a mortgage agreed and a flexible timescale, offering slightly less, will often complete when a higher offer from a precarious chain falls through. We help you weigh it up.

STEP 05

The legal bit.

From accepted offer to exchange of contracts is where sales sink or swim. Active management here is what turns an agreement into a completion.

Memorandum of Sale

The moment you accept an offer, we issue a Memorandum of Sale to both parties and their solicitors. It confirms the agreed price, the people involved, and the legal teams – and starts the clock on the legal process.

Instruct your solicitor early

Ideally before you even list. A good conveyancer can be gathering your title documents and property paperwork while your home is still being marketed – shaving weeks off the sale.



We can recommend one

Our in-house conveyancing team and panel of trusted North East solicitors know the process inside out. Ask us for a no-obligation quote.

The paperwork you'll complete

Your solicitor will ask you to fill in the Property Information Form (TA6) and the Fittings and Contents Form (TA10). Be thorough and honest – getting this right now prevents headaches later.

The buyer's side

Meanwhile, the buyer's solicitor is running local authority, environmental, water and drainage searches, and the buyer's lender is instructing a valuation. Surveys often happen at this stage too. It's busy.

Answering enquiries

The buyer's solicitor will raise enquiries – questions about boundaries, extensions, guarantees, planning permissions. Quick, complete answers keep the deal alive; slow or vague ones cause deals to die.

Active sales progression

Our progression team stays on top of all parties in the chain – your buyer, their buyer, your onward purchase if you have one – chasing solicitors, surveyors, lenders and agents to keep everyone moving. We'll update you every step of the way.

Around one in three UK sales fall through between offer and exchange. Active progression is the single biggest factor that changes that outcome.

STEP 06

Exchange, completion and moving out.

The final furlong. A mixture of exciting, emotional and admin-heavy – but with the right preparation, entirely manageable.

Exchange of contracts

The moment the sale becomes legally binding on both sides. Your solicitor receives the buyer's deposit (typically 5–10%), signed contracts are swapped, and a completion date is fixed – usually between one and four weeks later.

Redeeming your mortgage

If you have a mortgage on the property, your solicitor arranges a redemption figure from your lender. The balance is paid off on completion day from the sale proceeds – along with any early repayment charge if applicable.

Completion day

The buyer's solicitor transfers the balance to your solicitor. Once received, they notify us – we release the keys to the buyer, and you're officially moved on. Your solicitor sends you a completion statement showing the full breakdown of funds.

Buying onward?

If your sale is funding an onward purchase, it all happens in a carefully choreographed sequence on the same day. Your solicitor and our team coordinate with the chain so you can move keys and belongings smoothly.

Your moving-out checklist

- Book removals early**
Good firms book up. Quote 3+ weeks ahead.
- Take final meter readings**
Gas, electric, water – submit to suppliers.
- Leave the manuals**
Boiler, appliances, alarm codes – a kind touch.
- Redirect your post**
Royal Mail's service runs from 3 to 12 months.
- Cancel council tax**
Notify the council of your completion date.
- Close or transfer utilities**
Gas, electric, water, broadband, TV licence.
- Update your address**
Bank, DVLA, GP, employer, insurance.
- Leave the keys**
All sets – front, back, window, garage, shed.
- Clean as you'd like to find it**
A courtesy worth extending.
- Take photos on the way out**
Meters, condition – useful if anything is disputed.

Closing the door for the last time is an emotional moment. Take it in — and then look forward to the next chapter.

BUDGET CONFIDENTLY

The real cost of selling.

Most costs come out of your sale proceeds on completion day rather than from your pocket up front. Here's the full picture – so nothing is a surprise.

Estate agent fee ON COMPLETION	Typically 1–1.5% of the sale price plus VAT. Agreed and fixed up front in your contract with us.
Conveyancing LEGAL FEES	Usually £800–£1,500 plus disbursements (Land Registry, bank transfers, copy documents).
EPC BEFORE MARKETING	Energy Performance Certificate required by law before listing. Around £60–£120 if you need a new one.
Mortgage redemption ON COMPLETION	Your outstanding mortgage balance is cleared from the sale proceeds. Check for early repayment charges.
Removals ON MOVING	Typically £400–£1,500+ depending on distance and volume. Book 3–4 weeks in advance for best choice.
Leasehold pack IF APPLICABLE	If you're selling a leasehold property, the freeholder's management pack costs £200–£500+.
Capital Gains Tax IF APPLICABLE	Only relevant if the property isn't your main home (e.g. a buy-to-let or second property). Take specialist tax advice.
New home costs ONWARD PURCHASE	If you're buying as well, factor in Stamp Duty, survey, mortgage fees and moving costs separately.

£ We'll give you the full picture

At valuation, we'll walk you through every likely cost and give you a clear "net proceeds" figure – the amount you'll actually walk away with after fees, mortgage redemption and moving costs. No hidden extras, ever.

PLAIN ENGLISH

The words you'll hear, explained.

Selling a home comes with its own vocabulary. Here are the terms you're most likely to meet, in alphabetical order.

Accompanied viewings

Where the estate agent (us) shows buyers around, not the seller. Safer, more professional, and generates better feedback.

Asking price

The price at which your home is advertised. Different from guide price, OIRO, or offers over — which signal different expectations.

Capital Gains Tax

A tax on profit when selling a property that isn't your main home (e.g. buy-to-let). Take specialist tax advice.

Chain

A sequence of linked property transactions. Your sale may depend on your buyer's sale and your onward purchase.

Completion

The day ownership legally transfers, funds change hands, and you hand over the keys.

Completion statement

The final breakdown from your solicitor showing the sale price, all deductions, and the net sum due to you.

Conveyancing

The legal process of transferring ownership of a property from seller to buyer.

Disbursements

Costs paid by your solicitor on your behalf — Land Registry fees, bank transfer fees, copy documents.

Early repayment charge

A fee some mortgages charge if you redeem before the end of a fixed term. Check your mortgage paperwork early.

EPC

Energy Performance Certificate. Legally required before marketing. Valid for ten years. A to G rating.

Exchange of contracts

The point the sale becomes legally binding. Deposits change hands and a completion date is fixed.

Guide price

An indication of the seller's expectations, often used where a firm asking price isn't appropriate.

Kerb appeal

How attractive your home looks from the street — the first impression that decides whether buyers book a viewing.

Leasehold pack

Management information the buyer's solicitor needs if you're selling a leasehold property. Ordered from the freeholder.

Market appraisal

Another term for a valuation — an estate agent's view of what your home will sell for in the current market.

Memorandum of Sale

The document we issue once your offer is accepted, confirming price, parties and solicitors.

OIRO / Offers Over

"Offers in Region Of" signals flexibility; "Offers Over" signals a firm minimum. Both tactical pricing choices.

Property Information Form (TA6)

A detailed form you complete for your solicitor covering boundaries, disputes, alterations, warranties and more.

Fittings & Contents Form (TA10)

A form listing exactly what stays and what goes — from curtain rails to the garden shed.

Sales progression

The active management of a sale between offer and exchange — chasing solicitors, lenders, surveyors to keep the deal alive.

Sole agency

You instruct one agent exclusively, usually for a fixed period. The most common — and typically lowest-cost — arrangement.

SSTC

Sold Subject to Contract. Your offer has been accepted but contracts haven't yet exchanged.

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Ready to sell? *Let's talk.*

Five branches across County Durham and Darlington, each staffed by people who live and work in the community they serve. Pop in for a coffee, book a free valuation, or just ask us a question – whichever helps most.

Durham (Sales)

0191 386 9921
durham@jww.co.uk

Durham (Lettings)

0191 383 0184
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Bishop Auckland

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Chester-le-Street

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Consett

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Darlington

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This guide is intended as a general introduction to selling residential property in England. It is not financial, legal or tax advice. Fees, taxes and buying schemes are subject to change; always confirm specifics with your solicitor and a qualified tax adviser. JW Wood Estate Agents is a trading name of JW Wood Ltd.