

# Home Information Packs (an update)

No apologies for mentioning these wretched things again. They're now part of the property scene, without even achieving the time savings Government imagined.

by **FitzPatricks solicitors** Conveyancing Department

## So what's been happening?

One London estate agent, who insisted on using his own contacts because they paid him commission and a fee, took four weeks to deliver the HIP, and then it was wrong. A more local agent told us a property was freehold, when it was a purpose-built leasehold flat. Other difficulties include national providers of local searches who report that roads have been adopted by the local authority when they have not, so the liability for road charges is overlooked. And one national HIP provider sent his energy expert from North London to survey a property in Mid Sussex. The M23

was clogged up, he was late for his appointment and the seller was not going to wait in until he turned up!

## Putting these mistakes right wastes your time and your money

Many estate agents have signed up with national HIP providers to sell you their services, and some solicitors have similar arrangements. Should you go with them? You certainly don't have to and you will almost certainly be better off not doing so. Ask what costs are involved, check commissions, find out what will happen to your HIP if you want to change your estate

agent. Resist the 'hard sell'.

You need not put up with this. Your friendly local solicitors were as confused as you about how the market would develop. We lacked the ability to attend long meetings in the run-up to HIPs, or establish and implement expensive marketing plans. Also, we were never going to compete with the blandishments offered by national strings of estate agents. We knew how confusing Government plans and policies were and decided to wait and see how things developed before committing ourselves.

Local solicitors now know we can offer a far better service than the nationals. We can find you a

local expert who can have your Energy Report ready in as little as 24 hours, and make our searches online, which saves both time and fees. We will charge you for the fees we all must spend, while making sure that these are competitive, and not charge for our own time. And, if the sale does not happen as planned, it is your HIP and if you want to change agents, you can.

Can you find a better offer? No – so visit your solicitor first! Easy.

For more information and advice on conveyancing, contact FitzPatricks solicitors tel: 01444 870123.

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