



EUROPEAN WEEKEND GETAWAY

FIND THE PERFECT PLACE TO ESCAPE FOR A WEEKEND AWAY

GARDEN FURNITURE

FIND THE PERFECT CONVERTIBLE FURNITURE FOR YOUR GARDEN

SWIMMING EXERCISE

GET A FULL BODY WORKOUT IN WHILST SWIMMING

SUMMER RECIPES

LEARN TO MAKE SUMMER VEGETABLE RATATOUILLE

PARALYMPICS PREVIEW

PARIS 2024 PREVIEW AHEAD OF THE PARALYMPIC GAMES

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WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION!

Summer's now in full swing, England have made history at the Euros 2024, and the property industry is adapting to our new government which hopes to make some positive and exiting new changes to the industry. Speaking of which, we explore just how the new Labour government will help both sellers and landlords on pages 2&3 as we move through 2024 and beyond.

On pages 4&5 we look at some of the most beautiful weekend getaway locations across Europe to visit before the sun turns in. We look at convertible garden furniture ideas for your garden on pages 6&7, which will help you prepare for the cooler months ahead in a low-maintenance manner. If the sun gets too much for you, however, you can always cool off in your local swimming

pool; on pages 8 & 9 we explore all the best swimming exercises you can implement to get in the best shape possible.

Pages 10&11 take a sneak peak at all the best TV shows and films coming to the screens this month, whilst on pages 12&13 we delve into some delicious recipes perfect for the month of August. Finally, pages 14&15 look at the awesome upcoming sporting events of the Paris Summer Paralympic Games and the Tennis US Open.

So, grab a summer cocktail, get your shades on, sit in your new snazzy convertible furniture, and enjoy this month's magazine!

Daniel Evans
Editor



For sellers, these steps are intended to simplify the selling process, address housing market stability, and ensure fair procedures for all parties involved.

REFORMING PROPERTY TAXES


Labour intends to review and restructure property taxes, with a special focus on Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT). The goal is to make the property market more accessible and inexpensive, resulting in more transactions. Labour intends to stimulate the market by perhaps cutting or revising SDLT to lessen the burden on selling and buyers. This will help sellers find purchasers much easier.

SIMPLIFYING THE SELLING PROCESS

Labour seeks to improve the property sales process by reducing bureaucracy and delays. This includes digitising more components of the property transaction process to improve its efficiency and transparency. A faster, less time-consuming process can make selling property less stressful and more straightforward.

TACKLING HOUSING SHORTAGES

Labour's plans seek to balance the market by tackling the larger issue of housing shortages. Increasing the availability of affordable housing and encouraging new building can help to keep prices and demand stable. Sellers benefit from a



The new Labour government has laid out several policies and initiatives, and many of them will benefit sellers and landlords

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S STEPS TO HELP SELLERS AND LANDLORDS

better, more dynamic market in which properties are less likely to remain unsold.

SUPPORTING FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Labour's promise to first-time buyers has an indirect benefit for sellers. Making it easier for first-time buyers to enter the market—through measures such as providing more inexpensive financing alternatives and creating more affordable homes—creates a wider pool of potential buyers for existing homes. This can accelerate the selling process and potentially raise property values.

ENHANCING CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

The Labour government is also concentrating on improving consumer protections in the property sector. This includes cracking down on unfair tactics and increasing transparency in property transactions. Sellers benefit from a more level playing field and a lower chance of dealing with dishonest buyers or agents.

INVESTING IN LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Labour also prioritises investment in local infrastructure, such as transport, schools, and hospitals. Improved infrastructure can attract purchasers, improving the appeal and value of properties. Sellers in these locations may experience faster sales and better prices as a result of these initiatives.

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Labour intends to promote energy-efficient housing and adapt existing buildings to meet stricter environmental standards. Properties with higher energy efficiency ratings might be more appealing to buyers, which benefits sellers.

Grants and incentives for such upgrades can increase a property's marketability and value.

The new Labour government has also outlined a number of policies aimed at reshaping the housing market for landlords.

ABOLITION OF SECTION 21

Labour intends to repeal Section 21 "no-fault" evictions, substantially changing the picture for landlords. This means that landlords will no longer be able to evict tenants without a reason, aiming to give renters more security. Landlords may face a more complex and time-consuming process to regain possession of their properties under Section 8, which is being updated to include clearer grounds for eviction, such as persistent rent arrears or antisocial behaviour.

SUPPORT FOR GOOD LANDLORDS

Labour has pledged to help "good landlords" while cracking down on those who exploit tenants. Landlords who maintain high standards and fair procedures may benefit from incentives or safeguards, while details are not yet entirely clear.

PROFESSIONALISM OF THE RENTAL MARKET

Labour's initiatives to professionalise the rental industry, which include licensing programmes and restrictions, may help serious landlords. These policies attempt to remove rogue landlords and raise industry standards, potentially improving the sector's reputation. Professional landlords who already adhere to high standards may find it simpler to attract and maintain renters knowing that the competition is subject to the same stringent criteria.

EUROPEAN WEEKEND GETAWAYS BEFORE THE SUMMER'S OVER

Europe has several locations ideal for a weekend getaway because of their rich history, varied cultures, and breathtaking landscapes

These beautiful locations, each with their own special charm and attractions, provide unforgettable weekend escapes. Europe has so much to offer travellers, whether they are looking for adventure, culture, history, or just a chance to unwind.

PARIS, FRANCE

Why Visit: Romance, culture, and history are all linked with the City of Light. Paris offers a memorable experience whether you're exploring art-filled museums, enjoying coffee on the sidewalk or admiring the views from the top of the Eiffel Tower.

Highlights:

Eiffel Tower: Iconic and unmissable, a visit to the top offers panoramic views of the city.

Louvre Museum: Home to thousands of works of art, including the Mona Lisa.

Notre-Dame Cathedral: A masterpiece of Gothic architecture.

Montmartre: This bohemian neighbourhood, crowned by the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur, offers a charming village atmosphere.

BARCELONA, SPAIN

Why Visit: Barcelona is a dynamic city renowned for its delectable food, exciting street life, and distinctive fusion of contemporary and Gothic architecture.

Highlights:

Sagrada Família: Gaudí's masterpiece, still under construction, is a must-see.

La Rambla: A bustling street lined with shops, markets, and performers.

Gothic Quarter: A labyrinth of narrow medieval streets.

Park Güell: Another Gaudí creation, offering whimsical architecture and fantastic city views.





AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Why Visit: Amsterdam is the ideal destination for a weekend escape because of its gorgeous canals, top-notch museums, and laid-back vibe.

Highlights:

Rijksmuseum: Featuring masterpieces from the Dutch Golden Age.

Van Gogh Museum: Home to the largest collection of Van Gogh's works.

Anne Frank House: A poignant and important historical site.

Canal Cruise: A relaxing way to see the city's iconic canals and architecture.



PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

Why Visit: Prague enthralls tourists with its beauty and history, with fairy-tale castles, a bustling nightlife, and a quaint old town.

Highlights:

Prague Castle: Overlooking the city, this historic complex includes palaces, churches, and gardens.

Charles Bridge: Lined with statues, this bridge offers stunning views of the Vltava River.

Old Town Square: Home to the astronomical clock and beautiful medieval buildings.

St. Vitus Cathedral: A stunning example of Gothic architecture within the castle grounds.



ROME, ITALY

Why Visit: The Eternal City offers a wealth of Renaissance art, historical history, and delectable food.

Highlights:

Colosseum: The iconic symbol of Rome's imperial glory.

Vatican City: Home to St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museums, and the Sistine Chapel.

Trevi Fountain: A baroque masterpiece where visitors throw coins to ensure a return to Rome.

Pantheon: An ancient temple turned church, with a remarkable domed ceiling.



LISBON, PORTUGAL

Why Visit: Lisbon is a fun city to explore with its vibrant culture, rich maritime history, and colourful neighbourhoods.

Highlights:

Belém Tower: A UNESCO World Heritage site and symbol of Portugal's Age of Discovery.

Jerónimos Monastery: Another UNESCO site, known for its stunning Manueline architecture.

Alfama: The oldest district in Lisbon, with narrow streets, fado music, and historic buildings.

Tram 28: A charming way to see the city's historic neighbourhoods.



VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Why Visit: Vienna is a refined and attractive destination because of its imperial history, rich musical legacy, and magnificent architecture.

Highlights:

Schönbrunn Palace: The former summer residence of the Habsburgs, with beautiful gardens.

St. Stephen's Cathedral: A Gothic masterpiece in the heart of the city.

Vienna State Opera: One of the most important opera houses in the world.

Belvedere Palace: Home to an impressive art collection, including works by Gustav Klimt.

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Why Visit: Budapest is a tempting destination for a weekend getaway because of its breathtaking architecture, thermal springs, and active cultural scene.

Highlights:

Buda Castle: Offering panoramic views of the city and the Danube River.

Parliament Building: An architectural gem and the largest building in Hungary.

Széchenyi Thermal Bath: One of the largest spa complexes in Europe.

Fisherman's Bastion: A neo-Gothic terrace with beautiful views of the city.

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

Why Visit: Edinburgh is a fascinating travel destination because of its stunning scenery, old castle, and cultural events.

Highlights:

Edinburgh Castle: Dominating the skyline, this historic fortress offers incredible views.

Royal Mile: A historic street filled with shops, restaurants, and historical sites.

Arthur's Seat: An extinct volcano offering panoramic views of the city.

Holyrood Palace: The official residence of the British monarch in Scotland.

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Why Visit: Copenhagen is a pleasure to visit because of its unique combination of modern architecture, historical landmarks, and a laid-back, bike-friendly vibe.

Highlights:

Nyhavn: A colourful waterfront district with historic ships and lively cafés.

Tivoli Gardens: One of the world's oldest amusement parks, offering rides and entertainment.

The Little Mermaid: A famous statue inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale.

Rosenborg Castle: A beautiful Renaissance castle housing the Danish crown jewels.

10 CONVERTIBLE GARDEN FURNITURE IDEAS



Many garden enthusiasts strive to create an outdoor space that is both adaptable and functional



Convertible garden furniture can be a game changer by combining flexibility, design, and functionality. By introducing convertible garden furniture, you may increase the practicality and charm of your outdoor area. These versatile items allow you to tailor your garden to different activities and situations, ensuring that you get the most out of your outdoor living space.

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL DAYBEDS

A convertible daybed is a great addition to any garden. By day, it functions as a cosy lounge for reading or sunbathing. By night, it transforms into a comfortable bed for stargazing or a quick snooze. Look for daybeds that have adjustable backs or can be folded out to create a flat surface. Some designs also contain hidden storage chambers, which are ideal for storing cushions or gardening supplies.

FOLDING DINING SETS

Folding dining sets are perfect for tiny gardens or patios. These sets often contain a table and chairs that can be folded away when not in use to save space and facilitate storage. Modern designs frequently incorporate weather-resistant materials such as teak, aluminium, or all-weather wicker, ensuring durability and lifespan. Choose tables with drop-leaf extensions to accommodate more guests as needed.

EXTENDABLE TABLES

An extendable table is ideal for folks who enjoy entertaining but do not want a large table taking up all of their available space. These tables can be compact for regular usage or extended to accommodate guests and family. Look for models with hidden leaves or sliding mechanisms that allow you to easily extend the table. Combine these tables with stackable or folding chairs for increased versatility.



CONVERTIBLE BENCHES

Convertible benches provide a unique solution for both seating and storage. Some benches can be converted into picnic tables, creating an area for outdoor dining. Others include built-in storage behind the seat, which is ideal for storing garden supplies, pillows, or outdoor toys. These seats are frequently made of durable materials such as wood or metal, ensuring that they can survive the elements.

MODULAR SEATING

Modular seating solutions allow you to tailor your garden arrangement to your needs. These systems usually comprise a variety of elements that may be adjusted to form different seating positions, such as sofas, chairs, or loungers. Many modular sets are meant to be lightweight and portable, making it simple to modify your area for varied purposes. Look for products with weather-resistant cushions and sturdy frames.

OUTDOOR BAR CARTS

An outdoor bar cart can serve several functions in your garden. Besides being a beautiful method to serve beverages, many bar carts have shelves and compartments for storage. Some versions include wheels, making them easier to move around. When not in use as a bar, these carts can be used as plant stands, serving stations or storage containers for gardening materials.

SWING SEATS WITH CANOPIES

Swing seats are a great way to relax in the garden. Models with convertible canopies provide shade on sunny days and may be changed or removed to give a better view of the sky. Some swing chairs also have fold-down backs, which convert them into a flat bed for reclining. To ensure lifespan, choose robust materials such as steel or oak, as well as weather-resistant fabrics.

ADJUSTABLE LOUNGERS

Adjustable loungers are ideal for sunbathing, reading, and resting outside. These loungers often have various reclining configurations, allowing you to choose the most comfortable angle. Some designs additionally have wheels for ease of mobility and built-in side tables or cup holders for extra convenience. Aluminium, teak, and synthetic wicker are popular because they are long-lasting and require little upkeep.

CONVERTIBLE FIRE PIT TABLES

A fire pit table can act as a focal point in your garden, adding warmth and ambiance. Convertible variants frequently have a cover that allows the fire pit to double as a conventional table when not in use. Look for propane-powered designs for quick igniting and control, as well as materials that can handle high temperatures and outdoor situations.

COMPACT BISTRO SETS

Bistro sets are a charming addition to any garden, particularly smaller ones. These sets usually feature a small table and two seats, ideal for having a morning coffee or an evening drink. Many bistro sets are foldable, making them convenient to store when not in use. Look for weather-resistant materials, such as metal or treated wood, to ensure they will last through the seasons.



Models with convertible canopies provide shade on sunny days and may be changed or removed to give a better view of the sky.

SWIMMING POOL EXERCISES

Swimming is one of the best full-body workouts, giving a mix of aerobic exercise, strength training, and low-impact movement that is gentle on the joints



Whether you're a seasoned swimmer or a beginner trying to improve your fitness, integrating a range of swimming routines will help you build strength, endurance, and technique. By incorporating these swimming workouts into your routine, you may create a well-rounded fitness programme that improves your strength, endurance, and overall swimming performance. Remember to warm up before swimming and cool down afterwards to avoid injury and enhance recovery. Whether you swim for fitness, competition, or leisure, these routines will help you get the most out of your time in the water.

BUTTERFLY

The butterfly stroke is one of the most difficult and demanding swimming strokes, delivering a total-body

exercise that focuses on the chest, shoulders, and core. To master the butterfly: **Body Position:** Keep your body flat and horizontal, using a wave-like motion. **Arm Movement:** Move both arms simultaneously in a circular motion, entering the water thumbs first and pulling back under your body. **Kick:** Perform a dolphin kick by keeping your legs together and generating power from your hips.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (IM)

The Individual Medley (IM) combines all four strokes—freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly—into a single continuous swim. This combo is great for overall training because it works multiple muscle groups and tests your endurance. A typical IM sequence includes butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. To train for an IM: **Transition Practice:**

Improving your swimming technique increases efficiency while decreasing the chance of injury

Work on smooth transitions between strokes. Pacing: Learn to pace yourself to maintain energy throughout all four strokes. Technique: Focus on proper technique for each stroke to maximize efficiency.

KICK DRILLS

Kick drills isolate the legs, which helps to increase strength and improve kicking technique. Use a kickboard to support your upper body while you concentrate on different kicking styles: Freestyle Kick: Perform a flutter kick with straight legs, kicking from the hips. Breaststroke Kick: Focus on the frog kick, emphasizing the power from your inner thighs. Dolphin Kick: Keep your legs together and generate power from your hips in a wave-like motion.

PULL DRILLS

Pull drills isolate the upper body, giving you the opportunity to work on arm strength and technique. Use a pull buoy to keep your legs floating while performing the following drills: Freestyle Pull: Emphasize the 'catch' phase of your stroke, pulling water back effectively. Backstroke Pull: Concentrate on keeping your arm movements smooth and rhythmic. Breaststroke Pull: Focus

on the sweeping motion of your arms, ensuring a strong pull.

SPRINT INTERVALS

Including sprint intervals in your swimming programme improves cardiovascular fitness and speed. Alternate high-intensity sprints with low-intensity recovery intervals. High-Intensity Sprints: Swim at maximum effort for short distances, such as 25 or 50 meters. Recovery: Swim at a relaxed pace or perform easy strokes to recover. Sets: Aim for multiple sets of sprints with adequate rest in between.

LONG-DISTANCE SWIMMING

Long-distance swimming increases endurance and mental resilience. Swim continuous laps at a moderate pace, progressively increasing the distance over time. Concentrate on keeping appropriate technique and consistent breathing.

TECHNIQUE DRILLS

Improving your swimming technique increases efficiency while decreasing the chance of injury. Include drills such as: Catch-Up Drill: Perform the freestyle stroke but wait for one hand to 'catch up' with the other before taking the

next stroke. Fist Drill: Swim freestyle with your fists closed to emphasize the use of your forearms during the pull. Sculling: Move your hands in a figure-eight pattern at different depths to improve your feel for the water.

STRENGTH TRAINING

To build muscle and avoid injury, supplement your swimming regimen with land-based strength training routines. Concentrate on workouts that work the core, shoulders, back, and legs, such as: Planks: Build core stability. Push-Ups: Strengthen the chest, shoulders, and triceps. Squats: Improve leg strength and power. Pull-Ups: Enhance upper body strength, particularly in the back and arms.

FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY

Maintaining flexibility and suppleness is essential for effective swimming. Incorporate stretching and mobility exercises into your programme, with a focus on: Shoulder Flexibility: Perform shoulder stretches to maintain a full range of motion. Hip Flexibility: Stretch the hip flexors to support powerful kicks. Ankle Mobility: Improve ankle flexibility for more effective kicking.



THE GREATEST TV SHOWS TO STREAM

With the release of the latest TV shows this month, August looks to be a bright month for home streaming

THE UMBRELLA ACADEMY SEASON 4

In the fourth and final season of *The Umbrella Academy*, the Hargreeves siblings return for one last round of time-hopping, world-saving shenanigans. Season 4 will see the main cast (including Elliot Page's Viktor, Tom Hopper's Luther, and Aidan Gallagher's Five) all return. New additions to the cast include Nick Offerman, Megan Mullally, and David Cross.

The Umbrella Academy Season 4 premieres 8th August on Netflix

BAD MONKEY

Were you wondering what your man Vince Vaughn was up to these days? He's producing, writing, and starring in the new Apple TV+ series *Bad Monkey*, which is based on the best-selling novel of the same name, alongside *Ted Lasso* producer Bill Lawrence. Is this about nasty monkeys? Okay, sort of. It revolves around a former Miami Police Department officer (Vaughn). He discovers a human limb fished out of the water by tourists and determines that if he can show it was a murder, he'll be able to rejoin the police force. Oh, and there's a monkey involved, but no details have been given yet.

Bad Monkey premieres 14th August on Apple TV+

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RINGS OF POWER SEASON 2

The next season of *The Rings of Power* is set to premiere on Prime Video in August. According to the official narrative, Sauron returns, but after being "cast out by Galadriel," the growing Dark Lord must now rely on his own ingenuity to restore his might and oversee the forging of the Rings of Power, which would allow him to bind all of Middle-earth to his dark will. Friendships are strained, kingdoms are fracturing, and the forces of good will battle more than ever.

The Rings of Power Season 2 premieres 29th August on Prime Video



THE HOTTEST MOVIES TO CATCH ON THE SILVER SCREEN

Several fantastic films will be released in August that are ideal for all audiences, including action pictures, horrors, and sequels and reboots to certain classics we already know and adore

DIDI (comedy, drama)

In 2008, during the final month of summer before starting high school, an impressionable 13-year-old Taiwanese American kid learns everything his family cannot teach him: how to skate, flirt, and love his mother.

In UK cinemas from 2nd August

BORDERLANDS (action, sci-fi)

Returning to her home planet, an infamous outlaw makes an unexpected partnership with a group of unusual heroes. They fight extraterrestrial monsters and dangerous bandits to find a missing girl who possesses amazing power. Borderlands is very loosely based on the video game series of the same name developed by Gearbox Software.

In UK cinemas from 9th August

ALIEN: ROMULUS (horror, sci-fi)

While scavenging the deep ends of a derelict space station, a crew of teenage space colonists encounters the universe's most horrific life form. The film is rated R due to its gory violence and language. Alien: Romulus takes place in 2142, in between the events of Alien and Aliens.

In UK cinemas from 16th August

THE CROW (action, fantasy)

Soulmates Eric Draven and Shelly Webster are brutally murdered when the demons of her dark past catch up with them. Given the chance to save his true love by sacrificing himself, Draven returns to seek bloody revenge against the killers, traversing the worlds of the living and the dead to put the wrong things right.

In UK cinemas from 23rd August

INGREDIENTS

2 medium courgettes (zucchini), sliced into rounds
1 large aubergine (eggplant), diced
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 red pepper, diced
1 yellow pepper, diced
1 large onion, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 bay leaf
1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped (plus extra for garnish)
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/2 cup vegetable stock or water
Optional: Fresh parsley for garnish

SUMMER VEGETABLE RATATOUILLE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Slice the courgettes into rounds about 1/4 inch thick. Dice the aubergine into roughly 1-inch cubes. Chop the tomatoes and dice the red and yellow peppers into bite-sized pieces. Finely chop the onion and mince the garlic cloves.

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large, deep skillet or pot over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, sautéing until they are soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the peppers and continue to cook for another 5 minutes until they begin to soften.

Add another tablespoon of olive oil to the skillet. Add the diced aubergine and cook, stirring occasionally, until it starts to soften and turn golden, about 5-7 minutes. Stir in the courgettes and cook for an additional 5 minutes.

Add the chopped tomatoes, tomato paste, salt, black pepper, thyme, oregano, and bay leaf to the skillet. Pour in the vegetable stock or water. Stir everything together, ensuring the vegetables are well mixed and coated with the seasonings and tomato paste.

Reduce the heat to low, cover the skillet, and let the ratatouille simmer gently for about 30-40 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking and ensure even cooking. If the mixture becomes too dry, add a little more vegetable stock or water.

Once the vegetables are tender and the flavours are well melded, stir in the chopped fresh basil leaves. Taste and adjust the seasoning with more salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Garnish with additional fresh basil leaves and, if desired, fresh parsley. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature. Ratatouille can be enjoyed on its own, over rice, pasta, or with crusty bread.

TIPS

Roasting Variation: For a slightly different texture and flavour, consider roasting the vegetables in the oven before combining them in the skillet. Toss the diced aubergine, courgettes, and peppers with olive oil, salt, and pepper, and roast at 200°C (400°F) for about 25-30 minutes.

Make Ahead: Ratatouille often tastes even better the next day, as the flavours have more time to meld. It can be stored in the fridge for up to 4 days or frozen for up to 3 months.

INGREDIENTS

300ml double cream
2 tablespoons icing sugar (adjust to taste)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)
150g strawberries, hulled and quartered
100g raspberries
100g blackberries
4-5 meringue nests (store-bought or homemade)

BERRY ETON MESS RECIPE

INSTRUCTIONS:

Pour the double cream into a large mixing bowl. Add the icing sugar and vanilla extract (if using). Whip the cream using an electric mixer or a whisk until it forms soft peaks. Be careful not to overwhip; the cream should be smooth and slightly firm.

Wash the strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries thoroughly. Hull and quarter the strawberries. If the berries are very tart, you can toss them in a tablespoon of icing sugar and let them sit for a few minutes to macerate and become slightly sweeter.

Crush the meringue nests into bite-sized pieces. You can do this by placing them in a plastic bag and gently breaking them up with your hands or a rolling pin.

In a large bowl, gently fold the crushed meringue pieces into the whipped cream. Be careful not to overmix; you want the meringue to remain slightly crunchy.

Add most of the berries into the mixture, folding them in gently. Reserve a few berries for garnish.

Spoon the mixture into individual serving bowls or glasses. Garnish with the reserved berries on top.

Serve immediately for the best texture, as the meringue will stay crunchy. If you need to prepare it in advance, assemble just before serving to ensure the meringue doesn't become too soft.

TIPS

Variations: You can experiment with different types of berries or even add a splash of berry coulis or a few mint leaves for extra flavour.

Homemade Meringue: If you prefer to make your own meringue, whip egg whites with sugar until stiff peaks form, then bake at a low temperature until crisp.

Serving Ideas: For an elegant presentation, layer the ingredients in a glass trifle dish or individual glass cups.



PARIS 2024 SUMMER PARALYMPIC GAMES

The 2024 Summer Paralympics, which will take place in Paris, promise to be a spectacular celebration of athleticism, resilience, and inclusivity

This edition of the Games, scheduled from August 28th to September 8th, will be held at a number of historic sites, including the Stade de France, Champs-Élysées, and La Défense Arena, ensuring a captivating backdrop for both competitors and fans alike.

Paris, with its rich history and commitment to accessibility, is well-prepared to host nearly 4,400 athletes from all over the world. The city has made tremendous steps to improve infrastructure and make venues, transportation, and hotels more accessible to all attendees. This dedication exemplifies the Paralympics' broader spirit, which recognises not only athletic brilliance but also the ability of sport to effect social change and promote inclusivity.

Among the sports to follow, para athletics and swimming remain marquee events that attract significant global attention. Wheelchair basketball, para cycling, and boccia are also expected to be standouts, demonstrating exceptional talent and competition. Para taekwondo is new to the 2024 Paralympics, having debuted at the Tokyo 2020 Games and since developed in prominence. Athletes in this discipline, recognised for their quickness and tactical prowess, will undoubtedly attract fans.

Notable athletes predicted to make waves include Tatyana McFadden of the United States, a wheelchair racing powerhouse, and Daniel Dias of Brazil, a paralympic swimming hero. Their stories of perseverance and achievement continue to inspire millions.

The 2024 Paralympics also emphasize sustainability and innovation. Paris aims to deliver the greenest Games in history, with a focus on reducing carbon emissions and promoting eco-friendly practices. The city plans to use renewable energy sources and sustainable materials in constructing and operating the venues.

As the Paralympics approach, British expectations are high for a strong performance. Key athletes to watch include sprinter Jonnie Peacock, who is hoping for another gold medal in the T44 100m, and wheelchair racing sensation Hannah Cockroft, who is vying for several titles. With a strong roster of seasoned champions and potential youngsters, Team GB is poised to flourish on the international scene. The public anxiously awaits inspirational performances that demonstrate resilience and excellence. The Paralympics provide an opportunity for these outstanding individuals to showcase their abilities and bring home gold.



TENNIS US OPEN 2024

The 2024 US Open promises to be an exhilarating chapter in the tennis calendar, with both the men's and women's fields boasting a mix of experienced champions and emerging stars

Fans are excited to see if Novak Djokovic can add to his already amazing Grand Slam record. Djokovic, who shows no signs of slowing down, continues to be a fearsome force on Flushing Meadows' hard courts. His opponents, notably Carlos Alcaraz and Daniil Medvedev, will be eager to test his domination. Alcaraz, with his explosive style and youthful vigour, has quickly risen through the ranks, making him a serious candidate for the crown. Medvedev, noted for his steadiness and cerebral play, is also a formidable opponent.

On the women's side, Iga Świątek will attempt to cement her place as a top player by winning another major title. Her strong performances in previous seasons have created great expectations. Aryna Sabalenka, known for her powerful baseline game, and Coco Gauff, a new American star, are considered to be her main challengers. Gauff, in particular, has a devoted home crowd behind her, which may provide the extra push she needs to win her first Grand Slam title.

Veteran players such as Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams, if they decide to compete, will definitely attract a lot of interest. Nadal, who has battled ailments but remains a

determined competitor, might stage an incredible comeback. Serena Williams, chasing an unprecedented 24th Grand Slam title, always adds a theatrical element to her matches, attracting viewers across the world.

The doubles tournament should be exciting, with both veteran pairs and fresh partnerships striving for glory. The powerful combo of Joe Salisbury and Rajeev Ram will strive to defend their crown, while other teams will try to disrupt their rhythm.

British ambitions for the 2024 US Open are based on both developing potential and experienced players. Cameron Norrie, recognised for his resilience and smart play, is a formidable opponent in the men's singles. Meanwhile, rising talent Emma Raducanu hopes to repeat her 2021 US Open victory with another long run. Joe Salisbury will seek to defend his doubles title, demonstrating his excellent abilities and chemistry with his partner. With a mix of bright young players and veteran campaigners, British players are poised to make a huge impact at this year's competition.

Hillside, North Pickenham

Offers Over £750,000



Absolutely fantastic, three story detached five bedroom period property situated in the Norfolk village of North Pickenham. This superb property boasts three reception rooms, log burner, garage, gardens, parking and much more. Viewing highly recommended to fully appreciate. Available CHAIN FREE!

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Sedge Road, Swaffham

£245,000



A modern semi-detached two bedroom house situated within a cul de sac position on the popular Swans Nest development. Built by the much respected Abel Homes, this energy efficient property boasts a garage, triple glazed windows, en-suite shower room, gardens and solar panels. Viewing recommended.

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Upton Drive, Swaffham

£350,000



Fully refurbished, extremely well presented, detached three bedroom bungalow situated on the popular Southlands development. Updated to a high standard throughout, this fantastic property offers modern kitchen, shower room, en suite, gardens, parking, gas central heating and much more!

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Southlands, Swaffham

£350,000



Fully refurbished, extremely well presented, detached three bedroom bungalow situated on the popular Southlands development. Updated to a high standard throughout, this fantastic property offers modern kitchen, shower room, en suite, gardens, parking, gas central heating and much more!

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School Road, Necton

£525,000 to £550,000



Spacious, detached well presented four bedroom bungalow set within generous grounds approaching approximately half an acre (subject to survey). Two reception rooms, log burning stove, utility room, garage, workshop, gardens, parking.

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Lonsdale Crescent, Hingham

£650,000



Spacious, very well presented, detached three bedroom bungalow situated in an exclusive development of five properties within the sought after Norfolk village of Hingham. This superb property offers two reception rooms, utility room, tandem style garage, en-suite shower room, parking and gardens.

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Meadow Grove, Watton

£550,000



Superb, spacious, detached executive style four bedroom house situated on an exclusive development on the outskirts of Watton. This fantastic property has much to offer and includes three reception rooms, utility room, conservatory, double garage and much more. Viewing highly recommended!

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Dereham Road, Watton

£735,000



An exceptionally presented 3/4 bedroom detached house with approx 2500 sq ft of living space and various outbuildings and workshops, offering flexible living/working accommodation and suitable for a variety of uses including residential, annex, commercial and industrial (subject to planning).

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Richmond Road, Saham Toney

£475,000



Situated in the popular village of Saham Toney, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this extremely well presented, spacious, detached, fully updated four bedroom chalet style house. This fantastic property has much to offer and includes recently fitted modern kitchen/dining room with entertainment/bar area, water softener, modern replacement suites to shower rooms, two reception rooms and log burning stove.

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Dereham Road, Watton

£725,000



Absolutely stunning! Individual, spacious, detached five bedroom chalet-style house situated just on the outskirts of Watton. This superb property has been finished to a high standard throughout and has plenty to offer including two en-suites, vaulted ceilings, double garage and much much more!

WATTON - 01953 883474 - info@longsons.co.uk

Swaffham | Watton

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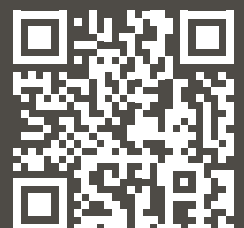
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HOW MUCH
IS MY
PROPERTY
WORTH?



Present your house for sale by de-cluttering...

Maximise your home's potential and create spacious rooms enticing potential buyers – simply by de-cluttering!

“ De-cluttering allows you to... maximise your space, emotionally prepare you to move, and will allow you to focus your buyers on what is important ”

If you are looking to sell your house, or have had your home on the market for a while now, then you probably want to get the maximum sale price in the quickest time. There are a few things you can't control – but the one thing that is in your control, is the look and feel of the interior and exterior.

While it's worth spending time fixing and cleaning your house before potential buyers come and view, it's also important to de-clutter. This creates spacious rooms and also allows you to decrease and organise your personal items before you move yourself. Of course it's understandable that you don't want to spend money, time and energy on a home you are about to leave, however, a lot of people are looking for a house in which they can move straight into. Maintaining your

property might even save you thousands of pounds; it could even reduce added expenses of living in your home whilst waiting for a sale. And it might even help avoid possible reductions in the asking price.

The main reason in which people move house tends to be because they lack space in their current home. They want a home that is spacious and in which they can grow into. If a potential viewer comes to your home and sees that there is lack of space, then this will turn them away.

De-cluttering allows you to remove any unnecessary items in an untidy or overcrowded place. It will help maximise your space, emotionally prepare you to move, and will allow you to focus your buyers on what is important.



SO WHERE SHOULD YOU START?

You need to create a great first impression and focus on the rooms themselves. You will notice that the first things you see in each room are personal items. Where possible you want to create the look of a

them into things you want to keep and things you want to get rid of. You may even find that you have collected a cupboard full of paper work. Get yourself organised! Don't just throw it all away, but file it and go through it thoroughly. This will also make it easier when you move.

De-personalising can also be a great way to de-clutter. Too many personal effects can be distracting to buyers. They want to see a house in which they can make their own memories rather than seeing yours. Again, personal items can be stored away. Remember

“ Where possible you want to create the look of a lifestyle that the potential buyers want ”

lifestyle that the potential buyer want. This usually has a 'show home' feel, rather than a 'lived in' feel. Minimising your things is the quickest way to do this: you want to ensure that potential buyers can do simple things, like, open any doors easily, ensuring that there are no obstacles.

So, what do we mean by clutter? There are two types: genuine clutter, and items that you want to keep but don't work for the sale of your property.

GENUINE CLUTTER:

You need to go through the space and sort out each item, categorising

You also want to focus on little things like DVDs, books and trinkets. These items may have some small value so sell them or donate them to charity. Get rid of any old shoes and coats that are lying about in your porch or hallway. You might want to hide away the coats and shoes you do currently wear. Store them in your wardrobe while you have viewings.

ITEMS THAT YOU WANT TO KEEP BUT DON'T WORK FOR THE SALE OF YOUR PROPERTY: You may want to consider putting some items in storage while you sell your home. Sometimes items are too large or even too small for some spaces and can make the room look odd. If you want to keep these particular items, then store them until you move into your new home.

that this is only a temporary way of living and hopefully it won't be for long! If you find you are keeping more things than you are throwing out, then think about whether or not it's in the right room or do you even need it now?

As previously mentioned, you can attempt to sell some of the things you have acquired over the years. Use sites like eBay, Gumtree and social networking sites to try and sell items. You may want to even hold a house sale for the remaining items that you can't sell. Failing that, why not donate to charity.

The end goal is still the same and it's important to help potential buyers envision your house as theirs. So remember, de-cluttering will make your home more spacious and entice potential buyers!

Top Tips!



If you are throwing away paperwork, shred anything that is confidential



De-clutter before agents come and take photos of your property. This will help attract more potential viewers online and get that first good impression



Don't spend too long on certain items and don't get distracted. Keep yourself motivated and race against the clock!



Make it fun! Play some music or watch TV while you de-clutter





Your step-by-step guide to the conveyancing process

Once a sale has been agreed and is in the hands of your solicitor, it will go through the following stages. Sometimes additional work will be needed – for example, if the property is leasehold or is yet to be registered with the Land Registry. It is also important for buyers to discuss the availability of their deposit with their solicitor early in the transaction, and we strongly recommend that you contact your solicitor regularly so that they can keep you fully up-to-date with the progress and the latest timescales.

Seller's solicitor's steps

- Obtain a copy of the Title Deeds (or office copies if the title is registered)
- Obtain a copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) (if applicable)
- The seller(s) will return a completed Property Information Form and a Fixtures, Fittings and Contents Form to the solicitors
- Copies of the above documents, plus a draft contract – this is known as an 'Information Pack' – will be sent to the buyer's solicitor
- Answer the buyer's solicitor's additional enquiries (for example, specific questions about fixtures and fittings) and obtain copies of any planning consent documents
- Agree the contract and arrange for the sellers to sign it in readiness of the exchange (below)
- All parties agree completion dates and the contracts are exchanged

Between exchange and completion

- Obtain redemption figures from the mortgage lender and reply to requisitions on title
- Approve the transfer and arrange for the seller(s) and buyer(s) to sign
- Receive the agent's fee account and seek the seller's consent to settle this out of completion funds

Completion date

This is the date the ownership of the property passes from the seller to the buyer, and it follows the successful transfer of funds. It's the date that the whole process works towards.

Upon completion

- Receive completion funds and (only when this has been completed) instruct your estate agent to release the keys to buyers. Redeem mortgage and forward the financial statement. Forward any surplus funds (unless these are being used to fund an onward purchase). Ensure all outstanding bills are paid
- Forward transfer documents and deeds to the buyer's solicitors
- Forward evidence of 'discharge of mortgage' to the buyer's solicitors

Buyer's solicitor's steps

- Obtain the Information Pack, including a copy of the EPC (if applicable) from the sellers' solicitor and raise any additional queries
- Initiate any specialist searches (for example: a coal search). Submit local, environmental and water searches and a chancel check. This takes about 10 working days in total, and enquiries are then usually raised from the results
- Approve the contract when all enquiries are satisfactory and complete. (At this stage, a mortgage transfer deed will need to be signed and witnessed)
- Receive a mortgage offer and instructions from the lender and deal with any conditions set out by them. Make sure that life cover and buildings insurance is being arranged
- Request the deposit, report back to the buyer, and arrange for the contract to be signed. Place buildings insurance and life cover in force
- All parties agree completion dates and the contracts are exchanged

Between exchange and completion

- Raise 'requisitions on title' and prepare the draft transfer deed
- Report on title to mortgage lender and obtain funds for completion, including Stamp Duty (if appropriate)
- Prepare accounts, obtain signature to mortgage deed and undertake final Land Registry and Land Charges searches

Completion date

This is the date the ownership of the property passes from the seller to the buyer, and it follows the successful transfer of funds. It's the date that the whole process works towards.

Upon completion

- Forward to the seller's solicitors the balance of funds – it is only then that they can authorise the release of the keys. Receive from the seller's solicitors, the transfer document deeds
- Stamp the Transfer Deed, register the buyer's ownership with the Land Registry and forward the deeds to the lender or client (where appropriate)

Contract - The agreement that sets out the main terms that have been agreed – for example: price, address, names, etc. Two copies are drawn up, and each party signs one in readiness for the exchange of contracts.

Deposit - The part of the purchase price (usually 10%) which the buyer pays on exchange of contracts.

Exchange of contracts - The swapping of signed contracts by the solicitors (together with the buyer's deposit). After this, the contract is binding.

Energy Performance Certificate - This contains information on energy use, energy performance, carbon dioxide emissions, and fuel bills.

Land Registry - The Government department that records who owns what land, and under what conditions.

Local Authority Search - A list of questions that are specific to the property and intended, for example, to discover if there have been any planning applications on the property, if the road to the house is maintained by the council, etc.

Mortgage Redemption Figure - The amount required to repay the outstanding capital/ interest of a mortgage.

Property information form/fixtures, fittings and contents form - Standard forms about the property that the seller answers for their solicitor (for example: what will be left behind, details of guarantees, etc.)

Title Deeds - Legal documents that prove ownership of land/buildings, and the terms on which they are owned.

Transfer of Title - The document that passes the ownership from the seller to the buyer.

Stamp Duty for buy to let investors and second home owners - An additional tax, paid by the buyer purchasing an additional property that is not their main residence. It includes buy to let landlords and those buying second homes and holiday homes. The higher rates will be 3 percentage points above the current rates of duty shown below.

Requisition on title - An enquiry relating to the completion arrangements.

Seller's Pack - This comprises a Property Information Form, a Fixtures, Fittings and Contents Form, a copy of the title deeds and the draft contract.

Stamp Duty – Currently, the Stamp Duty threshold for residential properties is £250,000. For first-time buyers you can claim a discount and won't pay Stamp Duty up to £425,000 on the purchase price and after that you will pay only 5% between £425,001 to £625,000.

However, how much you pay is also dependent on whether you already own another property or if you're a non-UK resident.



Moving house?

From meter readings to removal companies, there's so much to remember when moving house. Here's our checklist of what to do and when

First of all, congratulations on your new home! The excitement has probably now kicked in but moving home can also be one of the most stressful and emotionally draining things you can do. However, careful organisation and planning can help decrease the stress and anxiety of moving. This comprehensive and essential checklist will help you do just that.

Eight weeks - Research

Ideally, you want to start packing away any non-essential items as early as possible. This includes any items stored away in the loft, garage and shed. If you are not using it, pack it. Looking into your new area is also important, try to do this around eight weeks before you move. You might need to think about transferring your children to different schools and ordering new uniforms too. At this point, ensure you are also documenting all your important information away: that includes contact details, dates, contracts and information regarding your solicitor.

Six weeks - Removal companies or do it yourself?

Now would be the perfect time to decide on a local removal company. Or if you don't have too much to move, you may want to do it yourself. You could even look into different van hire companies. At this point you've probably started packing away some bits, but if there is anything you decide not to take, then look into selling these items or donating them to charity. This will also give you an idea on the volume of items you have to move.

Four weeks - Notify utility companies

This would be a good time for you to notify utility companies and inform them about your move to switch over. This includes gas and electricity, council tax, internet, phone rental and TV. You should also consider changing any car insurance, tax, memberships, phone contracts and inform your bank about the move. Now's the time to also arrange a date to have your new house cleaned before you move



“ It will be worth packing a night bag each to help everyone settle in, which means you won't have to rummage through everything to find your toothbrush! ”

in, and start ordering any new furnishings for your new property. Start packing away more items, that being, out of season clothes, books, DVDs and even bulky items, like TVs that aren't used often.

Two weeks - Confirm all details

Confirm your move with your removal company or van hire, estate agents and schools. If possible, try to organise someone to look after your pets and children for the day of your move, as this can also be a stressful time for them too. If your removal company doesn't disassemble any furniture or sort out the un-plumbing for the washing machine, then now would be the ideal time to organise these. Remember to also cancel any local services you receive: this could be window cleaners, gardeners and newspaper deliveries. You should now also think about re-registering to vote and getting your post re-directed after your moving date. Continue packing away more furnishings, kitchen appliances and crockery that you won't be using for the next couple of weeks.

24 hours - Final check and walk round

You now have only 24 hours before you move, so double check that everything is packed away and ready for transit. It will be worth packing a night bag each to help everyone settle in, which means you won't have to rummage through everything to find your toothbrush! You may want to create an inventory of your boxes and

furniture to help you keep track of what you have and to help you ensure it doesn't go missing.

Moving day

Today is the day! You need to be ready for when your removal company comes. Ensure that you let them know if there are any fragile boxes that need extra care when handling. If you're moving yourself, then pack up your car or van and work out how many trips it may take. Before you leave, also take note of your final meter readings and send these off to your provider. Don't forget to leave your keys for the new owners!

You have arrived at your new home!

Give your removal company instructions of which boxes go in which rooms and make sure you are happy with everything that has arrived. Ensure you check for any damage before the movers leave. Read your new utility meters and send your readings off to your supplier. Taking photos of them will also ensure you have the correct reading if you need them again in the future. Unpack your essentials such as bed linen and clean towels. Don't worry about the rest, it isn't going anywhere! Order a takeaway, have a cup of tea and enjoy your first night with your family.

Right, so now you're all moved in, it's time to settle down, unpack and enjoy your new place. Remember, planning is essential to ensure your move runs stress free.

Checklist

Eight weeks

- Pack non-essential items
- Research your new area (transfer schools and order new uniform)
- Keep all important documents

Six weeks

- Decide on a local removal company
- Clear out any unwanted items
- Keep packing

Four weeks

- Notify utility companies
- Start preparation for your new house
- Keep packing

Two weeks

- Finalise all details
- Organise pet and child care
- Cancel local services
- Keep packing

24 hours

- Check every room and ensure everything is packed
- Pack a night bag so everything is to hand
- Collect your new keys
- Make sure your phone is fully charged so you can get in touch with the estate agents or removal company

Moving in

- Prepare for the arrival of the removal company and give them directions/ your contact details
- Ensure everything is ready to move
- Record meter readings

On arrival

- Give removal company instructions of what goes where
- Check for any damage before they leave
- Read your new utility meters and send them off to your supplier
- Check if the previous owners have left anything behind
- Unpack essentials
- Order a takeaway and sit back and relax!



Want to treat yourself to a proper removal company for your next move or are you prepared to do it yourself?

Removal company or brave it yourself?

You're excited about your new home and location but the process of packing, organising and actually moving all of your items is something no one really ever looks forward to. Not only that but you also have to contact utility companies, maintain a job, keep your children happy and clean your entire house. You do have super powers, right?

Removal companies

Unless you live in a small property or flat, it could be worth hiring a professional removal company to help relieve some of the stress on the day. They have many skills and experience and some of the services they can provide include packing and

unpacking, dismantling and assembling furniture, loading your belongings quickly and securely, including those fragile and specialist items. They can even supply you with packing materials.

Hiring a removal company will also allow you the time to collect the keys to your new home. You also won't have to worry about the exhausting physical side of things, that being carrying boxes back and forth. Some services are great if you don't have much time to plan and get these done yourself; however these do often come at a premium and may not be suitable for those on a budget. When choosing a removal company

You also won't have to worry about the exhausting physical side of things, that being carrying boxes back and forth



it's key to look at those which have good recommendations and reviews, as you need a company you can rely on. You can use comparison sites, such as comparemymove.com and reallymoving.com, to help find you the best deals.

Getting quotes

You should aim to get at least three quotes from removal companies, preferably from firms which will come out to your property rather than those who just estimate the cost over the phone, as you don't want any nasty charges later on. Plus it will give the company an accurate idea of any restricted areas in your home, if they can park a van or lorry, and how many

items you have. You should also ask for the price to be broken down so you can see just how much you are paying for when it comes to certain aspects like insurance, packing, an hourly rate, mileage and any storage costs.

Once you have found a removal company, it can be useful to send them a briefing sheet that includes information about any items which need to be specially packed, any difficult or large items, plus any carpets and curtains which need moving. Finally, it can also be helpful to send them a floor plan of the new property so they can unload efficiently.

Top tips for packing

When packing, ensure you don't overload your boxes with heavy items, as these will be difficult to lift and could cause a back injury.

Fill any empty gaps using old newspaper, clothing, socks or even tea towels. This will help secure any items when they are being moved.

Create an inventory and label all your boxes and write the contents on each box with a marker. That way you will know which room each box is to go in. And if you are super organised, you could even colour code each room!

Pack heavier boxes on the bottom. This might seem like common sense but it will ensure that any of your fragile items won't break.

Pack a survival box. These are the things that you will need first and should include paper towels, bin bags, cutlery, the kettle, some mugs, tea, coffee, milk, sugar and finally, some toilet paper!



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GET YOUR FREE MARKET VALUATION TODAY

Summer is also an excellent time to capitalise on the bustling property market. As experienced estate agents we can help you find your requirements and ensuring you secure the best deal possible.

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