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Community Matters

As many of you know, from our previous newsletters, we are very keen to assist in the community wherever we can.

In fact, that was one of our many goals when we decided to produce a newsletter a few years ago. So I am delighted that we are able to continue supporting Downs Infant School, Woodingdean under 9's football team, Woodingdean Bowls Club and the Hanover Beer

Festival to name but a few. We have also been able to devote some space in this newsletter to a couple of forthcoming events. We wish them all every success.

With a General Election in the offing, it has been good to note that the lowest stamp duty threshold has been raised from £60,000 to £120,000 after more than 10 years at the same level despite increasing house prices. This will be a great help to many first time buyers and those starting on the property ladder and in fact I know of at least 6 of our own sales in progress where the purchasers will benefit by a saving of upto £1200.

A Place of Your Own?

By Nick Ellis - Nick Ellis & Co, Solicitors

Joint property owners need to ensure that the proportions in which they own property are properly recorded - if they don't they may face a nasty shock!

In a recent case the judge said, "I ask in despair how often this court has to remind conveyancers that they would save their clients a great deal of later difficulty if only they would sit the purchasers down (and) explain the difference between a joint tenancy and tenancy in common."

So what is the difference and why is it so important? If a property is owned as joint tenants, the purchasers jointly own the whole of the property; if the property is owned as tenants in common each party owns the property in a specified share of the property - for example 50%. It is also possible to own a tenancy in common in unequal shares to reflect unequal contributions for example, one person has a larger deposit than the other.

There are several important distinctions - a joint tenancy means that on death the property automatically passes to the survivor regardless of the existence of a will. With a tenancy in common the owner can leave his share of the property by will to someone who is not a co-owner.

It is often presumed that married couples should own property as joint tenants and unmarried couples should own property as tenants in common. This approach is too simplistic as it does not take into account a number of other factors such as tax planning, financial obligations of the co-owners, for example involvement in a business where one

co-owner could face unlimited personal liability, or where one spouse buys a property out of their own assets. When co-purchasers are friends, business partners, siblings or have children from previous relationships, it becomes even more complex.

In fact the combinations in which property can be held are almost endless, that is why it is important to make sure that you ask your solicitor to properly explain the implications to you before completion, or if you have already bought the property it is important to consider whether the way in which the property is held needs to be revisited.

The simplest way to address these issues is to take advice and if necessary enter into a legal agreement called a declaration of trust. This records the clients intentions from the outset and can prevent disputes at a later date should the relationship fail. The document can cover a number of scenarios to include how the sale proceeds will be divided, what happens should the property fall into negative equity and what happens if there is a change of contribution to the mortgage to name but a few. It is then kept with the title deeds as an accurate record of what was agreed.

So if you are buying a property with someone else, or if you already own a property jointly, make sure you get legal advice on your position - a few minutes spent at this stage can save a lot of heartache later down the line.



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Market Trends

Since the budget on the 16th March, the property market has started to improve with buyers generally gaining confidence. After a much slower end to 2004 and indeed a slow start to this year, property prices have edged back, in some cases up to 10%.

However any market is driven by supply and demand. With buyer confidence improving and more sales being agreed than there are new properties coming onto the market, prices will stabilise and we believe, remain fairly level over the summer months.

As always our advice is to price sensibly, overpriced properties will continue to remain on the market.

What's on!

Some local events scheduled during the next few months

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|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11 Apr | First Hanover Day Planning Meeting - 7.30pm, Parish Rooms, Church of the Annunciation, Washington St. - All welcome! |
| 17 Apr | Sunday Coffee Concert - Clco Wind Ensemble - 11am The Old Market, £5 - £17 |
| 21 Apr | Hanover Community Association Public Meeting - 8pm - The Hanover Community Centre, Southover St. |
| 24 Apr | Mayors Charity Bowls Fundraising event - Preston Park |
| 06/07/08 May | Brighton Horse Driving Trials Equestrian event - Stanmer Park |
| 07/08 May to 29/30 May | Hanover Arts Trail - Artist 'Open Houses' across Hanover. 11am - 5pm every weekend until Sunday, 30 May |
| 14 May | Moulsecoomb Funday - Community Funday - Wild Park |
| 15 May | Brighton Heart Support Trust Sponsored walk - Seaford |
| 30 May | Dragon Boat Racing Hove Lagoon |
| 05 June | Woodland Open Day - Woodland crafts and activities - Stanmer Park |
| 19 June | London to Brighton Bike Ride Charity Bike Ride - Madeira Drive |
| 24 June/12 July | Beach Soccer - Beach sports festival - Beach football, rugby and cricket - Brighton beach |
| 25 June | Woodingdean Carnival 11am - 5pm - Woodingdean Primary School playing field |

Please note: It is advisable to check dates, times and venue before travelling as each event is planned well in advance.

Did you know?

Bevendean

- 1: 'The Domesday Book of 1086 recorded the manor of Bevendean, 'Beofa's Valley', to be worth the equivalent of £6 and was held by one Walter from William de Warenne. It was eventually divided into two areas - Lower and Upper Bevendean, which were acquired by the Brighton Corporation in November 1913 and January 1940 respectively.
- 2: There was once an eighteenth-century farmhouse on Bevendean Road, but the buildings have long been demolished and the land now provides the open space known as Farm Green - between Auckland Drive and Bevendean School.
However, Upper Bevendean Farm, including its late nineteenth-century farmhouse, still survives.
- 3: With a pressing need for new homes in post-war Britain, Brighton was no exception. Building began in 1948 and the Corporation rapidly developed the majority of the Bevendean area as we know it today. Most of the roads were named after English castles.
- 4: The old White Admiral public house in Taunton Road, Lower Bevendean was used as the 'Nags Head' in an episode of the popular BBC comedy programme 'Only Fools and Horses' titled "Mothers Natures Son"
- 5: At present there are 15,722 people recorded as living in Bevendean and Moulscombe.

Woodingdean Carnival

Annual carnival day and procession - Saturday 25th June 2005, 11am-5pm. (Fundraising in aid of the Woodingdean swimming pool)

Dancing displays, kids fancy dress competition, baby show - everyone welcome.

Woodingdean Primary school playing field (Opposite the Maslen Estate agents office in Warren Road).

Dragon Boat Racing

Impact Initiatives - helping individuals and communities improve their lives - are holding a Dragon Boat Racing event at Hove Lagoon, May 30th 2005. They are calling for people to get teams together to join in the fun and would like you to register as soon as possible - only 15 teams can join in and places will go fast.

Please contact Harriet Gill on the details below for more information.
harriet.gill@impact-initiatives.org.uk

History on our doorstep

The Open Market



The Open Market is a working piece of Brighton's history. It was set up by a group of soldiers who came back from the First World War and found jobs as barrow boys.

The market has moved all over the city, from Oxford Street, to Brighton Town Hall to the Level and finally found a home off the London Road in 1924.

The Open Market recently saw improvements worth over a quarter of a million pounds. The council replaced the canopy, the wiring and the lighting, mended the pavements and installed some new gates and new bollards.



At the moment there are 42 stalls selling everything from bikes to bacon to flowers and herbal remedies.

The market has changed a lot since the early days. Before the advent of the fridge, people had to shop every other day. Now they tend to stock up once a week.

Many of the stallholders have worked in the Open Market for decades, but there are several newcomers. Brighton Stained Glass Supplies is the only shop of its kind in the city.

The latest arrival at the market is a stall selling Iranian pottery. An occult shop called Pagan Spirit is due to open soon. There is even an Internet café.

The market is still thriving and certainly offers an interesting alternative from the aisles of your local supermarket.

The King Alfred development - some questions answered

Here are just a few questions and answers. A more detailed account can be found at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

What are the plans for King Alfred?

The scheme is to replace the existing sports centre with a new sports facility, funded by a housing development on the site, 40% of which will be affordable housing. The scheme also includes small scale retail, cafes, restaurants and public spaces.

What stage are we at now?

Since their appointment, Karis ING have been working on the detail of the scheme and will shortly (Spring 2005) submit a design for the council's consideration and approval. A planning application is expected in Summer 2005.

Who are Karis/ING?

This is a consortium of local developer - Karis and the property arm of the Dutch bank ING. ING believe that by melding their finance and development expertise with local developers, with

local knowledge, they achieve the best of both worlds.

Is this the best way to fund a new sports centre?

The present King Alfred is the council's leading indoor sports centre. It is simply not up to the standard required for a city of our size. The council does not have the money to build a new £25m centre and no money is available from the Sports Lottery. This approach gives us not only a brand new sports centre, but also much needed affordable housing in a landmark design.

When are we likely to see bulldozers on site?

These things take time. Depending on the outcome of the planning application, this would not be before early 2006.

World Book Day - a day to remember



Photograph - Nicholas Sinclair

At long last Brighton's new Jubilee Library opened its doors to the public on March 3rd - World Book Day

The new library is part of a £60 million Private Finance Initiative regeneration scheme and will be the focus of a new city square. It sits at the heart of the city's cultural quarter, centred on the Royal Pavilion, Brighton Museum & Art Gallery, the Dome arts complex and the historic Theatre Royal.

The site team worked with Brighton & Hove City Council, over 60 suppliers, 40 sub-contractors and the services of eight professional teams to deliver a building of groundbreaking design and high quality, on time - a real achievement.

The exterior features a magnificent glass south-facing frontage which links the inside and outside

spaces whilst other walls are clad with thousands of dark blue and green hand-glazed ceramic tiles, recalling the 'mathematical' tiles seen on many historic Brighton buildings.

and the interior - a simple rectangular plan with three floors. Flexible perimeter spaces for book storage, library activities and specialist functions, wrap around central areas in a u-shape on three sides.



The décor of Jubilee Library is modern, colourful and stylish. Interior walls are clad in beechwood and internal concrete surfaces are painted white to maximise light reflection.

The library is environmentally friendly and extremely energy efficient. Amongst its many outstanding features it boasts a unique self-issue system which enables customers to electronically check books out themselves.

Head of libraries, Sally McMahon said: "This is going to add enormously to the cultural resources we have in the city and form the heart of a new cultural quarter."

Why overpricing may leave you out of pocket

As a seller, it is tempting to accept the highest estate agent's valuation you receive. However, there are sound reasons why you should avoid overpricing your home initially, as overpriced homes often end up selling for less than they otherwise would.

First, buyers buy by comparison. Why should they buy your house if it is more expensive than a similar alternative? This simply does not make sense, and your property is unlikely to sell until such time as any competing homes have sold. By that time your house may have suffered overexposure and be 'going stale' on the market.

Second, buyer activity is highest when the property is new on the market. If your

price prevents buyers from seeing the house, you will have missed this opportunity and may have to wait some time before a suitable buyer is found. Competition between buyers drives up your price, whereas time on the market drives it down.

Sellers often say "But we can always take an offer!" The problem with this is that if fewer buyers see your house, the chance of an offer being received is significantly reduced. The wrong price also attracts the wrong buyers, who are unlikely to offer in any event. Intense buyer activity in the early days of marketing is key to achieving the highest price for your property.

So be realistic. Be competitive. Quote the right price, stick to it, and you should readily secure the highest price for your home.

BRIGHTON - NEWS IN BRIEF

Council grants thousands for youth centre

Great news for Woodingdean as local youth centre receives thousands of pounds of council funding to renovate its structure.

Brighton & Hove City Council has awarded £10,000 of grant funding to bring about repairs and breath a new spark of life in to Woodingdean Youth Centre.

Councillor Sue John said: "The local community in Woodingdean has put a lot of work into making this centre such a success. The centre has the highest membership in the city with 200 people per week using its facilities. The repair work is going to benefit a lot of people."

The money was handed over at the end of February and work was due to begin early March. The centre's existing structure had come to the end of its useful life. Renovation will make the place much more welcoming, safer and secure for everyone who uses it. Work includes the installation of new windows and replacement of panel walls, which will help to cut heating costs considerably.

Instant information contributes to bus satisfaction

The provision of on-the-spot 'real-time' bus information is helping to raise the satisfaction of bus services in the city.

In Brighton & Hove, 74.2% of bus users said they were satisfied with the local provision of public transport information in the last council survey - that's 8% higher than a national survey carried out between July and September last year.

Brighton & Hove also recorded high rates of satisfaction with the service itself, with 80% of bus users satisfied with the overall service. This was the highest level of satisfaction in the country when compared with other counties, London, metropolitan and unitary authorities.

Roger French, managing director of Brighton & Hove Buses, added: "Our investment in higher frequencies on the most popular routes, together with more and more new buses, has provided greatly improved levels of service for thousands of people travelling by bus in the city".

Saying it with 150,000 flowers

This year, the city's floral displays will include a riot of blue, with shades of purple, white and silver.

A fantastic 150,000 flowers are being lovingly tended at Stanmer Nursery until June, when they will fill nearly 100 flower beds, 450 hanging baskets and a range of containers across the city. Some 240 new trees are also being planted. They include 41 trees funded by residents through the council's Tree Donation Scheme in memory of relatives or celebrating a birth or anniversary. For more on donating a tree call (01273) 292187.

Sky high

Seaside skyscraper planned for Brighton

Plans for a landmark development at Brighton Marina - featuring an elegant 40-storey tower - have been submitted to Brighton and Hove City Council by Brunswick Developments plc.

The response from the Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership endorses the proposals as a big step forward to linking the Marina to the city centre and contributing to the city's overall destination offer.

The proposed £175 million scheme has been designed by award-winning architects Wilkinson Eyre, whose designs include the Gateshead Millennium Bridge. The tower will include a public viewing gallery 420 feet (128 metres) above the Marina, offering previously unseen views along the stunning Sussex coast and over Brighton's Kemp Town district.

Under Brunswick's proposals 990 new homes would be created, 396 of which would be designated as 'affordable' key worker accommodation.

Brunswick has pledged that, if approved, the scheme would also bring with it an array of improvements to the area around Brighton Marina. These include two new bridges, creating new pedestrian access from Black Rock and an innovative 'closing bridge' that will complete a two kilometre walkway around the entire Marina.

With public consultation underway for the project, the city's planners are expected to take approximately four months to give their verdict on the proposals.



Andrew Goodall, managing director of Brunswick Developments, added:

"If the scheme goes ahead it will be one of the most exciting and inspiring developments in the country."

"Visually spectacular, it will also go a long way to linking Brighton Marina to the rest of the city. This will be achieved visually with the inspiring tower which will make a true landmark of the Marina. Physically, we are investing millions in new walkways and bridges to improve pedestrian access to and from the city and enhanced road entrances creating a true sense of arrival."



Well done Nick & John



Nick, manager of our Woodingdean office and John, negotiator at Lewes Road have both passed the National Association of Estate Agents Technical Award which consisted of four ³/₄ hour papers covering Law relating to residential property sales, Practice relating to residential property sales, Health & Safety, Security and General Law, Property appraisal and Building Construction.

Woodingdean Business Park

The second phase of the redevelopment of the former Sunblest Bakeries and Jaycee Furniture sites at Woodingdean has just been completed. Eight Industrial units totalling

26,500 sq.ft. (2,462 sq.m.) are now ready for occupation. One unit is already being fitted out by the new occupiers and a further three are under offer.

The new industrial units complement the office building completed in September of last year and



together form part of an important regeneration project for the city.

The site, known well locally, has been vacant since the 1990's. Simon Forrest of Oakley

Commercial commented, "The new units are available on a 'for sale' or 'to let' basis have generated considerable interest. In fact all four units reserved prior to completion have been sold rather than let".