

# A GUIDE TO BUYING YOUR FIRST HOME



# SETTING YOU ON THE RIGHT PATH

Buying a house is exciting but buying your first home is that little bit extra special. The journey to your first home can seem a little overwhelming, but don't worry – we've helped thousands of first time buyers through the process, so you're in safe hands

## Qualified mortgage advice

Our Mortgage Consultants are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to provide clear and practical advice on your mortgage and insurance needs. We take great pride in finding the right mortgage product for your circumstances.

Our Mortgage Consultants aim to:

- 1 Search thousands of mortgage deals from our panel of selected lenders to find the **right mortgage** for you
- 2 Confirm how much you may be able to **borrow** and all the costs involved
- 3 **Save** you money on the property you choose by helping you construct a suitable offer if your property purchase is for sale through another agent, and as long as we are not acting for the seller of the property\*.
- 4 Help you find a new home and **explain** everything you need to know about the house buying process
- 5 Take care of all your **mortgage & protection** arrangements whether you buy through an estate agent in the countryside network or not

We deliver great service,  
and our customers have  
rated us highly.



**Platinum Trusted  
Service Award**

2025

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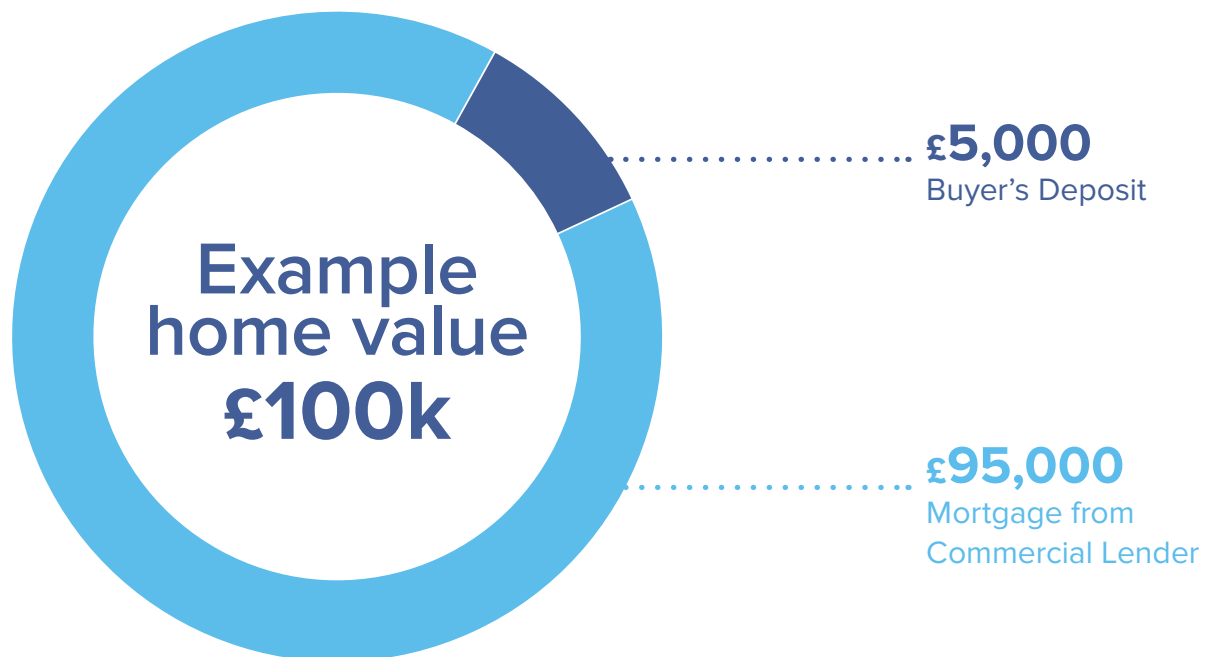
\*Market Intelligence is a system supported by TwentyEA that accesses a range of information on specific properties, including the market status of each property ( e.g, last listed, last transacted and time to sell). We can help with negotiations to aim to save you money.

# WHAT IS A MORTGAGE?

A mortgage is a type of loan which is used to buy a property. The lender who provides the loan will charge monthly interest, and you will have an agreed time span (mortgage term) to repay the amount borrowed.

## Here's how it works in simple terms

- You choose a property you want to buy
- You put down a deposit, which is a portion of the total price of the property.
- You take out a mortgage for the remaining amount. Our mortgage consultants will assess your individual circumstances to arrange a mortgage with a lender from our panel
- You then pay back the lender over time, with interest, through monthly payments



## Documents you'll need for a mortgage appointment

Your consultant will confirm what you'll need ahead of your appointment, however in general you will need:

- Photo ID – Valid driving licence or passport to verify your identity.
- Address verification – Annual council tax bill, utility bill or bank statements dated within the last 3 months to confirm your current address.
- Proof of income – Last 3 months' payslips and latest P60 or SA302 form (for self-employed).

# THE HOME BUYING PROCESS

Here's a brief overview for you, but we will also break this down over the next few pages

1	<b>Meet with our Mortgage Consultant</b> Speak to one of our Mortgage Consultants who will help assess your affordability for a mortgage.	2	<b>Mortgage Approval</b> We will then search for an appropriate mortgage provider and find out how much they are prepared to lend to you in principle (subject to status and lender criteria).
3	<b>Your decisions</b> We will help you find your dream home as well as give you guidance on what offer to make if the property is for sale with another agent.	4	<b>Applying for mortgage and protection products</b> If your offer is accepted, we can help arrange your mortgage and happily discuss any protection needs you may have.
5	<b>Legal process</b> Most people use a conveyancer or solicitor when buying a house as it can be a complicated process. We can help you appoint one, if you wish.	6	<b>Your lender will arrange a valuation</b> This is a requirement for your mortgage, please note that having a survey done on the property would be in addition to this.
7	<b>Mortgage Offer</b> If everything is in order a mortgage offer will be made.	8	<b>Searches</b> Local searches are carried out by your conveyancer or solicitor.
9	<b>Exchange</b> From this point the purchase is legally binding. (Note that Building and Contents Insurance must be put into force from this point)	10	<b>Completion</b> The property is yours and you can move in!

# HOW MUCH CAN YOU AFFORD TO BORROW?

Before you do anything else in your search for a home, speak to one of our Mortgage Consultants. We'll take a look at your finances and advise you on your mortgage options.\*

Lenders need to know much more about you than just your salary before making a decision on how much they're willing to lend by way of a mortgage.

## How does this work?

When applying for a mortgage we can help you understand how much you could borrow and arrange a mortgage agreement in principle. This is a conditional approval from a lender estimating how much they're willing to lend you.

## Your Affordability

Lenders will look at your salary, monthly outgoings, any existing debt and credit history to assess whether you can comfortably meet your monthly mortgage repayments. Typically they will let you borrow around 4.5 to 5 times your income.

## Your Deposit

In most cases, you would need to have saved at least 5% of the property's value to use as a deposit on your property. So, if you were buying a £200,000 home, you'd need to raise at least £10,000. We have access to a range of first-time buyer mortgages and low deposit schemes to help you.

## Try our borrowing calculator

Your annual income (pre-tax)	Estimated mortgage amount you could borrow*
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Joint applicant's annual income (pre-tax)	
<input type="text"/>	
	(subject to lender status and criteria)

\* This is not a formal quotation or commitment to lend. All figures are for illustrative purposes only and are based on a repayment mortgage only basis. Figures provided will be dependent on your financial situation, property value and the size of your deposit or equity.

# FIRST TIME BUYER MORTGAGE AND LOW DEPOSIT SCHEMES

Embarking on the journey to home ownership is an exciting milestone. We can help make your dream home a reality with access to a range of schemes and options tailored to support first-time buyers.

Please note that these are subject to change and individual lender criteria.



**Delayed Start Mortgage** - No mortgage repayments due for the first 3 months, helping manage other costs associated with moving



**£5K Deposit Mortgage** - Buy your first home with only a £5,000 deposit.



**Shared Ownership** – Buy a share of your first home with help from the Government.



**Track Record Mortgage** - Borrow up to 100% loan-to-value if you have a proven track record of paying rent for at least 12 months.



**Joint Borrower Sole Proprietor** – Allows relatives to contribute to the mortgage payments without needing to be on the title deeds.



**Gifted deposit** – Build your deposit with money gifted by a family member



**Family Springboard** - Get a 0% deposit mortgage with a helper's savings as security. This is returned with interest after 5 years.

# TYPES OF MORTGAGES AVAILABLE

There are a number of different types of mortgage available to you. Your consultant will explain these options in more detail, to help you find the one that suits your circumstances best. The main types are:

## **Fixed rate**

You are locked into repaying a fixed monthly amount for a period of time, typically lasting for two, three or five years.

## **Variable rate (Tracker Rate)**

The monthly amount can go up or down. Your payments track the Bank of England base rate plus additional interest. This rate therefore is directly affected by the Bank of England base rate.

## **Variable rate (Standard Variable Rate)**

The monthly amount is set by your lender and can go up or down. This rate is usually based on the Bank of England base rate plus additional interest set by the lender.

We compare thousands of mortgages to help you pick the right one



# VALUATION AND SURVEYS

Once you've had an offer accepted it's time to look more closely at the property to satisfy the mortgage lender, and for your own peace of mind too.

The lender will require a basic mortgage valuation – a report the mortgage lender will arrange themselves, which confirms the property is worth the money you're asking to borrow. It's important to remember that a mortgage lender's valuation report is not a survey. It merely tells the lender whether or not the property offers reasonable security on the loan

## **What is a home survey?**

While not mandatory, a house survey is highly recommended. A home survey is a thorough inspection of a property conducted by a qualified surveyor. The resulting report provides valuable insights into the property's condition, highlighting potential issues that could influence your purchase decision or require future investment. It's an essential tool for avoiding unexpected repair costs and understanding the true value of your potential new home.



**We can help you choose which survey you'll need for the property and arrange it for you either directly with the lender or through Countrywide Surveying Services.**



# CONVEYANCING

Conveyancing is the legal transfer of a property from one person to another. It includes all the legal work plus a variety of important searches and checks on the property.

## Our Conveyancers will:

- Draw up and check contracts
- Raise enquiries with the opposing conveyancer
- Carry out local searches (e.g. local authority, Land Registry, water and environmental searches)
- Arrange Land Registry certification
- Organise payment of stamp duty (if applicable)
- Manage exchange of contracts
- Transfer monies



**A conveyancer will charge an additional fee for their services, and there are thousands based around the UK, so to avoid confusion and make the process as stress-free as possible this is where we can help.**

# PROTECTING YOU, YOUR HOME AND YOUR FAMILY

Buying a property is a major investment, so it is wise to protect yourself and your home.

## **Buildings cover**

The mortgage lender will require you to have buildings insurance in place from the point you exchange contracts on a freehold property.

This steps in to cover the costs of repairing damage caused by sudden and unexpected emergencies, such as a burst pipe that floods a room, or structural damage caused by events like storms or fires. Buildings cover ensures your home is safe and habitable after such incidents.

Some buildings insurance policies have an element of accidental damage cover included, but you may want to add additional cover for more protection.

## **Contents cover**

You might want to consider adding contents insurance to ensure your possessions are covered from the day you move in.

Contents insurance protects the belongings inside your home. This includes everything from furniture and appliances to personal items like clothing, electronics, and valuables.

For instance, if someone breaks in and steals your jewellery, this policy helps cover the cost of replacing or repairing those items. It essentially safeguards everything you would take with you if you moved house. Both types of cover are designed to give you peace of mind, ensuring you're not left out of pocket after unexpected events.

## **Protecting you and your family**

Have you ever thought how your loved ones would be able to afford the mortgage if you were to die or if ill-health forced you to take time off work?

Speak to our Mortgage Consultant about:

- Life insurance
- Critical illness
- Income protection

# PREPARING A WILL

working in partnership with:



When you buy a property you become the owner of a substantial asset, so if you don't already have a will, now is a good time to put one in place.

Deciding what you want to happen to your property, possessions and assets in the event of your death would save your loved ones untold worry, costs and stress and provide them with stability and protection at a difficult time.

Don't risk leaving your loved ones with additional stress and unanticipated costs. We have teamed up with Redstone Wills – one of the largest will-writing specialists in the UK.



**Any fees payable will be explained in your initial no obligation appointment, before you choose whether to use our Mortgage Services.**

