

HOMEFRONT



Thinking of selling up and moving on? Then ensure your garden looks more like an entrant for the Chelsea Flower Show and less like a muddy wasteland, says Jenny Knight

Spring and summer are ideal times to sell when the sun lights up rooms and nature perks up gardens.

Sam Sproston, from Knight Frank Wandsworth, says: "You get a premium for houses which have unusually large gardens for the area. In Melody Road, one side has longer west-facing gardens and we see they sell more quickly than the other side of the road with the smaller gardens."

"When you are looking at the more expensive homes buyers want big gardens. We have a handsome eight-bedroom detached, double-fronted house in Westover Road with a 100 foot long double-width garden. The size of the garden is definitely an attraction."

"A lovely, inviting garden with some foliage and colour is a big selling point."

His tip is to turn smaller gardens into tidy patio areas. He points out that he has never had a buyer call and specifically ask for a swimming pool, while families with young children tend to fill in ponds.

Caroline Bell, of Savills, Putney, says: "No doubt, at this time of year, how the garden looks becomes more important. The most popular gardens are those that are facing south or west, but in Putney because the houses and gardens are often bigger the way the garden faces is not so important."

"With buyers the bigger the garden the better, unless they are among the small number who hate gardening. With family homes easy maintenance is helpful and although I hate astro turf, it can be suitable for people with children because they can play out and not make a mess."

"Sellers should be objective. Look at the garden and if the bushes are overgrown and the dog has ruined the lawn get someone in to cut back the bushes to make the garden look bigger. It's worth investing in getting someone in for a day to tidy up and stick in some colourful plants to liven the whole thing up."

"Buyers can get the impression that if the garden looks as if no one has bothered with it, then the house might be poorly maintained too."

Caroline also thinks that simplicity is best, saying that hot tubs or elaborate garden sheds tend not to be popular.

"Make sure fencing is in good order. I've just told a client that it is really worth replacing the tatty fencing because a well-maintained garden creates such a good impression."



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From his temporary residence, an apartment in Manhattan's Upper East Side (he's currently playing for New York City FC), footballer Frank Lampard has tried – and failed – to offload some of his property portfolio. Yaffingales, the six-bedroom, Tudor-style pile, complete with outdoor pool, gym and log cabin, in Esher was home to Frank, his ex and their two daughters and on the market for £7m in 2012. Now he's scored a let – £8,950 per month – through Jackson-Stops & Staff in Weybridge. When Frank decides to hang up his boots he'll still have a Chelsea house and other properties in the UK to call homes.



**TROPHY HOMES
INDULWICH**



Court Lane

With views across Dulwich Park this detached, double-fronted house has six bedrooms, three reception rooms, bathroom and three shower rooms, as well as a lovely and sizeable rear garden with parking for cars at the front. **£3,850,000 Harvey & Wheeler 0208 693 4321**



Alleyn Road

A handsome, seven-bedroom, detached, three-storey house with three reception rooms, period details, three bathrooms, a 116 foot west-facing garden and a separate garage. **£3,350,000 Savills 0208 673 4111**



Pickwick Road

In the heart of Dulwich Village, a six-bedroom house with two reception rooms and a sizeable kitchen dining room. The exterior is full of character and the interior has sizeable, comfortable rooms. **£2,200,000 Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward 020 3792 6918**



THE WORD

OUT OF TOWN BUY

Two major uncertainties have unsettled 'Estate Agency land' this year. Marc Wiehe director at Winkworth, Streatham surveys an unpredictable market

2016 so far has been a year of dramatic contrasts. The first quarter was characterised by frenetic buying activity as investors rushed to beat the stamp duty deadline of 1st of April. For a brief moment, those of us in Estate Agency land briefly witnessed the return of sealed bids as purchasers competed with each other to secure rental-friendly properties to add to their portfolios. A natural side effect of this was that the first time buyers were sidelined as they could not compete against largely cash or cash rich buyers. Many solicitors burnt the midnight oil in a rush to beat the deadline and while many deals were done, sadly many transactions were unable to be concluded in time, given that the Chancellor's announcement was only made in November of last year, giving the market a very narrow window.

Since April, attention has switched to Brexit matters and the higher end of the property market is suffering from a crisis of confidence as a result. As the market in London is sentiment driven as much as it is needs based, uncertainty over the EU question and its effects is bound to be paralysing. Buyers need confidence and despite the continued record low lending rates, they need to feel secure about their purchases in order to make offers.

This is the second spring in a row where a lack of confidence has affected the market place. In the lead up to last year's general election the market slowed noticeably and then rebounded after the result. This year, in our traditional prime selling market, the lead up to decision day (June the 23rd) is more significant as no one knows what is predicted to happen and, either way, how the result will affect the UK.

On the positive, side the sun is shining and Streatham is beginning to come out of her chrysalis hopefully to emerge as a beautiful butterfly....failing that, that it is at last becoming a sought-after neighbourhood in its own right!



Guide price £2,275,000

Meadows is a newly-built home which blends classic design with a high-quality finish and modern technology. The house sits in a 0.44 acre plot at the top of the popular Ralliwood Road and close to Ashtead Village. It has five double bedrooms and four bathrooms, including an indulgent master suite, and four reception rooms, with the drawing room giving great views to the garden and countryside beyond. Bi-fold doors lead from the spacious open-plan kitchen/family room to the garden. Knight Frank Esher 01372 469193

No. 32 The Old Town

32 The Pavement London SW4 0JE • 020 3535 0910

Where? In Clapham Old Town, by the common.

What's it like? A stylish restaurant and bar with modern interiors, and a vibrant atmosphere. The roof terrace and open front means it's a beautiful place to enjoy any glimpse of sun the English summer provides!

And the food? It has everything you need from morning coffees to incredible cocktails, Sunday lunches to casual sharing platters and brunches. With such great variety, you are spoilt for choice, but a personal favourite of mine has to be the No 32 House Burger. The house made burger sauce is fab.



BEST BITES

Rosalind Salliss
Knight Frank
Clapham

