

Please ensure any documents are posted to our Wakefield office at 2 King Street Wakefield WF1 2SQ. In light of the situation with COVID-19, we are continuing to work remotely and arrangements are in place for our post to be checked regularly.

You may be aware the Government has issued updated guidance in relation to home buyers and renters advising they can now move during the COVID-19 outbreak as long as they comply with the social distancing and stay alert measures. Whilst we follow these measures to help contain the spread of COVID-19, as a nation, we must all work together to help protect one another and prioritising the health of everyone must continue to be the priority at this time.

The updated guidance provides further advice on the different elements of moving home and those individuals within our society, such as those that are vulnerable and shielding. Please note as an industry we have moved to simultaneous exchange and completions to help prevent you or a member of the chain breach the contract you/someone become unwell and have to self-isolate therefore it may not be possible to exchange prior to completion unless the chain agrees. As your legal representative, we have a legal, moral, and ethical duty to ensure we are all following the Government's guidance.

Some points you should consider in relation to moving home during COVID-19 outbreak:

- Is your job at risk and will you be able to continue with any mortgage repayments, irrespective of any payment holiday the Lender may grant?
- Can you arrange removals? We are aware the British Association of Removers have recommended a cautious return to work and they will need to ensure they are able to comply with social distancing measures.
- Will you be able to hire a van to move yourself and will you be able to vacate the property by the contractual completion time, whilst adhering to the social distancing rules? Remember you can only socialise with members of your own household and therefore should not ask any other family member or friend to assist.
- Are you or any member of the chain classed as vulnerable and therefore needs to self-isolate for 12 weeks as advised by Government? Those that have received a letter advising they are in the clinically extremely vulnerable group and should shield may not feel comfortable to move despite the Government's announcement and their decision should be respected without any pressure from any party in the chain to complete. Therefore, completion may still be delayed until the shielding period has ended and in accordance with the latest Government guidance.
- Are you or any member of your household unwell and currently self-isolating for any period of time? If so, completion should not take place until any self-isolation period ends as the Government recognises moving is not appropriate whilst someone who is unwell poses a direct risk of transmitting the virus.
- You should ensure any property you are selling/moving out of is cleaned thoroughly for the incoming party and ensure you have carried out a deep clean of the property you are moving into. If you have any concerns the occupiers of the property you are moving into have suffered from coronavirus or been in contact with someone who has, you should follow the advice given for decontamination of your new home.

At Liddy's Solicitors, we have taken steps to ensure we can progress your transaction as far as we are able to during this time. Whilst the Government guidance has been updated to permit house moves, there may still be some delays in your transactions such as receiving search results, replies to enquiries and mortgage offers as a result of businesses closing completely or furloughing staff and therefore working at a reduced capacity. For example, we are aware surveys were put on hold and so there will inevitably be a backlog of work to be dealt with. It is bound to take time for some Firm's to re-instate staff and get back to their previous working levels. We are currently still not meeting clients face to face and will be sending you any paperwork to sign via email for you to print, sign and return to us via post.

We have to be flexible and adapt to the circumstances during these unprecedented times. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.