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When Quality Matters

Contents



- 16 EXPERT ADVICE
Updated legislation on short-term lets
- 23 AREA FOCUS
The best areas in Edinburgh for first-time buyers
- 28 INTERIORS INSIDER
At home with Matthew Williamson
- 32 INTERIORS INSIDER
Spring/summer style
- 34 PROPERTY ADVICE
What you need to know about buying a reno
- 42 SUNSHINE ON LEITH
At home with buyer Charlotte Barbour

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Editor's letter



Editor

Laura Mearns

Hello!

It's officially Springtime, and for many, the time is ripe to be thinking about making a move to your dream home, or freshening up your space for the season ahead. This month's issue of ESPC Property & Interiors covers everything you need to know, whatever your plans.

For first-time buyers, there are guides on boosting your deposit, the best areas of Edinburgh to buy in, and our My ESPC service to help you find your dream home, while Leith resident Charlotte Barbour shows us around her first home, found on ESPC.

We're also looking at fresh interior trends for Spring, with John Lewis & Partners' exciting latest launch, houseplant tips from Dobbies and some Easter-inspired ways to dress your dining table.

Plus, there's expert advice from our member firms, and mortgages and lettings experts, and a spotlight on some of the finest properties newly on the market. Remember, you can find hundreds of new homes each week on espc.com, so don't forget to sign up for a My ESPC account and get alerts when the perfect property appears!

Happy reading!

Laura



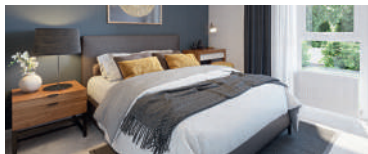


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Edinburgh *elegance*

An elegant Bruntsfield duplex flat that's an immaculate family home.

Bruntsfield is never out of style – this chic pocket of the Capital retains a sense of cachet with buyers of all ages and stages of life, and it's easy to see why. Handily located close to the city centre, but with a quaint, village feel and community spirit, plus access to excellent schools, bars and restaurants, local shops, transport links and plentiful green spaces, Bruntsfield is an idyllic location to call home. And this fabulous five-bedroom duplex garden flat, close to the Links and the Union Canal walkways, is sure to be popular with house-hunters in the area.

124 Gilmore Place is an ample family home spread over two floors, offering versatile accommodation that would be perfect for a growing family. Set in a handsome sandstone tenement, the property is at ground and garden level, and enjoys coveted main-door access, a sweeping double driveway, plus a private walled garden to the rear - perfect for luxuriating in the upcoming summer sunshine.

Entering at ground level, a bright central hallway leads to four bedrooms, a shower room and the living room, while a staircase to the basement level opens to a further bedroom, bathroom, utility and kitchen-diner, plus ample storage across both floors.

At the front of the property is a stunning, exceptionally spacious living room that basks in glorious period features and plenty of natural light, thanks to a generous bay window. This fresh, airy room boasts gorgeous details including an ornate fireplace and working shutters, exposed floorboards and beautiful decorative corning, plus there's a generous walk-in cupboard that offers an elegant solution to stash any clutter.

Four of the five bedrooms are housed on the ground floor, with one being used as a home office, so there's plenty of flexibility to suit any family's needs. The principal bedroom is located at the rear of the property, with a view over the garden. This tranquil space enjoys more beautiful period features, including an Edinburgh press, corning, shutters and a window seat with storage, plus a walk-in

wardrobe with plenty of clever storage capacity. Bedroom two also boasts a view over the garden, while bedroom four is situated to the front of the property, with sweeping high ceilings and built-in storage. Bedroom five is currently being used as a home office, but would also make an ideal nursery or children's bedroom.

A sleek and perfectly practical shower room completes the ground floor. Descending to the garden level, bedroom three is a light and bright space directly looking onto the garden, while the family bathroom is a little slice of coastal charm, with a cool colour palette and rustic décor, complete with colourful tiling and quaint wainscoting.

The hub of the home is the generous kitchen-diner, which offers direct access to the garden through French doors. This fabulous space is made for socialising, with the open-plan style lending itself perfectly to family living. The streamlined fitted kitchen is made up of lower cabinetry and open shelving on the walls for a fresh, bright feel, overlooking the dining space. There's also a handy utility room with extensive additional storage and plenty of room for appliances and laundry.

Made with family living in mind, this fabulous five-bedroom flat is a rare find, and perfectly combines modern conveniences and on-trend, elegant décor with spectacular period details. Presented in immaculate condition, it's an ideal home for any family hoping to settle down in this sought-after corner of the city.

124 Gilmore Place, Bruntsfield, Edinburgh, EH3 9PL
Offers over £580,000
Selling solicitor: Warners - call 0131 253 2729

5 bed | 2 bath | 2 lounge



“

Made with family living in mind, this fabulous five-bedroom flat is a rare find...

”



Edinburgh buyer chooses prestige at The Playfair

Buyer Gordon Ross shares his experience of purchasing a property at one of Edinburgh's most distinguished addresses.

Having always been familiar with the impressive historic building, Edinburgh local Gordon Ross decided that the iconic The Playfair at Donaldson's was the ideal place to invest in an apartment.

Extensively restored and carefully converted into award-winning new homes by leading heritage developer, City & Country, the Category A listed former school is now firmly established as one of Edinburgh's most prestigious addresses.

Gordon says: "My wife and I plan to move into The Playfair ourselves, the apartment is a perfect size for when it'll just be the two of us, something easier to maintain in our later years."

In the meantime, the couple is letting the one-bedroom property. With a booming rental market in the city, they had very little trouble finding a tenant, saying: "[the apartment] received a lot of interest as soon as we listed it, and was let within just three days. City & Country had done an exceptional job decorating the apartment to

a very high quality and contemporary standard, meaning we needed to do very little ourselves."

Apartments at The Playfair marry the best of the old and the new, creating an impressively striking contrast to the building's majestic exterior, alongside a contemporary specification. Residents benefit from underground parking, use of the maintained grounds and internal courtyard, and concierge.

The Playfair is perfectly placed for residents to access the city centre, which appealed to Gordon: "The Playfair's location is easy to get into Edinburgh city centre, with access to a bus, tram and train, it seemed like a great option for later in life."

A range of apartments and penthouses are currently available at The Playfair at Donaldson's, priced from £415,000. For more information visit cityandcountry.co.uk/donaldsons or call 0131 341 5102.

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*Prices correct at time of printing and subject to availability. Photography is indicative only.

CITY & COUNTRY

The House Price Report: March 2022

We take a closer look at how the housing market performed across Edinburgh, the Lothians, Fife and the Borders over the first quarter of 2022.

The average property selling price in Edinburgh, the Lothians, Fife and the Borders rose 3.3% year-on-year during January-March 2022, to £267,941.

Significant increases in average selling prices occurred in West Lothian and East Fife. In West Lothian, the average selling price jumped 43%, taking the average to £283,678. East Fife enjoyed popularity throughout 2020 and 2021, and this shows no signs of slowing, with average prices rising 26% to £309,417.

By contrast, the average property selling price in the 2021 hotspot of Dunfermline dropped 6%, to £182,173. Dunfermline was the home of the most affordable property, with one-bedroom flats selling for an average of £90,702, making it a great option for first-time buyers.

Houses in the Capital were still in high demand - three-bedroom houses in Cramond,

Barnton and Cammo experienced a 31% increase, selling for £508,033 on average, while three-bed houses in South Queensferry and Dalmeny rose 21% to £288,936.

During January-March 2022, properties achieved 106% of the Home Report valuation on average, 3.7 percentage points higher year-on-year.

Buyers paid the most over Home Report valuation for properties in East Lothian and East Fife, paying 108% on average, an increase of 4 percentage points and 5 percentage points respectively.

33% of homes went to a closing date during this quarter, up from 26% last year, which may have influenced the amount buyers were willing to offer.

The median selling time of properties dropped seven days year-on-year during

Key points

£267,941
average selling price

The average property selling price rose 3.3% year-on-year to £267,941.

106%
average percentage of Home Report valuation achieved

On average, buyers paid 106% of Home Report valuation, up 3.7 percentage points.

18 days
median time to sell

The median selling time for properties was 18 days, seven days quicker than 2021.



January-March 2022, to 18 days. However, we must remember that we are comparing a period of 'normal' activity to January-March 2021, when the second national lockdown was in place, and the market moved differently to accommodate restrictions.

Homes sold the fastest in Midlothian and West Lothian, with a median selling time of 13 days.

January-March 2021 was particularly frenzied, and one year on, we can see signs of market activity returning to more 'normal' levels. During January-March 2022, sales volumes across Edinburgh, the Lothians, Fife and the Borders decreased 21% year-on-year, taking the levels closer to those seen in early 2020.

Two-bedroom flats in Leith sold in the highest quantities, but the volume of these sales was down 39% year-on-year, hinting that the demand for this area is balancing out.

Meanwhile, the volume of new properties coming to the market increased 2% year-on-year. Dunfermline had the highest volume of new properties listed for sale, but levels were down 1% on last year.

Edinburgh's Trinity area has become especially sought-after, and it seems that homeowners in the area were aware of this, as listings for homes here were up 61% year-on-year.

Paul Hilton, CEO of ESPC, said: "In the first quarter of 2022, we've seen an interesting comparison to twelve months ago, when Scotland was under the second national lockdown. Even though property sales and associated activities were permitted at that time, naturally the market was under higher pressure and moved at a different pace, so we must bear this in mind when we look at these figures.

"We're continuing to see signs that the market is calming down following the frenzied activity of the past two years, as well as signs of rising interest for out-of-town areas. With life almost back to normal, and many buyers settled into new lifestyles, we can see that there is still very strong demand for homes outside of the city centre that offer great transport links, where a larger property is more affordable for many. Areas such as West Lothian and Midlothian are seeing significant leaps in demand, while we're continuing to see strong interest for East Lothian and East Fife – regions which have both thrived throughout the past two years. And of course, there seems to be no stopping the desire for family homes in some of Edinburgh's most sought-after suburbs.

"If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in Edinburgh, the Lothians, Fife or the Borders, get in touch with your local ESPC agent today."

150

solicitor estate agents

ready to help you buy and sell homes

Over

1200

homes for sale

567,000

My ESPC emails sent during March

A peaceful haven with great connections

Westpoint Homes reveals a stylish new development on the edge of Kirkliston.



Situated within a beautiful woodland setting just nine miles from the centre of Edinburgh, Westpoint Homes' latest development of eleven beautifully designed five-bedroom detached family villas offers a luxuriously tranquil countryside idyll.

Meadow View Grange is situated on the rural green edge of Kirkliston, a peaceful and prosperous community close to the Capital where you will find an abundance of shops, bars and restaurants, as well as many historical landmarks, international airport and tram network.

All of these stunning homes at Meadow View Grange boast beautiful country stone features to the front elevations, garages, stylish bi-fold doors and generous gardens, all set within a beautiful secluded, landscaped environment.

Plot 11, The Clover is a unique five-bedroom detached home with double integral garage. Featuring stylish bi-fold doors leading to the garden, the open-plan kitchen and family room are the heart of the home. A separate dining

room is perfect for more formal occasions and links to the kitchen via the utility room. The generous lounge offers views across the front garden and creates a comfortable environment where you can relax and enjoy with friends and family. A convenient WC is located off the hall.

Upstairs, the impressive principal suite is complete with a stunning Juliet balcony, fabulous closet and luxurious four-piece en suite. Bedroom two boasts an en suite shower room and fitted wardrobes. With a further three double bedrooms, a large four-piece family bathroom and ample storage, the Clover is the perfect family home.

Part exchange is also available at Meadow View Grange*

For the latest information on Meadow View Grange, please contact 0800 587 0333 Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm or visit westpointhomes.net

*T&C's apply. Please speak with our dedicated sales team for more information.



MEADOW VIEW GRANGE

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PX AVAILABLE ON SELECTED PLOTS*

An exclusive development of eleven beautifully designed five-bedroom detached family homes set within the mature grounds of historic Almondhill in the prosperous community of Kirkliston.

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Opening Times: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

*Please contact sales consultant for further information.



westpointhomes.net

Westpoint
HOMES.



Updated legislation on short-term lets

Nicky Lloyd, Head of ESPC Lettings, talks us through the updates to legislation around short-term lets across Scotland.

Short-term lets in Scotland have long been the subject of controversy, with arguments that their prevalence is preventing property being used as homes for local people.

In January 2022, after years of consultations, the Scottish Parliament approved legislation which will require all operators of short-term lets to apply for a licence. The licensing scheme will include mandatory safety requirements to ensure a safe, quality experience for visitors and for the property's neighbours.

The scheme gives councils discretion to apply further conditions – these may apply to everyone in the local area, or to a specific property. It's hoped that it will help councils understand the effects of short-term lets in their area, and handle complaints effectively.

Local authorities have until 1 October 2022 to establish a licensing scheme. Existing short-term lets must apply for a licence by 1 April 2023 to keep operating, and all short-term lets in Scotland must be licensed by 1 July 2024.

Applicants will undergo a 'fit and proper person' test and must provide evidence that their property meets mandatory licensing conditions, which include proof of fire, gas and electrical safety and maximum occupancy limits, among many other things.

Councils will also be able to enforce control areas, which will require planning permission to change a property's use to a short-term let. However, it should be noted that home sharing (such as renting a room in your home) will not be affected by control areas.

The City of Edinburgh Council is the first local authority to propose a control area that would cover the whole city. In February 2022, its proposal was approved by Planning Committee councillors, with the next steps requiring approval from the Scottish Government. If approved, this would impact the whole city, which has seen some of the highest levels of short-term lets across the UK, with 2,700 listings recorded in 2019.

To keep up with the latest on the Edinburgh lettings market, visit [espc.com](https://www.espc.com).

ESPC Lettings is an Edinburgh letting agent. We can help with marketing your rental property and finding the right tenants. Contact the team on 0131 253 2847 or landlord@espc.com.

How My ESPC can help your property search

Starting your property buying journey? Let ESPC help you, with a free My ESPC account.

Signing up to a free My ESPC account can make your property search quicker, slicker and simpler than ever before – and you'll get access to regular news and property market updates too.

Here's just a few reasons why you should sign up to My ESPC:

It's fast and free to set up

Creating a My ESPC account is quick, easy and free to do – and it can make the world of difference to your property search. So many of our buyers have told us how helpful My ESPC was for them, so why not sign up today?

Create saved searches

When you sign up to My ESPC, you can create saved searches to make your property hunt simpler and smoother. Once you've searched for a home with your preferred criteria, you can save your search and you can make as many as you like, to take into account property size, types and even specific streets. You can tailor your saved search to make it as individual as your requirements.

You'll receive property alerts when new homes come onto the market

After saving your unique search criteria, you can opt-in to receive alerts when properties come onto the market that tick your boxes. As a My ESPC account holder, you'll be among

the first to see when a new property is listed that matches your criteria – and if it's Exclusive to ESPC, you'll see it before it goes live on any other property portal, putting your search ahead of other buyers.

Watchlist your favourite properties

My ESPC makes it easy to keep an eye on properties that have attracted your attention. Simply click the star icon on your chosen listing, and it will be added to a watchlist that you can check at any time.

Get notified of any changes to your favourite properties

With a My ESPC account, you can opt-in to receive alerts on your shortlist, meaning you'll be the first to know if anything changes. If one of your favourite homes sets a closing date, goes under offer, changes its price or comes back onto the market, you'll receive an alert so that you can take your next steps confidently.



Receive a free weekly newsletter

You can also opt-in to receive our free weekly newsletter, which is packed with property advice, news, events and the latest homes on the market, to offer you a helping hand in your search.

What are you waiting for? Sign up for your free My ESPC account today by heading to espc.com/useful-info/my-espc.



TORWOOD

Make Murrayfield Home



32 CORSTORPHINE ROAD MURRAYFIELD EDINBURGH

At the heart of this new development from AMA Homes lies a grand Victorian villa, which has been sympathetically restored and converted into 2 magnificent homes.

Due for completion this spring, these four and five bedroom houses retain the majestic proportions of the original rooms and are beautifully detailed throughout. Each home offers a spacious garage and private landscaped gardens.

For full details call Behnam Afshar on 07967 322 025
or email behnama@amanewtown.co.uk

Prices on application

www.amahomes.co.uk/torwood-house



When Quality Matters

The *luxe* life

Luxmount in Gorebridge is a rare find,
and could make the perfect family home.





Luxmount, 12 Private Road, Gorebridge,

Midlothian EH23 4HG

Offers over £490,000

Selling solicitor: McDougall McQueen - call 0131 253 2972

5 bed | 2 bath | 1 lounge

Searching for an idyllic family home in Midlothian? Demand for houses in this region, and particularly in the popular town of Gorebridge, has risen hugely recently, as you'll know from this issue's House Price Report. With desire so strong for family homes here, we can't imagine that the beautiful Luxmount will be on the market for long...

This detached traditional double-fronted villa offers kerb appeal in abundance, with charming external presentation and a mature front garden. It's been beautifully upgraded by the current owners, offering buyers the opportunity to ease into life here effortlessly.

Set in a sought-after pocket of Gorebridge, just two minutes from the train station, the house is ideal for commuters, offering links to Edinburgh in 30 minutes.



Entering the property, a welcoming central hallway is filled with light thanks to a stunning cupola. To the right sits a sunny, spacious lounge with large bay window and elegant fireplace, while to the left, buyers will find a spectacular kitchen-dining-family room that extends the length of the property, flooded with natural light and filled with quaint period details, including woodburning stove, original shutters and detailed cornicing. This space

has ample room for relaxing, cooking, dining and entertaining, plus it boasts beautiful views to the Moorfoot Hills. The stylish farmhouse-style kitchen includes duck-egg cabinetry and solid wood worktops, with a range of quality appliances and an island with Belfast sink. There's even a utility room for extra practicality, opening out onto the rear garden.

The ground floor is also where you'll find a sleek shower room and the smallest of the property's five bedrooms - which measures at a generous 3.5mx3.3m!

On the upper floor, the hallway opens onto a further four bedrooms, plus a box room and a chic family bathroom, complete with rainfall shower over bath and finished in contemporary style. The equally-ample principal and second bedrooms both enjoy a prominent position at the front of the house, with large bay-style dormer windows. To the rear of the property sit bedrooms three and four, both of which feel light and airy, and by virtue of cosy window seats, enjoy outlooks over the garden. The box room makes an ideal home office, but could be turned into a dressing room or playroom as required.

Outside, a large wraparound garden offers space in abundance for hosting, relaxing or honing green fingers, with a patio area, plenty of greenery and mature shrubbery, including fruit trees. The house also boasts a private driveway and double detached garage, which can be accessed via the garden.

Beautifully finished, and offering a sumptuous mix of period detail with contemporary flair, Luxmount is a rarely-available find that would make a truly special family home.



THE HOME OF free virtual property events

BUY-TO-LET WEBINAR

Date: 21st April 2022
Time: 12:00pm-12:45pm

FIRST TIME BUYER WEBINAR

Date: 10th May 2022
Time: 12:00pm-12:45pm

Full details at [espc.com/events](https://www.espc.com/events)



The best areas in Edinburgh for first-time buyers

Planning on purchasing your first home in Edinburgh?
We take a look at the best areas for your budget.

Trying to decide on the right location for your new home can be tricky, but when it's your first home, it can feel like an added pressure to get it right. Thankfully, ESPC is here to help – with over 50 years of helping buyers in Edinburgh, our unrivalled local knowledge can help you on your way to buyer bliss. So whether your priority is a good commute, access to the best local bars and restaurants, or making the most sensible long-term investment, we can guide you.

First-time buyers will pay LBTT (Land and Buildings Transaction Tax) on properties priced over £175,000 – so with that in mind, we're sharing the best areas in the Capital where you can find one-bedroom starter homes for under the LBTT threshold.

“

With over 50 years of helping buyers in Edinburgh, our unrivalled local knowledge can help you on your way to buyer bliss.

”

Gorgie

Located to the west of the city, Gorgie has great bus links, and is in walking distance to Haymarket and the West End. Gorgie is home to Heart of Midlothian FC, and it's close to BT Murrayfield Stadium, so there's a lively atmosphere and great nightlife. Plus, there's plenty of shops and supermarkets, and even a local city farm!

Over the past six months, one-bedroom flats in Gorgie had an average selling price of £142,807, well under the LBTT threshold. These properties went under offer in a median time of 24 days.

Portobello

Dreaming of buying your first property by the sea? You could snap up your first home in picturesque Portobello, a stone's throw from the beach. Portobello is a very popular option, with a friendly community feel and lots going on, a plethora of independent businesses and local amenities, and great transport links into the city centre.

One-bedroom flats in Portobello sold for an average of £151,273 over the past six months, leaving you plenty of room in the budget for décor – and ice-cream on the beach! Portobello one-beds went under offer in a median time of 36 days during this period.





Leith

Leith is one of the best areas in Edinburgh for first-time buyers, with a high volume of properties on the market. Leith Walk is packed with shops and bars, while The Shore boasts glamorous restaurants, independent businesses and local markets galore. The area is very popular, and once the Edinburgh Trams extension is complete in 2023, properties here may become even more sought-after, making it a good investment.

One-bedroom flats in Leith had an average selling price of £165,481 between October 2021 - March 2022, and sold in a median time of 19 days.

Abbeyhill

Just to the east of the city, cosmopolitan Abbeyhill has a reputation for its artisan community and friendly neighbourhood feel. It's close to Holyrood Park for long walks, but it's also walking distance from the heart of the city, with excellent bus links. Abbeyhill residents can enjoy an abundance of local businesses on their doorstep, including those on nearby Easter Road, while the handy retail park at Meadowbank offers larger stores and supermarkets.

Over the past six months, one-bedroom flats in Abbeyhill sold for £173,793 on average, taking 21 days to do so.

You can find everything you need to know about being a first-time buyer when you visit [espc.com](https://www.espc.com), where you'll find our handy first-time buyer's guide, real-life stories from ESPC buyers who are loving life in their first homes, plus expert advice from our property and mortgage professionals.

Top tips to boost your mortgage deposit

Buying your first home? Read on for our top tips on boosting your deposit.

A bigger deposit for your first home can help your budget stretch further, or secure lower interest rates and monthly repayments. Here are our top tips for boosting your deposit.

Get independent mortgage advice

An independent mortgage adviser, like those at ESPC Mortgages, can offer advice on how much you need to save, and how to reach your target. They can also examine the mortgage market to find the most suitable deal, and highlight different options which may mean you don't need to save as much as you think.

Save as much as you can

If you're in a financial position to save money, then save as much as you can. Try calculating a monthly budget to work out what you can afford to save each month, then set up a standing order to transfer this money to your savings when you get paid.

Set up a Lifetime ISA

If you're saving but not planning to buy just yet, you could consider a Lifetime ISA. You can save up to £4,000 a year, and get a 25% tax-free bonus from the Government – a maximum yearly bonus of £1,000.

Your Lifetime ISA must either go towards your first home or retirement. If you withdraw

money for any other purpose, you won't receive the bonus and may face penalties on the withdrawn amount.

You must have had a Lifetime ISA for at least a year in order to use the money to buy a property, so it's best suited to those planning to buy next year.

You have to be between 18 and 40 years of age for a Lifetime ISA. You can withdraw without penalty if you are purchasing your first home, over 60 or terminally ill. *Investments carry risk

Research different locations

Homes in popular areas can come with a premium price tag, meaning you'll likely need a larger deposit to live there.

Research a variety of different areas to explore what places meet your needs – you might discover somewhere more affordable nearby that offers similar amenities, but at a lower price.

Get mortgage advice today

ESPC Mortgages is a team of independent mortgage advisers based in Edinburgh. With many years of experience, they are well-placed to help you purchase your first property. Get in touch with the team on 0131 253 2920 or fsenquiries@espc.com.

The information contained in this article is provided in good faith. Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of the information, no responsibility is accepted for any errors which, despite our precautions, it may contain.

The initial consultation with an adviser is free and without obligation. Thereafter, ESPC Mortgages charges for mortgage advice are usually £350 (£295 for first-time buyers). YOUR

HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOANS SECURED AGAINST IT.

ESPC UK LTD is an appointed representative of Lyncombe consultants which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

How to understand a Home Report

Billy Gibbs, estate agent at Blackwood & Smith LLP, shares a breakdown of the Home Report, and what those numbers really mean for buyers and sellers.

A Home Report is legally required for any residential property for sale in Scotland. Home Reports consist of a Single Survey, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), and a Property Questionnaire.

Single Survey

Carried out by a Chartered Surveyor, the survey details the property's condition, accessibility, and current market value.

For simplicity, aspects of the property's condition are put into one of three categories:

Category 1

No immediate action or repair needed.

Category 2

There are repairs or replacement requiring future attention, but estimates are still advised.

Category 3

Urgent repairs or replacement are needed now. Failure to deal with them may cause problems to other parts of the property or cause a safety hazard. Estimates for repairs are needed now.

Category 1s and 2s are less likely to cause issues, however category 3s can create anxiety for buyers and sellers. For a buyer, a category 3 may mean they explore potential repair costs before making an offer. Buyers should remember that offers can be subject to further surveys being carried out, and sometimes, sellers may address the problem themselves.

Sellers should know that, while the single survey may highlight some category 3 issues, the valuation is based on the property's current condition and any required repairs will be factored

in. They are under no obligation to address repairs – although it may make selling easier!

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC):

EPCs rate the property's energy efficiency from A to G and offer recommendations for improvements, with no obligation for sellers to carry these out.

EPC requirements are closely linked with national efforts to reach net zero and future legislation is expected to make them increasingly important when selling. There is even suggestion that "green mortgages" will be introduced, offering better mortgage deals to purchasers of energy efficient homes.



Property Questionnaire:

The seller completes the Property Questionnaire, supplying information that only they are likely to know, including parking arrangements and council tax bands. It must be completed honestly, with the hope that this will result in less sales falling through due to unforeseen issues arising during conveyancing.

For more from Blackwood & Smith LLP, visit blackwoodsmith.com or call 01721 720131.

At home with Matthew Williamson

As the fashion-turned-interior designer launches his first homeware collection for John Lewis, he opens the doors of his colour-drenched London home.



Matthew Williamson's flair for bold, decorative interiors was honed during his career as a fashion designer. 'In some ways, I see my career in fashion as training to be an interior designer,' says Williamson, who, in the early 2000s, was at the beating heart of the British creative scene, along with his friends and muses Sienna Miller and Jade Jagger.

Inside his elegantly vibrant north London home, the ornate and the contemporary are combined in perfectly mismatched harmony throughout the ground-floor Victorian apartment. This signature aesthetic – one that the designer tags 'rustic decadence' – is also threaded through his eye-catching new homeware collection for John Lewis. 'I like you to walk into a room and your eyes to dart around like a firefly,' he says. 'I always want my work to have an element of joy. It's meant to make you feel better in some small shape or form. These are very optimistic pieces that are meant to elevate the everyday.'

The joy of colour

Matthew is renowned for his vibrant palette. The fondant-pink hallway walls of his apartment, set off by zinging minty-green skirtings, are as uncompromisingly bold as you might expect. 'I love to use warm and cool colours together,' he explains.



Walk into the expansive, light-filled living room and there is an instant mood change. Here, the walls are drenched in a softer tone of dusky pinkish brick. 'I think of this pink as a neutral. It's sort of my beige or grey,' he says. 'I don't want to live in grey or beige, but at the same time I want a backdrop for accessories and furniture that can be a little more jewel-toned.'

This love affair with colour and pattern is rooted in Matthew's Mancunian childhood, when helping his receptionist mother choose her outfits for work was a cherished ritual: 'She introduced me to the idea that fashion could be mood-boosting and lift the spirits of those around you.' Incidentally, his mother was also a fiercely house-proud John Lewis customer (Matthew specifically recalls 'a pine dining table that was saved up for, for months on end') and this deep-rooted emotional connection with the store brings resonance to his new collection: 'Totally a passion project.'



A natural celebration

For his John Lewis collection, Williamson has consciously chosen to skew the mood towards the rustic, celebrating the British countryside and the splendour of nature on our doorstep. A majestic 'star-lit sky at night' print looks tranquil deployed across bedlinen, while a glorious botanical textile pattern (another bedding design) is inspired by seeds and leaves on a woodland floor.

His aim was to create uncompromising pieces ('the lamp I would want, the cushion I would want') that work in different environments. The signature peacock velvet cushion distils his aesthetic in one show-stopping wow: it's designed both as a standalone statement piece to inject a minimalist space with a visual pop and, for the maximalists out there, can be piled high in mismatching stacks.

Mirror, mirror...

These days, Williamson shuttles back and forth between London and the family home in Mallorca, where he spends most of his time with his partner Joseph and their daughter Skye, six. She is the muse behind one of his favourite pieces in the collection, the Twiggy Mirror, inspired by the sticks she likes to collect and store in her treasure box. Well, that and a Moroccan red lacquer furniture set that Matthew installed in his garden in Mallorca, 'which, in the washing machine of my brain, came out as that mirror,' he laughs.

The unexpected mix of sweet, fairytale woodsiness and lacquered high glam sounds like an impossible visual cocktail, but it works. In fact, the Twiggy Mirror is rather like a brooch to put on your wall. And really, who could resist that?

Matthew's home decor masterclass



Find Matthew Williamson's collection in John Lewis & Partners stores, or online at johnlewis.com

Get rid of the grey

'Grey is a cold colour in my opinion – it's not the most uplifting shade, generally. Another neutral could be a plaster tone, where there is some essence of red in it.'

Group objects well

'Think about varying heights and start with the background, then the foreground and finally add in the detail. Pick colours that work in harmony.'

Go full-on foliage

'Fill a vase with foliage three – or even six – times the height and volume you think should go in that vase. It will create a massive impact.'

Layer 'full-fat' colour against a neutral base

'If you're cautious about colour, don't go all guns blazing – it's about layers. Start with a neutral base and introduce colour much as you would in fashion, when you add in a bright bag or shoe. A lamp with a print shade can be decorative, or simply add small pieces such as cushions.'

Embrace the mix

'I love to mix old and new. It's about finding pieces that are special to you and not being too concerned about them matching perfectly.'

Spring/summer *style*

We share this season's style forecast, so you can tap into the latest interior trends.

Florals galore

An update on the 'cottagecore' trend of a few seasons past, Spring 2022 will see florals become more prevalent in the most on-trend homes. Think detailed, delicate floral patterns on wallpaper, used across an entire room for maximum impact, or reserved for a feature area if you don't want to go full-on flower power. The key is to choose classic floral patterns, like entwining jasmine, leafy botanicals or a William Morris-style repetitive print, for a stylish take on countryside maximalism.

Colour palettes

Thinking of updating your home with a fresh paint palette? Colour connoisseurs Pantone have released a Spring/Summer 2022 lookbook with the shades to consider. The 15-shade trend report includes 10 of the most arresting colours seen at London Fashion Week, plus five core neutrals to bring everything together. It's a playful palette that you can mix and match to suit your style - spanning the cheerful warmth of Potpourri, Bubblegum, Orchid Bloom and Coral Rose, to the grounding cosiness of Coffee Quartz, Hummus, Sudan Brown and Poppy Seed, with greens, yellows, lilacs and whites thrown into the mix too.



Hotel suite style

After two years of spending much more time at home than we ever imagined, the time is ripe for a luxe home makeover, particularly in our bedrooms. Adopting the sleek, ultra-comfy aesthetic of a five-star hotel room will give your sleeping space a new lease of life, allowing you to sink into restful slumber, night after night. Pared-back shades of green, taupe or blush work well to instil a sense of calm, and heavy curtains will block out unwanted light. Clear the clutter, swap your plain headboard for a stylish statement piece, and dress the bed in layers of sumptuous linens - a five-star feel in your own home.

Bringing the outside in

Biophilic design (where plants and nature form a key part of your interiors scheme) is a huge trend for 2022, and what better time to breathe new life into your home? Adding a range of houseplants and succulents to your interiors can help revitalise the space and add interest without feeling cluttered. Check page 39 for Dobbies' advice on houseplant trends.



Items priced from £6, all available from [dunelm.com](https://www.dunelm.com)



Dark academia

After emerging from TikTok, where over 1.7 billion people have viewed content related to it, 'dark academia' is an interiors trend that celebrates a romanticised notion of old-fashioned academic institutions, like historical libraries or boarding schools. Think books in abundance, a deep, rich colour palette, and a plethora of eccentric antique treasures.

What you need to know about *buying a reno*

Planning a renovation project? We speak to industry experts and renovators with first-hand experience, so you know what to expect.



For some searching for their ideal home, the answer is to create it themselves. With rising property demand, curiosity around renovations has soared in recent months, with increasing numbers of buyers considering major works to craft their dream home.

Renovations are rewarding, but aren't for the fainthearted - even if plans are relatively minor, the process can be costly and challenging. For some buyers, it's the best course of action, with some opting for larger properties in need of extensive refurbishment to get the space they need, and some choosing smaller homes in the perfect postcode, with a view to adding large-scale extensions.

The range of options is limitless, but for most, the budget is not. We've spoken to industry experts on what to consider - plus buyers

who've undertaken home renovations, with stunning results.

What should you look for - and avoid?

If you're buying a project, know what to look for during your search - the good and the bad.

"Location is crucial," says Callum Fiske, Director of Edinburgh's Ampersand Interiors. "The old saying that the worst house in the best street trumps the opposite has a lot of merit! Also, make sure you investigate any restrictions on work that you intend to carry out, like listed buildings regulations."

Examine the Home Report carefully - it may be worth ordering an additional building survey, to uncover any potential risks. Most problems can be fixed, but bear in mind that every issue is an added expense.



Consider what's required, so you can calculate the return on your investment. Even if you don't plan to sell, it's good to be aware of prices in your area, so that you don't spend above the property's ceiling value.

Planning permission can add significant time and expense to your project, so engage an architect early to make plans, explore the process and what's needed, and get the ball rolling quickly.

What's a realistic budget?

Budgets can vary wildly depending on the scale of the plans. For full renovations, allocate funds for electrics, plumbing, building works, heating, plastering, windows, doors and floors, fixtures and fittings, and décor – and if you're renovating a period property, additional budget to restore sympathetic features, like corning,

shutters, or fireplaces. Include labourers' rates, VAT and a contingency budget – when it comes to renovations, expect the unexpected, after all.

For a kitchen renovation, Louisa Forsyth of Kitchens International advises: "A tiny galley kitchen will obviously cost a lot less than a large open-plan area. Our kitchens start from £18,000, but very much depend on the spec of the cabinetry, appliances, and worktops."

If you're planning an interiors overhaul once the messy work is done, Callum Fischen advises: "Allow approximately 10-15% of the property's value to furnish it, upping to 15-20% to include kitchens and bathrooms. I'd recommend a 20% contingency for the full renovation – unforeseen issues may impact on the anticipated design and consequently the cost."

When should you call in the experts?

Procuring your team of experts early, including everyone from your architect to your kitchen designer, can make the renovations process smoother.

“Buyers should ideally get us involved as early as possible,” advises Callum. “It’s vital that we get an understanding of exactly what the client wants to achieve, to prevent expensive mistakes from being made in construction, or selections being made in a piecemeal way, affecting the flow.”

Louisa agrees: “Think about the kitchen at the very beginning, so the designer will be able to provide a more functional, inspiring design than if they were only brought in once plans were finalised. A reputable kitchen designer will work with the architect and builder at every stage and provide concept drawings and detailed plans for electrics and plumbing, making everything flow.”

What about the design?

If you don’t know where to begin, or need help refining ideas, experts can hone your vision. A good architect will be able to translate your requirements into a balanced design, while experienced tradespeople can explore options you might never have considered.

“We are delighted to work with clients’ ideas – it’s their home and must reflect the way they wish to live,” says Callum. “But if you’re engaging a professional designer, it makes sense to be open-minded about what they can bring to the table, which can take the interiors to another level.”



“We advocate buyers coming to us with an open mind,” Louisa concurs. “We are highly experienced in interpreting a client’s wishes and turning their dreams into reality. As no two customers are the same, nor are any two kitchens, so you can’t buy it ‘off the peg’. The more thorough the design process, the better the result.”

Inspiration can come from anywhere, which can be overwhelming. With social media and magazines (including this one!) at your fingertips, embrace the options and think about what you love, and what works with the age and style of your property. A renovation is so much more than the build – there’s also the details, covering everything from colour palettes and flooring to décor and accessories.

Develop a collection of images, to articulate your goal without leaving it open to misinterpretation. Try Pinterest, a ‘saved images’ collection on Instagram or even a physical moodboard, with colour swatches, magazine clippings, wallpaper samples and fabric or carpet snips.

What about partial renovations?

Many homeowners decide to do partial renovations – extensions, loft conversions, knocking walls down, or refurbishing one space. If this is your plan, you might be wondering about the impact on the rest of your home.

“It’s important to review how the new works will relate to the existing interiors – there should be a natural flow with the rest of the property. You don’t want a new space to look like it exists in a parallel universe to the rest of the house,” Callum advises. “Practically speaking, consider whether the work can be

sealed off for as little disruption as possible. With a large-scale renovation, we would always suggest a client considers moving out – the whole process will be quicker and infinitely less stressful!”

How long will it take?

How long is a piece of string? Renovations are unpredictable (as you’ll read on the next page!), so it’s worth being aware of how planning permission, material sourcing and supply issues, and your labourers’ other commitments can all affect how long it will take to finish your dream home. Some elements may require six months or a year, and some may be finished in weeks, so good project management is essential to keep everything on track.

Feeling ready to take on a renovation? Check espc.com for hundreds of new homes each week, where you can find the one you want to personalise.



The renovator who's doing it all over again

Katie and Jordan Laird turned a garden flat in Edinburgh's Hillside into a stunning four-bedroom family home, in a marathon three-year renovation spanning the Covid-19 lockdowns.

"We knew it was a big job, but realised how much bigger it was at the end," muses Katie. "Everything needed updated, we turned two basement rooms into bedrooms, and restored all the original features."

Katie and Jordan's ambitious plans included digging out the front garden to make an outdoor terrace, alongside refurbishing every room, as Katie explains: "We hadn't done work like that before, so we didn't know any better. It started out really exciting, then got terrifying when Covid-19 hit. It was monotonous, and we questioned our decisions - the house always felt cold and dirty, and I was pregnant while we converted the basement, meaning I had to sleep on a sofa bed for the full nine months! But at the end, it felt like a huge achievement - it turned out beautifully and I'm so proud we did it."

The couple decided to sell their completed project, relocating to East Lothian to begin another - although this one has an easier starting point for these now-seasoned renovators.

"Our latest project is a 1960s modernist bungalow, designed by an architect for his family - they lived here for 60 years and we're now the second owners. It's our dream home," says Katie. "Luckily, this time around, we can take our time and live comfortably in the house as it is. The décor is pretty perfect, so we don't need to do much, just a few updates and then one day, hopefully extend.

I know exactly what I want it to be like, but we don't currently have the budget, so we're starting with the boring bits, like rewiring and installing a new heating system."

After completing a stressful renovation, one might wonder why the couple would choose to start another, but it's for good reason: "In a romantic way, we get excited when we can imagine what a space might look like. And in a pragmatic way, it allows us to shoot for a hoop that we

otherwise wouldn't be able to. Every home we've bought, we've been under no illusion that we would have never been able to afford, had they been in a different condition. So as much as know the pain and stress it can cause, we are willing to do the renovations to own something we otherwise couldn't. It's hard work, but it's worth it."



Transform your home this spring

The garden experts at Dobbies share their top tips on transforming your interiors with simple style updates this spring.



Spring has sprung, and what better way to welcome the new season than by giving your home a fresh new look?

Dobbies' Stylist, Rebecca Stanton, shares her tips on how you can breathe a new lease of life into your home, including the best ways to style your houseplants and how to accessorise with homeware that complements your colour scheme, to freshen up your style without overhauling your interiors.

Add spring colour

Colourful accessories are an easy way to transition your décor and will instantly freshen up your interiors.

Colourful plant pots are a fantastic way to incorporate the vibrancy of spring into your home and give your houseplants a makeover. If your home has a chic neutral colour scheme, why not choose plant pots in bright colours to make a style statement and add a fun touch?

“

As we begin to utilise our outdoor spaces more, now is the time to embrace nature and create a flow from home to garden.

”



Embrace the outdoors

As we begin to utilise our outdoor spaces more, now is the time to embrace nature and create a flow from home to garden.

An easy way to bring the outside in is with houseplants, as not only do these provide a natural look and feel, but they will help refresh your interiors. When it comes to styling greenery, a great way to make an impact is by grouping together plants of different textures, heights, and varieties to create dimension and interest.

Rebecca says: “By layering plants of different sizes, either on the floor or on a shelf, you can create an interesting display that will bring a welcome pop of colour to any nook in your home.”



Soften your interiors

Pampas grass is an easy way to add a relaxed element to your interiors. Dobbies' unique air plants also make a great addition to smaller spaces, with their eye-catching appearance and trailing greenery.

Exotic grasses are a fantastic way to soften your interiors and lend a bohemian feel. With a wide range of sizes available, pampas grass can be styled in different ways and is beautiful when paired with neutral décor to create a relaxed vibe.

To make an impact, Rebecca says: "Styling pampas grass in a tall vase, or even on a stand, is a fabulous way to make a statement and accentuate the grass's height and gorgeous stems."

Another easy way to soften your interiors is by incorporating textured cushions and throws in light fabrics. These will look gorgeous styled in your sunroom or conservatory and can be brought outside to keep you warm in the garden on cooler nights.

Hang in there

Hanging plants come in all shapes and sizes and can be styled at different lengths depending on the effect you want to create, plus they can add a burst of spring colour to even the smallest spaces.

Rebecca says: "Hanging plants are a wonderful way to add vibrancy to any space, regardless of size, and are super on-trend for spring. With a range of different styles to choose from, hanging plants can be suited to any aesthetic, but my personal favourite is the macramé variation as it suits both neutral and bold décor and helps lend a natural feel to any space, perfect for this time of year."

Not your average garden centre, Dobbies has a wide range of products and houseplants, perfect for transitioning your home for the new season. Find out more at www.dobbies.com.



Sunshine on Leith

Charlotte Barbour and her partner Dave bought their first home together back in 2018. Four years on, Charlotte shows us around the Leith tenement flat they found on ESPC that ticked all of their boxes.

Back in January 2018, senior copywriter Charlotte Barbour and her partner Dave were making plans to buy their first home together, and for them, there was only one location in mind: the burgeoning property hotspot of Leith.

“I’ve always been quite picky about what I look for when it comes to most things, and flat hunting was no different!”, says Charlotte. “I wanted to be based in Leith, but wasn’t married to a certain area within it. I was also very strict about living above ground level with good natural light, after two years at university in a less-than-ideal (cold, dark and mouldy!) basement flat!”

Location wasn’t the only thing on Charlotte’s mind, as she was hoping to find a period property packed with charm and quirky details. “I had my heart set on an old tenement rather than a new build, as I love the period features of old buildings – I was always chasing cornicing, high ceilings, original floorboards and big, bay windows!

I grew up in an old house, and lived in old flats during my time at university in Glasgow, so I’ve always felt so much more at home in older buildings, and I’m drawn to all their architectural relics. It sounds extremely clichéd, but I do love the idea of places and buildings that tell a story – of the people who lived there before you, changes that have been made over the years – and most importantly, the kind of chapter you’re going to write there.”

With a location set in stone, and a wish list in mind, Charlotte and Dave set out to find a property that ticked all of their boxes. The couple turned to ESPC to help with their search, as Charlotte explains: “I was completely addicted to the ESPC website and used to check it several times a day when flat hunting. It’s such an easy site to use and I like how it remembers your previous searches and the filters and budget you applied, which saves a lot of time – especially if you’re on it a lot!”



You can follow Charlotte's interiors journey over on Instagram @charbourr.

Luckily, their search didn't take too long, with Charlotte's ideal property, an original tenement flat built around 1890, in their perfect postcode, appearing on ESPC in early March, and she was quick to act. "I found it on the ESPC website one afternoon, and organised a viewing for that evening! After missing out on a couple of lovely properties, I pushed for a viewing before the owner had really started offering them, and put in an offer the next morning."

The pair knew immediately this was 'the one', as Charlotte tells us: "It was the first place that ticked all the boxes and was within our budget. The big, homely kitchen definitely won my heart, as did the bright and spacious living room."

Although it was perfect on paper, the property wasn't without some compromises along the way, with Charlotte and Dave finding early in their search that they'd have to abandon their dreams of a two-bed property, switching their ESPC search to find a one-bedroom home instead. "We have one bedroom and a box room in this flat, and while it's been a compromise from what I originally had in mind, it's worked out well for us so far!" Charlotte says.

After getting the keys in June 2018, Charlotte and Dave set to work putting their own stamp on the place, starting with the kitchen. The couple swapped the pale green walls for white, tiled some sections and sanded the oak cabinetry before painting it an on-trend blue hue. They also replaced the faux-granite worktops with solid wood, and used the leftovers to create new wooden shelves for additional storage. Talented Dave has also recently created a window seat in the kitchen space, making the most of the natural light pouring in, and the couple have enjoyed their more relaxed approach to personalising their first home.

"We spent every last penny of the savings we had purchasing the flat, so our renovations have pretty much all been DIY!", says Charlotte. "The only thing we've had professionally done was the sanding of the floors in the bedroom, living room and box room, which has helped to modernise and brighten the space up a bit. It's easy to fall into a Pinterest hole and get caught up in current trends, or what other people are doing, and I definitely put a lot of pressure on myself to meet my mental expectations of the finished flat as quickly as possible. While it's good to have





an idea of what you like, it's important to be a bit organic and flexible with it, too. I learnt to go with the flow and buy things that I liked, rather than trying to stick rigidly to a 'theme', or basing my interior choices on someone else's Pinterest board. It's surprising what can come together when you use your imagination - and you'll end up with a place that's more original, and more authentically 'you!'

Despite finding their perfect property, this adventurous pair made the decision to up sticks and try something new, when an opportunity to relocate to Vancouver came up in November 2019. Their time away gave them a chance to reflect on the home they'd created together, as Charlotte explains: "My favourite thing about our home is the space and airiness. It was definitely something I missed while living in a modern shoebox apartment in Vancouver."

The couple opted not to sell during their time away, and returned home to Leith in October 2021, since when they've continued with their renovations - including a planned box room transformation ready for the arrival of a very special new flatmate.

"Since moving back in, I've been desperate to change the kitchen lights and paint the wooden kitchen ceiling white," Charlotte tells us. "And with a baby arriving in September, we also have plans to change the box room into a nursery!"

Four years after snapping up their ideal home, and with a huge life change on the horizon, Charlotte reflects on the journey to find their perfect place: "Although I was quite picky, I'm always grateful I stuck to my guns and didn't compromise too much on our search. I'd hate to have gotten caught up in wanting to secure a place and ending up somewhere I didn't truly love."

And for anyone about to embark on their own first-time buyer journey, Charlotte has some sage advice to share. "It's not really a hot take, but acting fast is absolutely key - especially if you're buying in Edinburgh! Also, check your credit rating is tip-top before putting an offer in, so you're not let down on mortgage offers later down the line. That was one very stressful mistake I won't be making again!"



The Lupita bouquet, £50,
bloomandwild.com

Easter tablescapes

Set the table in style
this Easter and create
a swoonworthy
tablescape filled with
springtime cheer.



Alize glass cake stand, £24.50,
oliverbonas.com



Green glass candlestick, £14,
talkingtables.co.uk



Wildflower Garden collection, prices from £8,
truffletablesapes.co.uk



Isabella espresso cups, £30,
sweetpeaandwillow.com



Lorenzo set of four wine
glasses, £19, procook.co.uk



Ruffle gingham napkin
in pastel green, £24,
rebeccaudall.com



Hubba Accent Mirror, £121.99, Sanatoga Poppy Hare Sculpture, £25.99, Merrick pink glass vases, from £21.99, Selection of baskets, various sizes and price options. All wayfair.co.uk.

My 9-to-5

Jewellery designer at Edinburgh's Laings showroom, Felicity Lynden talks us through a day in her life.



Felicity Lynden
Jewellery designer at
Edinburgh's Laings showroom

Where do you call home?

A tenement flat in Shandon, which we bought about five years ago. It's the perfect location for us to walk to work, and I love the traditional features like the high ceilings and bay windows.

My day starts with...

A bit of chaos! I've never been much of a morning person. I feed the cat, and sit with her while having a coffee and listening to the radio before walking to work. I love the walk - it helps me organise my thoughts and prepare for the day.

My main responsibilities are...

Bringing the visions of my clients to life. As part of the bespoke design team in the Laings Edinburgh showroom, my role is to turn people's ideas or heirlooms into a new, exciting piece of bespoke jewellery. Whether it's designing from scratch, reworking an existing family stone or transforming a dated piece, I am responsible for the end-to-end journey, including initial sketches and design specifications, sourcing exquisite gemstones and overseeing the goldsmiths.

A typical working day usually involves...

Handling bespoke enquiries and scheduling appointments with clients. Designing jewellery involves a huge amount of trust, so it's important to get to know my clients and their taste, and fully understand what they're looking for. Once we've finalised the design together, our workshop brings it to

life, so I spend lots of time liaising with the craftspeople, talking through the designs to determine estimates and timescales, tracking progress of pieces already underway and spending time in the workshop, to understand the fundamentals. This is important so that we can grasp the parameters of design, and how far we can push them.

I got my job...

After falling in love with the craftsmanship and skill of jewellery when I was 14, after doing a work experience placement at a jeweller's workshop. I learned some basic skills to make several items of silver jewellery, and found it fascinating. I graduated with a degree in Jewellery and Silversmithing, and I started as a Sales Consultant with Laings. Here, I was lucky enough to go to the International Gemological Institute in Antwerp to broaden my knowledge of diamonds. By then I'd built up a good knowledge of the industry, and started in the bespoke jewellery team, turning my design education into a fully-fledged practice.

The best part of my job is...

Creating unique pieces of jewellery with their own story to tell, and presenting them to the client. I get to make their dream pieces a glittering reality. Every design journey is completely different, and I get just as excited as the clients – it's always amazing to see the finished result.

My most memorable career moment is...

Designing my first engagement ring. I was so delighted to be part of such a significant moment, and I still love playing my part in an experience that will stay with a client forever. It's especially rewarding when a newly-engaged couple come back in to share their excitement and their gratitude for helping to guide them through the process.

After work I...

Usually make the most of all the bars and restaurants the city has to offer – I'm very lucky to work in the centre of Edinburgh! I'm partial to a gin cocktail, so Badger & Co, Rabble and

The Jolly Botanist are great to enjoy after work, while I love sushi at Maki & Ramen and Umai.

If I wasn't a jeweller, I'd have been...

Something that's still creative and hands-on. I've really enjoyed renovating our flat, from sanding floorboards to reinstating the original fireplace, so perhaps I would've gone into something interiors based?

What's the best piece of career advice you've been given?

I was lucky enough to be mentored by Sarah Alexander, Lead Designer at Laings, and she advised me to keep learning, learn from every department and everyone around you – no two designs or pieces are the same and you need to remain curious to understand the ever-evolving process.

You can find out more about Laings' bespoke design service online at laingsuk.com, or visit their George Street showroom.



Your search starts here

Our property section highlights just some of the stunning homes now available with ESPC solicitor estate agents. Which one of them could be yours?



2 ABINGER GARDENS, MURRAYFIELD, EDINBURGH, EH12 6DE

OFFERS OVER £1,150,000

6  3  3  D 



Exceptional Victorian house | Wonderful views | Lovely private gardens | Drawing room | Sitting room/double bedroom 3 | Kitchen/breakfast/family room | Dining room | Principal bedroom - en-suite | 4 double bedrooms | Study/bedroom 6 | Family bathroom | Shower room | GCH | DG

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 0131 581 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

FLAT 57, 1 DONALDSON DRIVE, EDINBURGH, EH12 5FA

FIXED PRICE £785,000

2  3  1  C 



One of Edinburgh's finest addresses | Stunning duplex apartment | Set in 16 acres of communal grounds | Concierge | 2 parking spaces | Double height sitting/dining room | Kitchen | Utility | Principal bed with dressing & en suite | Double bed 2 with en suite | Bathroom

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 0131 587 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

PANTILES, 22 CARBERRY ROAD, MUSSELBURGH, EAST LoTHIAN, EH21 8PR

OFFERS OVER £750,000

4  3  3  D 



Modern single storey house | Large gardens | Double garage | Sitting room | Conservatory | Kitchen/dining room | Utility room | Dining room/family room | Principal bedroom with dressing room & en suite | Double bedroom 2 with en suite | Double bedroom 3 | Double bedroom 4/study | Bathroom | GCH | DG

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 01620 532654

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

6B OSWALD ROAD, GRANGE, EDINBURGH EH9 2HF

OFFERS OVER £725,000

4  2  1  E 



Boasting four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a generous reception room, a breakfasting kitchen, and a study, as well as beautiful period features, this main-door double upper villa forms part of a handsome traditional building on sought-after Oswald Road in the desirable Grange area of Edinburgh. Tucked away from the road behind a walled and gated driveway, screened by leafy trees, the property enjoys a private position and the front door, approached via external stairs, opens into a vestibule where a short internal staircase takes you to a first-floor hall.

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt - Contact GG 0131 253 2993


GILSON GRAY
LAW • PROPERTY • FINANCE

21 ESSELMONT ROAD, NEWINGTON, EH16 5PX

OFFERS OVER £700,000

5  2  3  C 



This rarely available, tastefully extended double upper villa is located in the ever-desirable district of Newington. The accommodation comprises a large kitchen/dining room which can easily sit 12-14 people, family room, large living room with a log burning fire, 5 double bedrooms, modern shower room with waterfall shower and a bathroom with a white 3-piece suite and a shower above the bath. The property boasts a private south facing garden with a summer house and garden storage. There is a 2-car driveway offering off street parking. The property has gas central heating and double glazing.

VIEWING INFORMATION

Tel Sols on 0131 667 1900
mail@deansproperties.co.uk

Deans Properties 
Deans Solicitors and Estate Agents LLP

91, GARDINER ROAD, EDINBURGH, EH4 3RL

OFFERS OVER £645,000

5  3  2  C 



Bright & generously proportioned family accommodation | Vestibule | Hall | Sitting room | Spacious open plan kitchen/dining room/family room | Principal bedroom with en-suite | 4 further double bedrooms | Bathroom | Shower room | Utility | Delightful garden | Driveway | IGCH |

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 0131 581 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

69 SPOTTISWOODE GARDENS, ST. ANDREWS, KY16 8SB

OFFERS OVER £625,000

5  3  2  C 



This deceptively spacious luxury 5 bed, detached property with separate annex, is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac within a desirable residential area of St Andrews, close to supermarkets and the St Andrews Community Hospital and doctors' surgeries.

VIEWING INFORMATION

Tel: 01334 862336 By Appointment

Thorntons 
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FLAT 55, 1 DONALDSON DRIVE, EDINBURGH, EH12 5FA

FIXED PRICE £600,000

2  2  1  C 



Situated in the iconic Donaldson's Playfair Building | 16 acres of shared grounds | 2 underground parking spaces | Concierge | Stunning double height sitting/dining room | Contemporary kitchen | Principal bedroom with en suite | Double bedroom 2 | Shower room | Utility

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 0131 581 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

4C BELFORD PARK, EDINBURGH, EH4 3DP

OFFERS OVER £525,000

2  2  2  D 



Beautifully presented, well proportioned accommodation | Peacefully located in highly desirable residential area | Welcoming hall | Sitting room | Kitchen/dining room | 2 double bedrooms | Home office | Bathroom | Delightful courtyard garden | Private parking | GCH

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appt tel Agent 0131 581 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

73/4 LOGIE GREEN ROAD, CANONMILLS, EDINBURGH, EH7 4HF

OFFERS OVER £520,000

3  2  1  B 



Superb, dual aspect sitting / dining / kitchen | High-spec modern kitchen with island unit
| Principal bedroom with modern ensuite | Two further double bedrooms | Stylish main
bathroom | Excellent storage provision | Factored building with lift access | Well-maintained
communal grounds | Secure allocated parking | Gas central heating and double glazing

VIEWING INFORMATION

By appointment tel Agent 0131 581 5711

SIMPSON
& MARWICK

3 MAURICEWOOD STEADINGS, PENICUIK, EH26 0RW

OFFERS OVER £475,000

5  2  2  B 



Lovely, light-filled 5 bedroom detached house with large private garden and detached garage, forming part of a peaceful residential development nestled under the Pentland Hills regional park.

VIEWING INFORMATION

Viewings by appointment with Coulters on
0131 603 7333

COULTERS[©]

ESTATE HOUSE, SMAILHOLM, KELSO, TD5 7PH

OFFERS OVER £470,000

3  2  4  E 



Beautifully positioned within this sought after village, famed for its links to Sir Walter Scott, this quintessential countryside home exudes character and warmth - stunning landscaped garden with far reaching outlooks over rolling countryside and the Cheviots beyond. A beautiful family home, with plenty of adaptable living accommodation on the ground floor and three well-appointed bedrooms above, with the outdoor space and scope having obvious appeal for those in search of a change of pace in the heart of the Scottish Borders.

VIEWING INFORMATION

CONTACT HASTING LEGAL & PROPERTY
01573 225999



1 GARDEN COTTAGE, CAVERS, HAWICK

OFFERS OVER £385,000

3  2  2  F 



This striking, beautiful detached Victorian home is ideal for family life or those seeking the more semi-rural country lifestyle. Dating from around 1850 with blonde sandstone exterior, this is an impressive cottage with conservatory to the rear and benefits a particularly charming interior with stylish finishes blending with charming period elements, a fully enclosed cottage garden, pond and Breeze summerhouse along with driveway and private parking. For equestrian enthusiasts, there is livery & neighbouring farrier close by.

VIEWING INFORMATION

CONTACT HASTINGS LEGAL & PROPERTY
01750 724160



SOUDEN VIEW, CHESTERS, HAWICK

OFFERS OVER £375,000

4  3  2  C 



Location is a key driver for this modern detached villa, which enjoys an elevated south-facing setting looking across rolling open countryside to its namesake, Souden Hill, in the peaceful rural village of Chesters, near Jedburgh. Exceptional and unique features include an attached multi-purpose workshop/studio, low-cost, low carbon heating combined with photovoltaic panels. Spacious family accommodation, and expansive front and back gardens - the latter incorporating an observatory to take advantage of the dark sky location.

VIEWING INFORMATION

CONTACT HASTINGS LEGAL & PROPERTY
01835 340330



3 CLAREMONT GROVE, EDINBURGH, EH7 4DP

OFFERS OVER £340,000

2  1  1  C 



Situated in sought-after Broughton, with a south-facing garden and private driveway, this recently refurbished, two-bedroom, mid-terrace house is brought to market in a move-in condition, offering bright and spacious accommodation.

VIEWING INFORMATION

Click 'Register To View' & select time on the website



7/2 WELLINGTON PLACE, LEITH LINKS, EH6 7EQ

OFFERS OVER £310,000

2  1  1  D 



The property forms part of a historic B-listed tenement, situated directly beside Leith Links in the desirable Leith conservation area. This is a beautifully presented, two-bedroom, ground-floor flat and enjoys a much sought-after location in the capital.

VIEWING INFORMATION

Tel VMH 0131 253 2964



GLENKINDIE 24 MILL STREET, SELKIRK, TD7 5AD

FIXED PRICE £210,000

3  2  3  E 



Glenkindie is an ideal find for those in search of a family home with excellent access to amenities. Being in excellent condition, as reflected in the Home Report, this detached Victorian property presents a blend of traditional character features with modern upgrades, catering easily for family life. With an attractive fully enclosed garden frontage, mature hedging and trees providing privacy and the Conservatory providing a welcoming entrance and offering both a public space to enjoy the garden and countryside views beyond.

VIEWING INFORMATION

CONTACT HASTINGS LEGAL & PROPERTY
01750 724160





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