



ESPC is property marketing channel with a network of 140 Solicitors Estate Agents across Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife, Borders and the South and West of Scotland. Only Solicitor estate agents can be members of ESPC, who are fully regulated by the Law Society of Scotland.

The solicitor estate agent proposition allows for estate agency and legal work to be carried out under one roof, setting ESPC members apart from other estate agents. You need a solicitor to move home in Scotland, and our unique offering allows for a smoother transaction between all aspects of your sale and purchase.

To promote the highest standard of service levels for both buyers and sellers, we have select ESPC agents who have voluntarily signed up to a Charter. This encompasses all aspects of your property journey, from estate agency through to the legal process.

Here's what you can expect from an ESPC chartered firm when buying or selling your home.

Selling your home – what you can expect

Pre-Valuation

- Be able to book a valuation with chosen member firm within 24 hours **(SLA)**
- Seller will receive email / and or telephone confirmation of the appointment with clear sign posting of what to expect on the day.

Valuation

- Provide a full and transparent **facts-based** valuation
- Provide full transparency of services and what the client can expect from your firm
- Where possible, identify potential pitfalls at this stage to emphasize the importance of a solicitor estate agent (i.e. Building warrants, alteration documents, anything identifiable the seller should know)
- Follow up with details on the valuation to client no later than 48 hours **(SLA)**
- Provide full transparency on fees and outlays where possible at this point (All standard fees – including search fee, AML, estate agency fee, legal fees, costs of Home Report, ESPC fee and EWS1 if applicable)

Pre-market

- AML checks will be carried out
- Carry out KYC for their purchase (evidence of mortgage in principle should be available)
- Solicitor or property team discusses any legalities at this point where necessary – alteration documents etc.
- Set expectations with seller about what they will need (viewings, documents, response timescales)
- Provide details of legalities when acting for seller. Closing dates, explaining offers to help them make an informed decision, qualifying buyers etc.

- Provide seller with a point of contact at this point, also a conveyancer where possible to set expectations.

On market

- Client's listing will include a floor plan, PDF schedule, high-quality / high resolution photographs, and marketing
- Properties will be described in line with current legislation
- Offer accompanied viewings for seller, especially for vulnerable clients
- Respond within 1 working day **(SLA)** for a viewing request
- Viewings will all be followed up within 48 hours **(SLA)** and feedback collated for the client as agreed
- On market progress will be provided weekly or as agreed with seller

Sale conveyancing (legals)

- Full transparency on fee quotations should be provided
- Sellers Solicitor should issue QA within 5 days of receiving client instructions and if it is not possible due to technical reasons e.g., waiting on alterations papers/deeds then a draft should be issued based on client instructions with an email/letter explaining the reasons for the delay
- Title Deeds should be dispatched to Purchaser's solicitor as soon as practicable and no later than 14 days prior to the proposed date of entry
- Standard Offer. Clause 5, (5) days is removable and changeable, realistic timescale set around the circumstances to clients and property but sent as soon as possible
- Keys will be safely exchanged from firm to firm as agreed.

Purchase conveyancing (legals)

- Full transparency on fee quotations, LBTT, taxes should be provided
- AML checks should be completed prior to an Offer being submitted, and where not possible the Offer should state that AML is to be carried out and that will be done immediately on acceptance of an offer and the Seller notified within 5 working days that AML has been completed
- Buyer will be allocated a dedicated team member / solicitor throughout transaction
- Team/named person should be required to be disclosed to the Seller's solicitor at the point the verbal acceptance of the offer is given
- Buyer will be advised on purchase based on comparables and expert advice, ensuring they are fully aware of their affordability
- Best endeavours that proof of funds and mortgage in principle will be confirmed to the selling agent as a chartered member
- Keys will be safely exchanged from firm to firm as agreed.

The ESPC Property Charter outlines the behaviors and commitments to higher standards to be maintained by a member firm. Alongside the responsibilities of both seller and buyer client care, the chartered member firm will also agree to:

Member firm commitments

- One member of staff from each firm will be allocated as the charter champion. Responsibilities include feeding back to their firm, instilling values, and behaviours to their firm, and being the point of contact for feedback, meetings, and any issues if they arise
- Training, one person per firm minimum to be enrolled on the accreditation course. The course should commence within 6 months of signing the ESPC charter. If a member of staff departs from a chartered firm, the accreditation is transferable, but the firm must have at least one member of staff committed to the training to be a chartered member
- Continuous development – ensuring once the training is completed, commitment to further industry updates and training is attended (minimum two per year)
- Chartered member firm will take part in the ESPC annual Mystery Shopper
- Attend bi-annual sessions focused on the live working charter, gathering intel and feedback on how ESPC and members can work collectively to continually drive-up standards for both buyers and sellers
- Attend meetings with other industry stakeholders including Law Society of Scotland, ECF and surveyors to promote good practice within the profession, assessing how we can make positive changes and drive forward any ideas that could have a positive impact and welcomed change for both buyers and sellers
- Chartered member firm will incorporate and be mindful of ESG responsibilities, with consumers looking at companies' policies and becoming more aware of the great need for change, we will expect our members to be working towards and in step with government commitments to be net-zero by 2050.