

Another Christmas is fast approaching and you know what that means! Yes, a flyer from Stuart and some more, rather poor jokes! I'm always open to suggestions so feel free to email me any crackers to

advice@sbms-online.co.uk

(bearing in mind I can only publish the cleaner ones).

Before that though, what has changed in the market since my previous flyer in June? Well, the home buyer market seems to have strengthened and estate agents are reporting increasing activity. There is likely to be a slowdown over the November and December months, as is traditional, with the market picking up in January to be its strongest for the first half of the New Year. I doubt there will be any massive change in this pattern, compared to previous years.

Stamp Duty

At the time of writing, the Stamp Duty limits were still at a temporary 0% to £175,000, 1% and upwards beyond that. It is not clear whether the 'powers that be' will make the increase from £125,000 a permanent feature. I, for one, don't understand why it isn't more sensible to charge Stamp Duty on a tiered basis the same as Income Tax i.e. 0% to £175,000; 1% for the part of the price above £175,000 to £250,000; 3% for the part above £250,000 to £500,000 etc.



I guess the reason this has never been done is due to the reduction in tax that would be payable to HM Revenue! Here's hoping that the £175,000 limit stays as it is, at least for now to help promote the housing market and help to stabilise prices further by having a healthy market looking forward. Hey, they could even raise the £250,000 limit to £300,000 too!

Is it a good time to move home?

Yes, I still think it is, especially if you are moving up market. The mortgage market is still nowhere near as buoyant as it was two or three years ago but those customers with bigger deposits are still able to get some very good rates i.e. late 2% rates for trackers and mid to late 3% rates for fixed in some instances. Lenders will still lend the amount that they would 3 years ago, as long as you can prove income and have a clean credit history. There has even been a return from some lenders of our much loved Broker Exclusive rates too!

The main issues are still that no-one wants to lend the higher percentages; rates are available up to 90%, but at higher rates, with a lot less choice of schemes. However, there are sometimes other ways to achieve things and we've done some mortgages this year for some first time buyers where parents or grandparents have helped provide deposits (either by using savings that are providing no real return due to low savings rates or by raising funds against their own homes). Looking forward, I'm optimistic that in the future there will be a lowering of rates at the higher loan to values, once the house prices have stabilised further and confidence regained a little more.

For those on variable rates there's still a larger than normal portion of the market reverting to variable rates. **For those of you on trackers and standard variable rates, don't forget to keep a close eye on the monthly interest rate reviews, if there is any confirmation of a change, then call us straight away so that we can discuss options with you.**

I suspect that if interest rates do change, then there may be a further tightening of rates i.e. an increase in all rates (including new fixed rates) as well as a possible upwards movement due to the inability of the lenders to cope with the amount of new applications received.

If you want a chat to discuss options or what's available now, then call me straight away.



Can we help?

We continue to offer all the services you would expect, covered in the bullet points overleaf. **You are always most welcome to call us** to discuss any concerns whether they be with the market generally, future plans or current financial difficulties.

I have always said that the core of our ethos is to look after our customers as best as we can, suggesting solutions they had maybe not been aware of, **after all if we don't look after you, then you our customers, cannot be expected to look after us by providing valuable repeat business and referring your family, friends and colleagues!**

And don't forget we don't only provide mortgage advice!

Email: advice@sbms-online.co.uk
Web: www.sbms-online.co.uk

As a reminder of the services we offer:

- Independent mortgage advice
- Independent insurance advice including:
 - Life Assurance
 - Critical Illness
 - Accident & Sickness
 - Unemployment
 - Income Protection

Cover can be arranged to protect family as well as a mortgage.

- Buildings & contents insurance
- We can recommend Conveyancer, Solicitor and HIP providers
- IFA services including pensions & investments
- Loans - secured and unsecured

APRs dependent on term, amount and circumstances. Quotes on request

- Will service
- Commercial & business enquires
- Debt management & IVA advice
- Buy and rent back schemes



Emily starts proper school, Lucy tries on her school uniform, ready to start reception in January.

An Irishman is cleaning his rifle and accidentally shoots his wife. He immediately dials 999.

Irishman: 'It's me wife! I've accidentally shot 'er & I tink I've killed 'er!'

Operator: 'Please calm down, Sir, can you first make sure she is actually dead!'

click *BANG*

Irishman: 'Okay, done that. What next?'

Two young boys walked into a pharmacy one day, picked out a box of tampons and proceeded to the checkout counter.

The man at the counter asked the older boy, 'Son, how old are you?' 'Eight,' the boy replied.

The man continued, 'do you know what these are used for?' The boy replied, 'not exactly, but they aren't for me. They're for him. He's my brother. He's four. We saw on TV that if you use these you would be able to swim and ride a bike. Right now, he can't do either.'

Old man goes to the local paper to post an obituary. Chap says to him, 'It's £5 a word'. The man says, 'OK, since I've only got 15 quid left after all the expenses it'll have to read - Mary is dead'.

The chap says, 'you can't just put that!, tell you what, I'm feeling generous, have 6 words for your 15 quid'.

Old man says, 'thanks for that - make it read, Mary is dead. Fiesta for sale.'

So I went down my local ice-cream shop, and said 'I want to buy an ice-cream'.

He said 'Hundreds & thousands?'

I said, 'We'll start with one.'

He said 'Knickerbocker glory?'

I said 'I do get a certain amount of freedom in these trousers, yes.'



Daddy and the girls, playing in the leaves at Whipsnade.

Ralph and Edna were both patients in a mental hospital. One day while they were walking past the hospital swimming pool, Ralph suddenly jumped into the deep end. He sank to the bottom of the pool and stayed there.

Edna promptly jumped in to save him. She swam to the bottom and pulled him out. When the Head Nurse Director became aware of Edna's heroic act she immediately ordered her to be discharged from the hospital, as she now considered her to be mentally stable.

When she went to tell Edna the news she said, 'Edna, I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're being discharged, since you were able to rationally respond to a crisis by jumping in and saving the life of the person you love. I have concluded that your act displays sound mindedness. The bad news is Ralph hung himself in the bathroom with his bathrobe belt right after you saved him. I am so sorry, but he's dead.' Edna replied, 'He didn't hang himself, I put him there to dry. How soon can I go home?'

When you stop believing in Santa Claus is when you start getting clothes for Christmas.

This year, rather than sending you all a Christmas card, we will be making a charitable donation to the British Heart Foundation and Cancer Research

Thank you for your continued custom.
Merry Christmas to all! Stuart & Sharon Brown

FOR ANY FINANCIAL ADVICE
PLEASE CONTACT US ON

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