

It's been 7 months since our last newsletter so I thought it was time to update you.

Housing market

The nil band Stamp Duty limit has reduced back down to £125,000 except for first time buyers when they can buy up to £250,000 and pay no Stamp Duty at all.

Interest rates remain unchanged (the base rate is still 0.5%) and lender's standard variable rates range from around 2.5% to 5.99%, so I know some of you are enjoying low rates. However there is no way of predicting where interest rates will be in six or 12 months time and what the effect of a new government will have on our overall economy.

As for the positives, I think house prices have bounced back slightly and most of the business we are currently doing is for people buying. A 'moving' market is clearly a good thing and we have been really busy in March, April, May and June.

There has been a mass return to the market of Broker Exclusive rates (special deals in addition to the normal rates), a sign that there is an appetite from the lenders to actually attract new business. There has been a slow easing of the high loan to value lending rates, which can hopefully only improve with house prices recovering over time too. Even buy to let rates are now available up to 80% lending again.

Currently there are fixed rates from the low 3%'s for shorter terms, up to

mid to late 4% for longer termed fixed rates...trackers from mid 2% upwards...amazing rates if the amount of equity/deposit is decent. Any of you who want to look at fresh options should call me straight away and I'll happily do a review (even to see if it makes sense to come out of any existing deal early).

Interested in looking at your credit file?

There is now a link on our website that will take you straight to one of the main credit reference agencies. There you can sign up for a free 30 day access period to your credit file and see what the credit companies can see about you.

Looking forward

At the risk of being a 'doom monger' I think most of us accept that interest rates will increase at some point, the million dollar question is when.

Head of Intermediary Sales at Nationwide said: 'If you look at the Bank of England base rates over the past twenty years, the average is 5.97%. That puts the current 0.50% in context and makes it clear that clients should be thinking about possible future rate rises.'



With many lenders still offering free valuations and free legals, it is a market where it may pay to switch to a fixed rate before rates start to increase. Again call me to discuss further.

Insurance and protection

If you haven't reviewed the cover you have in the last two years, now may be a good time to do so. Not only can we help with this, giving full advice and looking at the whole market, but it is also cheaper to arrange cover through ourselves than going to your bank or any of the direct providers.

As well as Life, Critical Illness, Accident/Sickness/Unemployment, Buildings/Contents, Income Protection insurances we now also arrange Private Medical Cover.

A thank you!

For those of you that have come back to us time and time again, we are sincerely grateful for the opportunity to continue to provide you with advice and guidance in respect of your mortgage, life, buildings and contents insurance and other areas.

We are also grateful for your continued referrals and recommendations as these are the things that have helped us continue to trade where others have not been able to do so.

As always, please call me to discuss anything at all, really I would rather you called me to discuss something than assume I can't help (or that I wouldn't want to).

I can always be called on
07710 770969 or emailed at
advice@sbms-online.co.uk

Best regards, Stuart

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

**Independent
Financial Advice**



By the time you read this it is likely that the World Cup will be over, so will Wimbledon and we will be entering the school holidays. I'm not a massive sports fan to be honest but I would have liked our boys to have done far better than they did.

To keep you abreast of our personal situation, (only because some of you like to hear how the girls are doing), well Emily is 5½ and due to start year one of school in September and Lucy (4 ¼) will move to Reception (where Emily has been for the last year).

I have to say I now regret not spending more time on family outings etc with them whilst they were under school age, as now we have to ask permission to take a day off! This is understandable (their education is important) but completely alien to Sharon and I who haven't had to do the same for our own holidays since becoming self employed seven years ago! Apparently you can get fined for taking your own kids out of school too much in any year...what happened to responsible parents being able to decide what was good for their own children? Those of our clients who are teachers will say that not all parents are responsible or care enough about schooling, hence the rules and regulations, and I guess they are right.

Anyway we have tried to make up for it by taking them to Bournemouth, Kew Gardens and Ashridge amongst other places recently. This was made possible by the great weather so far this summer (long may it continue), it's strange to think that we were mostly snowed-in only in February. I had to 'car share' with Sharon as the Freelander was the only way we could both get about for about three weeks!

Cup of tea

One day my mother was out and my dad was in charge of me.

I was maybe 2 1/2 years old. Someone had given me a little 'tea set' as a gift and it was one of my favourite toys.

Daddy was in the living room engrossed in the evening news when I brought daddy a little cup of 'tea', which was just water. After several cups of tea and lots of praise for such yummy tea, my mum came home.

My dad made her wait in the living room to watch me bring him a cup of tea, because it was 'just the cutest thing!' My Mum waited, and sure enough, here I come down the hall with a cup of tea for daddy and she watches him drink it up.

Then she said (as only a mother would know): 'Did it ever occur to you that the only place she can reach water is the toilet?'

Dads don't think like mums do.

Walking past the mental hospital, by us the other day.

And all the patients were shouting, '13....13....13.'

The fence was too high to see over, but I saw a little gap in the planks, so I looked through to see what was going on.....

Some idiot poked me in the eye with a stick!

Then they all started shouting '14....14....14'...



As a reminder of the services we offer:

- Independent mortgage advice
- Independent insurance advice including:
 - Life Assurance
 - Critical Illness
 - Accident and Sickness
 - Unemployment
 - Income Protection
 - Private Medical Insurance
- Cover can be arranged to protect family as well as a mortgage.
- Buildings and contents insurance
- We can recommend Conveyancer, Solicitor and HIP providers
- IFA services including pensions and investments
- Loans - secured and unsecured APRs dependent on term, amount and circumstances. Quotes on request
- Will service
- Commercial and business enquires
- Debt management and IVA advice
- Credit file service
- Buy and rent back schemes

I went into a shop and I said, 'Can someone sell me a kettle.' The bloke said 'Kenwood' I said, 'Where is he then?'

I went to buy a watch, and the man in the shop said 'Analogue.' I said 'No, just a watch.'

I told my girlfriend I had a job in a bowling alley. She said 'Tenpin?' I said, 'No, permanent.'

I went to the doctor's today. He told me I was paranoid. Well he didn't actually say that, but I know that's what he was thinking.

Man goes to the doctor with a hearing problem. Dr says 'Can you describe the symptoms?' Man says 'Yeah, Homer is fat and drinks beer and Marge has blue hair!'

**FOR ANY FINANCIAL ADVICE
PLEASE CONTACT US ON**

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