

# Stuart Brown Mortgage Services

**Independent  
Financial Advice**

## Welcome to our winter newsletter

### The housing market - getting back on track

After a number of years in a turbulent economic climate, we are continuing to see signs of recovery in the housing and mortgage market. According to figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders, total mortgage lending in July this year has increased by 29% compared to the same period last year. This is great news, showing signs that the **market is strengthening**.

One particular area which has seen large growth is mortgages to first time buyers. This has reached a **5½ year high** this year, hitting 25,000 mortgages to those buying their first home in May. This was a 42% increase on the year before.

What does this all mean for you? Mortgages currently have **extremely competitive interest rates (fixed rates from 1.94% anyone?)**, so if you are looking to change your mortgage or buy a new home, you could save money on your mortgage payments. **Even those sitting on old Nationwide or C&G variable rates at 2.5% could be doing better.** A recent survey from Halifax has shown that mortgage repayments are the most affordable they have been for 14 years. Mortgage payments now represent 27% of the average income compared to 48% in 2007.

And the **number of mortgage products** available has also increased to **over 10,000 for the first time in 5 years.**

This means there is much more choice. In the last week alone we have had notification of another lender confirming that they plan to join the governments' **'Help to Buy scheme'** and **another lender who will lend at 95% irrespective of the scheme too.** I truly believe we have turned the corner...

Of course, **we can take the hassle out of finding a mortgage** and can help find the best deal for you **(so you don't have to second guess whether the lender will lend what you need, that the rate is the most cost effective and appropriate one for your circumstances and also ensure the process is as speedy and hassle free as possible for you).**

We are able to provide a full advice service and guide you through all the options available. There are many other things to take into consideration when taking out a mortgage such as general insurance and protection; **we offer a full service in insurance and protection too**, looking at the **whole market** to boot!

I can review current levels of protection for you if you want, **independently of any mortgage** and it's a **good idea to do so periodically**, not just when you move home, get married (or divorced!) or have children. Don't forget we tend **not** to charge fees for majority of the business we do, and a **telephone call costs you nothing anyway (but a few minutes of your time).**



#### Finally, a thanks to those of you who do!



As I always say in these newsletters, we are grateful for any referrals and repeat business you give us. There is nothing more reassuring than getting a recommendation from someone or a call from a client we haven't spoken to in a while.

Please remember us and the fact that I will always try to do the best by anyone we deal with. I try to be 'long haul' rather than 'quick buck'.

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 wouldn't want to).**

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

Best regards,

Stuart



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**S**ince our last newsletter we have had another couple of short family trips. One to York, we had a lovely time and the girls really enjoyed the Viking centre, and another to Torquay. This may be our last camping holiday for a while, we have decided next year we fancy staying in a cottage with proper beds and showers (I reckon I'm getting too old to do 200 miles then put up a tent!). The girls do enjoy camping though so I am sure we will do it again, it's a good way of getting 'family time' and a break for less cost...



only 12 of them so it was a breeze, in the past we have had parties for 19 in our lounge.

Emily is now in year 4 and so, unbelievably to us, we have had to fill in the application form for her to move up to Middle School next September. It really doesn't seem possible, the time has gone so quickly. We went to the open evening which was interesting for me as I have not been inside the school since I left about 30 years ago. I can't believe that next year she will be in double figures age-wise. What's even scarier is that according to her little sister Lucy, she has 4 boyfriends!!! This year she has enjoyed a WW2 trip to Holdenby House where they all dressed up as evacuees, they made it so realistic that a couple of the

children (in tears) did actually come up to check they would be going home again and weren't being evacuated for real!

Lucy is 7½ and now in year 3 and is doing really well, I am sure she is set to be some sort of mathematical genius, she obviously takes after her Dad! She has had a Roman day at school and visited Verulamium in Saint Albans, Sharon went along to help on this and now has more understanding as to why teachers need six weeks off in the summer to recover, apparently the noise level of sixty 7 year olds is deafening.

Lots more has happened but no space to write, so I'll finish by saying *best wishes to each of you, and your families for the Christmas and New Year periods.*



Emily has just had her 9th birthday so Sharon had some more creative cake making and party organising. This year there were



A man left for work one Friday afternoon. Instead of going home, he stayed out the entire weekend hunting with the boys and spending all his wages. When he finally got home on Sunday night, he was confronted by his very angry wife. After two hours, she stopped nagging and said: "How would you like it if you didn't see me for two or three days?" He replied: "That would be fine with me." Monday went by and he didn't see his wife. Tuesday and Wednesday came and went with the same results. By Thursday, the swelling went down just enough for him to see her a little out of the corner of his left eye.

The wife has been missing a week now. Police said to prepare for the worst. So I have been to the charity shop to get all her clothes back.

Worried because they hadn't heard anything for days from the widow in the neighbouring flat, Mrs. Silver said to her son, "Timmy, would you go next door and see how old Mrs. Kirkland is?" A few minutes later, Timmy returned. "Well," asked Mrs. Silver, "is she all right?" "She's fine, except that she's angry at you." "At me?" the woman exclaimed. "Whatever for?" "She said it's none of your business how old she is," snickered Timmy

And remember...

...You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.  
...When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Brigade usually uses water.  
...You're never too old to learn something stupid.

**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
- Buildings and contents insurance
- We can recommend Conveyancer, Solicitor and EPC provider
- IFA services including pensions and investments
- Loans and bridging
- Will service
- Commercial and business enquires
- Credit file service

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



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