

Purchase of a freehold residential property – a house

Our fees are based on the amount of time it takes us to complete your purchase efficiently and the seniority and experience of the lawyers and other fee earners working on your transaction. Our fees will be specifically agreed with you at the outset of your transaction, once we know the details and circumstances involved, and will cover the work required to complete your purchase, including dealing with registration at the Land Registry and the payment of Stamp Duty Land Tax (Stamp Duty), if the property is in England, or Land Transaction Tax (Land Tax), if the property you wish to buy is in Wales. Where the transaction does not proceed to completion a reduction of 25% to 50% is usually applied to the agreed fees depending on how far advanced the transaction is.

Our fees also reflect the particular requirements of your purchase. For example, dealing with a listed building may, because of the added complexities, cost more.

Our current hourly charge rates range from £250 for a recently qualified solicitor to £435 for a senior partner/consultant.

Occasionally a transaction becomes unexpectedly more complex e.g. there might be a defect in title, such as a right of way across the property, or works carried out to the property without the necessary permissions. We would notify you of this as soon as reasonably practicable, so that you can decide whether you wish to continue with the transaction with the additional expense of us dealing with the unexpected extra work.

Our fees

<u>Purchase price of property</u>	<u>Fee range</u>
Less than £350,000	£1,400 - £1,800
£350,000 - £500,000	£1,800 - £2,500
£500,000 - £750,000	£2,500 - £3,000
£750,000 - £1,000,000	£3,000 - £4,500
£1,000,000 - £2,000,000	£4,500 - £6,500
£2,000,000 - £3,000,000	£6,500 - £8,500
£3,000,000 - £4,000,000	£8,500 - £10,500
£4,000,000 - £5,000,000	£10,500 - £12,500
£5,000,000 +	£12,500 +

Our fee ranges assume that:

- This is a standard transaction and that no unforeseen matters arise, including for example (but not limited to) a defect in title which requires remedying prior to completion or the preparation of additional documents ancillary to the main transaction

- This is not the purchase of a new build property, which usually involves considerable additional documents and negotiation
- The transaction is concluded in a timely manner and no unforeseen complications arise
- All parties to the transaction are co-operative and there is no unreasonable delay in third parties providing documentation
- No indemnity policies are required to cover problems. Additional disbursements will apply if indemnity policies are required and the seller does not agree to pay for them.

The fee range for acting on behalf of your mortgage lender should this be required is £500 - £2,000 (depending on the size and complexity of the borrowing).

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to your transaction that are payable to third parties, such as search fees. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process. Disbursements are not included in our fee ranges, however, these typically include:

- Land Registry fee: £20 - £910 (Depending on purchase price and whether online registration can be used)
- Search fees: £350 - £500 plus VAT
- Electronic money transfer fee: 50p - £15 plus VAT.

Any photocopying that is required will be charged at a commercial rate. This would usually be no more than £100 plus VAT where relevant.

VAT

VAT is payable at 20% on all legal fees and taxable disbursements.

Stamp Duty or Land Tax

This depends on the purchase price of your property. You can calculate the amount you will need to pay by using HMRC's [Stamp Duty Land Tax calculator](#) or if the property is located in Wales, by using the Welsh Revenue Authority's [Land Tax calculator](#). There may be additional tax to be paid e.g. if you already own another property or have an interest in another property anywhere in the world, or less tax if you are a first time buyer.

Example transaction

Example freehold purchase transaction in England for a first time buyer being purchased for £500,000 with a mortgage, where we are acting for the lender.

Legal fee (purchase)	£2,500.00
Legal fee (acting for lender)	£500.00
Search fees	£350.00
Electronic money transfer fees	<u>£15.50</u>
Subtotal	£3,365.50
VAT	<u>£673.10</u>
Total legal fees, disbursements and VAT	<u>£4,038.60</u>
Stamp Duty (first time buyer)	£10,000.00

Land Registry fee	<u>£135.00</u>
Subtotal	<u>£10,135.00</u>
Total costs including Stamp Duty and Land Registry fee	<u>£14,173.60</u>

How long will my purchase take?

How long it will take from your offer being accepted until you can move into your property will depend on a number of factors. The average process takes between 4-8 weeks to exchange contracts and then between 2-4 weeks from exchange to completion. It can be quicker or slower, depending on the parties in the chain. For example, if you are a first time buyer, purchasing a new build property that is ready for occupation, with a mortgage in principle, it could take overall 6-8 weeks. However, if you are buying a property that requires a Building Regulations Completion Certificate or a retrospective Listed Building consent to be obtained, this can take significantly longer, possibly between 2-6 months. In such a situation additional charges would apply and you might decide not to proceed with the transaction due to the delay.

Stages of your purchase

The precise stages involved in the purchase of a freehold residential property vary according to the circumstances. However, below we set out some key stages that are relevant to most transactions:

- Take your instructions and give you initial advice
- Check finances are in place to fund purchase and contact lender's solicitors if relevant
- Receive and consider the draft contract and title documents
- Carry out searches
- Obtain further planning and Building Regulations documentation (if relevant)
- Make any necessary enquiries of seller's solicitors
- Negotiate the terms of the contract
- Report to you on all documents and information received
- Report to you on the conditions of your mortgage offer
- Send final contract to you for signature and request the deposit
- Agree completion date (date from which you will own the property)
- Exchange contracts and notify you that this has happened
- Advise you on joint ownership (where relevant)
- Arrange for all monies needed to be received from lender and you in time for completion
- Obtain pre-completion searches
- Arrange for you to sign the transfer and mortgage
- Complete your purchase
- Deal with the notification of the transaction and payment of Stamp Duty or Land Tax
- Deal with application for registration of the transfer and mortgage at the Land Registry.

Our team

Name	Status
Janet Armstrong-Fox	Partner

Rory Macpherson	Partner
John Rochman	Consultant
Jane Lindop	Senior Associate
Mandeep Mattu	Associate
Lara Moore	Associate
Aimee Stevens	Associate
Jonathan Wood	Chartered Legal Executive