

# ASK THE EXPERTS

Do you have a question you would like to ask our property experts?  
Email: [experts@propertysquare.co.uk](mailto:experts@propertysquare.co.uk)

Your questions answered by our local property experts...



**Q** Our new property has a water meter - could you offer some advice on how to bring the bills down?

**A** The key to water efficiency is to reduce the amount of water that gets wasted rather than restricting use. The bathroom accounts for roughly 65% of all domestic water use so is the best place to start saving water.

- Don't use the toilet as a dustbin - each flush can use as much as 11 litres of water!
- Install a dual flush kits in your toilet and save a up to 20,000 litres of water a year
- Make sure all drips are fixed and pipes are sealed - a dripping tap wastes 20 litres of water a day
- Take shorter showers - or invest in one with an eco setting which reduces the flow of water
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth. Leaving the tap running wastes 6 litres per minute.

Advice from [www.thameswater.co.uk](http://www.thameswater.co.uk)



**Q** What tips can you give me as a tenant to help find my ideal home?

**A** >> When viewing a property consider how you might personalise the space with accessories like rugs, cushions, dramatic bedspreads or mood lighting such as up-lighters or lamps.

>> Don't waste time. Before viewing any properties consider what's most important to you and where you might be willing to compromise. If you are a keen cook is there really any point viewing a property with spacious bedrooms and a tiny kitchen?

>> The secret to finding a suitable home lies largely in your preparation. Although 'budget' and 'location' are important invest a few minutes to define your lifestyle and exactly what sort of property you are looking for - it will pay dividends when you start your search!

>> Expect to pay a premium for property close to shops and restaurants. You are likely to get more for your money if you expand your search to nearby residential areas.

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**Q** I am facing a sealed bid situation; how can I present myself in the best light?

**A** Sealed bids are often used when there are multiple offers on the same property. They aim to gain the best possible price for the vendor and to give all potential buyers a fair attempt at purchasing the property.

Your offer must be received within the set date and time deadline. In order to present yourself in the best light and maximise the chances of your bid being chosen, it pays to be organised and the more information you give, the better.

Write an official letter stating your maximum offer (ensuring that you can afford it), outlining who you are and what you do. Include details of your financial situation and your timescale for moving. Always mention anything that makes you look like a good buyer, such as paying cash, having no chain or already having your mortgage offer in principal.

Certain details could sway your vendor depending on their motivation. Someone else might make a higher offer, but if you are perceived to be a better buyer due to your circumstances, you might win the bid.

It also goes in your favour if you have a mortgage broker and solicitor in place. If so, you should include their details within your letter as it demonstrates that you are in a position to proceed quickly. If possible, it might even be better to instruct your solicitor to write the letter, to give you more credibility.

Most of all; be transparent with your situation. If you say you are a cash buyer, you might be asked to prove it with bank statements and won't be looked upon favourably if you're caught out. Finally, remember; a bid is not binding until exchange of contracts.

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