

10 things not to say to a potential buyer

When prospective buyers view houses, sellers often think it makes them appear more friendly or credible if they accompany their "visitors" and keep up a running commentary.



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“But every estate agent has at least one tale of a potential sale that was ruined by a keen seller who said just the wrong thing at a critical point,” notes Berry Everitt, CEO of the Chas Everitt International property group.

“So actually, the best thing that sellers can do is fill in the disclosure form before their home is listed, then briefly welcome any buyers their agent brings around ... and make themselves scarce during every viewing.”

Writing in the latest *Property Signposts* newsletter, he says this is not a question of trying to hide anything, “It’s just that unless you know the circumstances of prospective buyers or their reasons for wanting to move to your area, it is all too easy to ‘put your foot in it’ and put them right off.”

And of course some subjects are more off-putting than others. Below are 10 things Everitt suggests that you should really never mention:

1. How many people have already been to view your property. Prospective buyers might start to wonder why they should want it if no-one else did.

2. How quiet or active the neighbourhood is. Perceptions are different and buyers might in any case not enjoy the same atmosphere or activities as you do.
3. How many children there are in the area or how close the schools are. You don't know what the buyer's family situation is or what their schooling arrangements might be, even if they do have children.
4. How great your church is. This should be obvious but it's a big no-no to bring up anything related to faith or religion with people you don't know. In fact, you should only volunteer information about any local amenity if the buyer asks you a specific question, like "How close are the nearest shops?" or "Is there a bus stop nearby?"
5. How 'new' your kitchen/ bathroom/ flooring/ paving/paintwork is. Newness is a relative thing and the kitchen you remodelled just two years ago might seem dated to someone with different tastes.
6. The fact that your family has outgrown the house. If buyers have the same size family, they might start to think it is also too small for them.
7. The fact that the house is too big for you and/ or too expensive to run now that your children have left home. Once again, buyers might just start to reconsider if this is what they really need.
8. Your recent divorce. Your buyers might be newlyweds and this could easily turn them off.
9. The death of a family member that has prompted you to sell. Some people are really sensitive about this.
10. The fact that you have been transferred, are emigrating, or have already bought another home. Your need to sell quickly might be used against you when it comes to negotiating price.

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