

**How much can I borrow?**

The amount lenders will loan you will vary greatly and gone are the days where the lender will lend you say 3.5 times your annual salary. Most work with affordability calculators, which consider your outgoings, the size of your family and of course your income. You can still use 3.5 times your salary or 3 times joint salary as a guide. Our mortgage advisers will be able to tell you accurately how much you can borrow.

The size of your deposit is also important, the bigger the deposit the better the rate offered and even the higher the loan. You will more than likely need a deposit of at least 10%. Home Buy schemes help first time buyers who have no deposit.

Can I afford the mortgage?

You need to sit down and draw up a detailed monthly budget of all your income and expenditure. This will show you what you have left to pay for your mortgage repayments. The last thing you to take on more than you can afford.

Also consider the effects of any future mortgage rate increases.

You will also need to consider the additional cost of insurance such as Home insurance, life cover and redundancy cover. Valuable protection, but at an additional cost.

Choosing the right mortgage scheme

There are literally thousands of mortgages out there in the market to choose from, but fortunately there are only a few really crucial things you really need to know about.

- Fixed rate, where the repayments stay the same for a pre-determined period whether interest rates go up or down.
- Variable rate, where the repayments can go both up and down.

See our Guide to mortgages for full details on all of the schemes available and the advantages, disadvantages of these schemes.

Its important to seek professional advice when choosing the right mortgage, that's where we can help.

Get your mortgage agreed

Once you've found the right mortgage, you will need to get an Agreement in Principle from the lender. We can advise you about this. It doesn't commit you to taking out a mortgage with this particular lender, nor does it commit them to lending you the money. But it does let you start house hunting knowing that mortgage funds have been agreed, this will also put you in a better position when negotiating the price.

this guide continued...

**Finding your perfect home**

See our House Hunting guide for advice on choosing the right property.

Found your dream home

Its time to make an offer, be strong and negotiate the best possible price, see our guide to moving. You will need to appoint a solicitor and arrange your mortgage.

As part of the mortgage process your lender will want to carry out a valuation, you will need to pay for this, see our guide to cost of moving.

Mortgage valuation. This is simply a report from a professional property surveyor that enables a lender to decide whether the property is worth enough, and is in good enough condition, to provide security for the loan. A valuation is the cheapest form of survey but it doesn't tell you, the purchaser, much about the condition of the property.

A full Survey or Homebuyers Report, describes the property in detail and reports on any visible defects. If anything comes to light now that you didn't know before, and that makes you think twice about buying, you have the right to withdraw your offer. A full survey costs more than a valuation.

Finally there's a Structural Survey: as the name suggests, this gives even more detail on the condition of the property. It's not always needed, but can be advisable if the property is very old, or in visibly poor condition, for example. And yes, it costs even more.

Arranging your Mortgage

If you've already got an Agreement in Principle, this stage should be a bit easier. Your adviser will be able to advise on the latest rates as these may have changed since you first spoke. You will need to provide the relevant document the lender will need and also pay for the valuation.

Protecting your new home

Borrowing all that money from your lender is a big financial commitment, and you'll want to know that you can still make the payments if you lose your job or fall ill. This is where protection comes in.

Most people find their first few years of home ownership to be a financial stretch, and it can seem like insurance is just another cost at the worst possible time. But knowing that you're protected against whatever life may throw at you brings peace of mind, and that's worth a lot.

There are a range of protection policies available such as Life Cover, Critical Illness Cover, Income Protection and Redundancy Cover. More information can be found in our Guide to Mortgages or speak to an Adviser today.

Moving Day

We have a complete guide to your moving day which is FREE to download and use to help you plan for the big day.