



GETTING YOUR HOUSE

Ready to sell



THE GUIDE

We know that properties should look their best when they're put on the market.

While most people try to make their properties presentable, they often focus only on the aspects that personally bother them, overlooking other details that might only be noticed by someone not living in the property.

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To help, we have prepared a detailed guide to help you consider all the ins and outs of preparing your property.

In this guide, you'll find practical tips for selling your home from enhancing kerb appeal to staging the interior and addressing essential repairs. Remember that little changes can sometimes go a long way to increasing the property's value.



It's about creating a space

Staging a home is all about making your home more attractive to potential buyers. It's not just about tidying up, it's about creating a space where buyers can easily imagine themselves living. From a fresh coat of neutral paint to furniture arrangement, these minor changes can make a huge difference, helping your home stand out in the market.

A well-staged home can attract more interest and often leads to a quicker sale. It's a simple yet effective way to show off your home's best features and make it easier for buyers to see the potential of your property.

where buyers can easily imagine themselves living



Staging the interior

- ARRANGE FURNITURE STRATEGICALLY**
Position furniture to accentuate the key features of each room, such as fireplaces and expansive windows. This not only highlights the unique aspects of your property but also demonstrates the potential of the space to buyers.
- ENHANCE THE SPACE WITH TASTEFUL DÉCOR**
Introduce elements like fresh flowers, cosy throw blankets, and stylish accent pillows. These touches create a warm and inviting atmosphere, making the house ready for viewing and helping prospective buyers gather ideas on how they could decorate the space.
- SHOWCASE DINING AREAS**
Set the dining table with elegant place settings to display the functionality of the space and how it could look during family gatherings.
- OPTIMISE TEMPERATURE SETTINGS**
Adjust the heating to ensure the house feels warm and welcoming. A cosy temperature can make a huge difference in buyer perception, especially during colder months. Around 21°C should be the norm as any higher temperatures can feel too warm to some and make them feel uncomfortable during the viewing.
- USE MIRRORS TO MAXIMISE SPACE**
Strategically placing mirrors in smaller rooms and hallways can make these areas appear brighter and more spacious.
- MAINTAIN PRISTINE WINDOWS**
Clean windows not only enhance natural light but also improve the outward view, making rooms feel more open and inviting.
- ENSURE ADEQUATE LIGHTING**
Replace any broken light bulbs and add lamps to darker corners to brighten up every part of the house.
- PRIORITISE BEDROOM APPEAL**
Since bedrooms often carry high value for buyers, ensure they are presented that way, rather than as home offices, to maximise the perceived value of the property.

Kitchen

Often, a kitchen functions as a central point for the home, so it's one of the most important areas to stage in any property. To enhance your kitchen's appeal and potentially even the selling price, follow these tips:



ORGANISE STORAGE

Maximize the perception of storage space by tidying up cupboards. Keep in mind that if your cupboards are fully packed and appear to be running out of space, viewers might think they will face the same issue. In contrast, neat, tidy cupboards with plenty of empty space suggest there is plenty of space for someone who enjoys cooking.

SIMPLIFY DECORATIONS

Remove any personal items like fridge magnets and keep decorations neutral and appealing to help the potential buyer imagine themselves in the space.

DECLUTTER SURFACES

Keep countertops clear except for a minimalistic touch such as a bowl of fruit. Store away bulky appliances and ensure that all dishes are tidied away. The idea is to allow viewers to see how much workspace the kitchen offers and allow them to judge if it's enough for their needs.

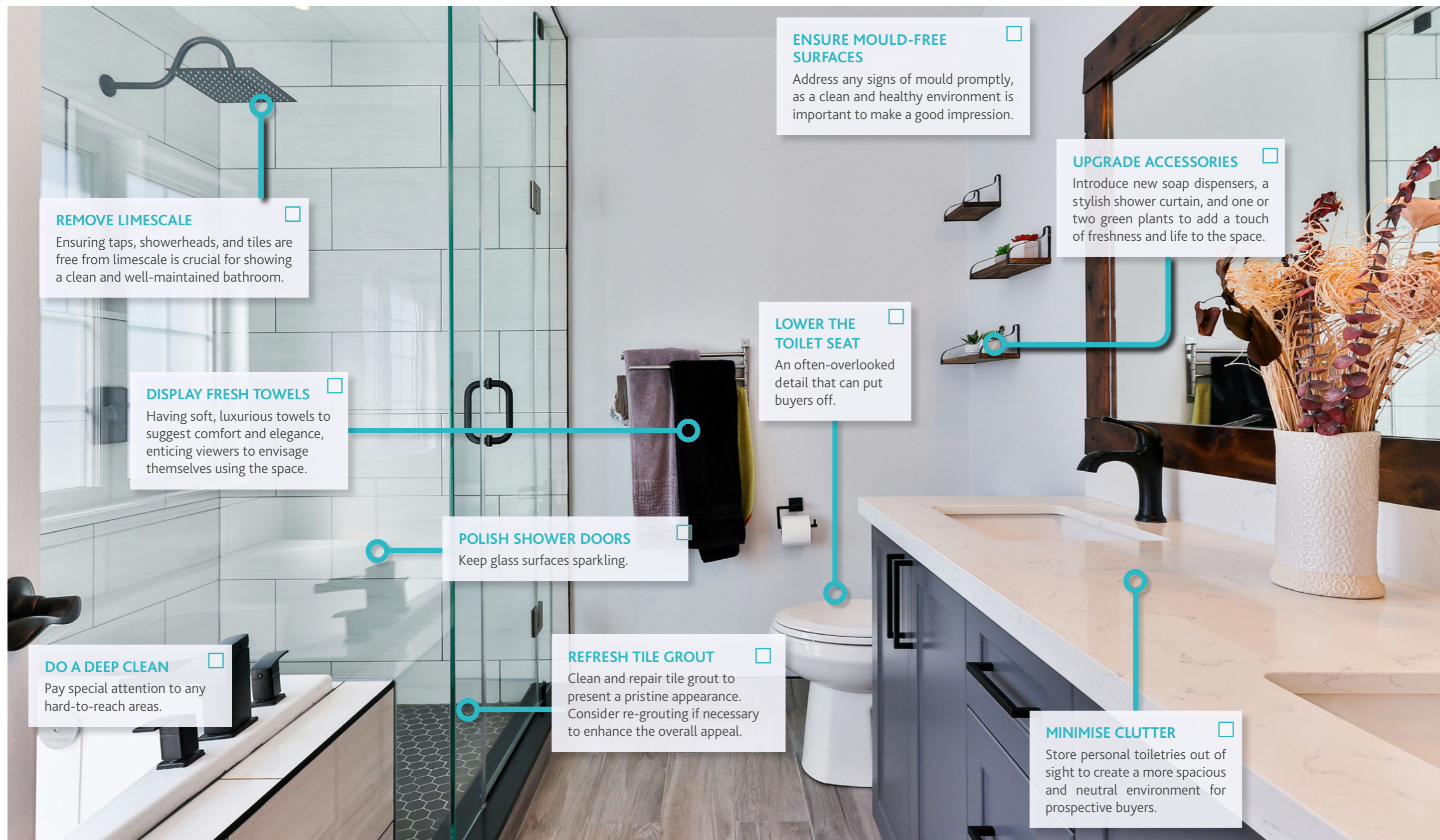
UPDATE FIXTURES + FINISHES

Consider minor upgrades like cabinet refacing or a fresh coat of paint. These small changes can make a significant difference without a hefty investment. Additionally, updating worn countertops with affordable laminate options can modernise the space and make it look tidier.

ENSURE CLEANLINESS + MAINTENANCE

Ensure all kitchen appliances and surfaces are spotless. Prospective buyers often see the kitchen as a reflection of the overall care taken in the home.

Bathroom



Living Room





Repaint key rooms

□ ENHANCE ROOM BRIGHTNESS

A fresh coat of light paint can transform dark, cramped spaces into bright, welcoming areas.

□ CHOOSE A NEUTRAL PAINT PALETTE

To make your property more appealing to potential buyers, repaint key rooms using neutral colours such as beige, light grey, or white. These shades are widely preferred as they help prospective buyers envision their own furnishings and decor in the space.

□ REMOVE BOLD COLOURS + WALLPAPERS

Before putting your house on the market, get rid of any vibrant or unconventional wallpapers and paint choices.

Make necessary repairs

FIX OBVIOUS ISSUES

- Mend leaky taps, cracked kitchen or bathroom tiles, and any visible damage to present your house ready for potential buyers.
- Patch holes or cracks in walls and ceilings to ensure a tidy appearance.
- Replace broken light bulbs and consider upgrading outdated light fixtures.

INSPECT MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

- Make sure the heating system works properly.
- Examine plumbing and electrical systems for any faults and fix them to avoid last-minute hurdles in the selling process.



Carpets + Flooring

□ REPLACE OR PROFESSIONALLY CLEAN CARPETS

If your carpets appear worn or are visibly stained, consider replacing them with brighter, more appealing options to increase the appeal. Alternatively, professional cleaning can revitalise existing carpets by removing stains and odours.

□ ADDRESS TORN CARPETS

Examine all carpeted areas for signs of wear or damage. Replacing torn carpets is essential as it helps in presenting a well-maintained home.

□ POLISH HARDWOOD FLOORS

Ensure that any hardwood floors are thoroughly polished to reflect well during viewings.

□ REFRESH AREA RUGS

Clean or replace area rugs to complement the flooring. This small detail can enhance the appearance of the rooms and contribute positively to first impressions during open-house days.



Deep cleaning

□ OVEN

Ensure the oven is cleaned thoroughly to remove all traces of grease and burnt food, reflecting well-maintained kitchen appliances.

□ FIREPLACE

If you have one, clean the fireplace to highlight this desirable feature. Stack some burning wood to indicate that the fireplace is functional and ready to use.

□ WINDOWS, MIRRORS + GLASS SURFACES

Clean and polish these to a streak-free finish, ensuring they sparkle to enhance natural light.

□ LIGHT FIXTURES, SKIRTING BOARDS + CEILING FANS

Dust and polish these areas to show attention to detail, building toward making a good first impression.

□ CURTAINS

Clean all curtains thoroughly to brighten rooms.

□ FURNITURE

If staying for viewings, make sure all furniture is clean and presentable.

□ CARPETS

Invest in professional carpet cleaning to remove stains and odours.



Declutter

but don't depersonalise



□ MINIMISE BULKY FURNITURE

Reduce the amount of furniture in each room to enhance the sense of space. Consider using a storage unit to temporarily store any non-essential furnishings and personal items.

□ MAINTAIN CHARACTER ELEMENTS

While depersonalising, keep a few stylish elements like tasteful vases or select paintings. These touches help to present an appealing, lived-in feel without overwhelming potential buyers with personal tastes.

□ NEUTRALISE PERSONAL DECOR

To help prospective buyers seeing themselves in your home, replace overtly personal items such as family photographs, holiday souvenirs, and children's artwork with more neutral decor. The aim is to strike a balance between a clean canvas and a homely atmosphere.

□ SHOWCASE LIFESTYLE POTENTIAL

Display the lifestyle that your house supports. Arrange furniture and decor to highlight the comfort and functionality of each space, suggesting a lifestyle that buyers can aspire to.

□ DECLUTTER COMPREHENSIVELY

Remove unnecessary items and clear out spaces like cupboards and cabinets to demonstrate ample storage.

□ KEEP ESSENTIAL FURNITURE

Retain key pieces that define the purpose of each room. For instance, a well-placed armchair and a reading lamp in a study corner can suggest use without clutter.

Final touches before hosting viewings



ELIMINATE BAD SMELLS + INTRODUCE PLEASANT SCENTS

- ❑ Eliminate unpleasant odours — clean drains, wash bins, air out old cooking smells, and remove any furniture which smells of cigarette smoke.
- ❑ Consider removing the pet litter trays to freshen the environment for potential buyers.
- ❑ Ensure there is enough ventilation of all rooms before the viewers' arrival to maintain a fresh atmosphere throughout your property.
- ❑ Choose natural air fresheners such as essential oil diffusers or home perfumes, selecting mild scents that enhance rather than dominate the space. Recommended fragrances include orange, lemon, jasmine, cedar, pine, vanilla, and cinnamon.
- ❑ While preparing your house ready for sale, avoid overpowering and clichéd scents like freshly brewed coffee or baked bread.



CREATE AMBIENCE

- ❑ Open curtains and blinds to introduce more natural light.
- ❑ Adjust the temperature to ensure it is comfortable (around 21°C).
- ❑ Consider playing soft, ambient music in the background to enhance the atmosphere, subtly influencing the mood and overall impression of the home.
- ❑ Strategically place fresh flowers or indoor plants in key areas to add a touch of vibrancy and life.
- ❑ Ensure all lighting fixtures are working and consider installing warm-toned bulbs (~2,700-3,000K to create a cosy and inviting glow throughout the property).

QUICK CLEAN

- ❑ Do a quick last-minute clean, focusing on high-traffic areas, before each showing.
- ❑ Ensure the house is free of any clutter and personal items are stored away.

Enhance kerb appeal - improve the exterior



Enhancing your property's kerb appeal is key to making a strong first impression. Here are the essential checklist steps to boost your home's exterior appeal, from refreshing the facade and maintaining the garden to repairing driveways and addressing critical issues highlighted in the home report. Follow these tips to make your property more attractive to potential buyers and stand out in a competitive market.

TAKE CARE OF THE FACADE

To enhance the kerb appeal and prepare your house for sale, consider the following:

- Refresh the paint: Apply a fresh coat of neutral paint to the facade, focusing on any areas that are peeling or weathered.
- Maintain windows: Ensure all windows are well-maintained, draft-proofed, and freshly painted where necessary.
- Roof repairs: Replace any missing tiles and remove moss to avoid negative remarks in your home report.
- Gutters: Check that all gutters are clean and functioning properly.
- Front door appeal: Repair or replace any broken doorknobs, update the house number and ensure the door is attractive.
- Subtle garden touches: Add window boxes or planters to enhance the outdoor space. Don't overdo it as many people prefer a low-maintenance garden.
- Fence and outdoor structures: Repaint fences, decks, and sheds to improve overall appearance.
- Outdoor furniture and bins: Remove outdated furniture and ensure wheelie bins are hidden from street view.

IMPROVE THE LANDSCAPE

First impressions are crucial when preparing your house for the market. Enhancing your property's outdoor space can make a huge difference to a potential buyer's first impressions. To optimise kerb appeal:

- Mow the lawn: Ensure its neatly trimmed for a clean look.
- Trim bushes: Cut back any overgrown bushes to maintain a tidy garden.
- Remove weeds: Clear out weeds and apply fresh soil to garden beds for a polished appearance.
- Plant colourful flowers: Add a splash of colour with low-maintenance flowers, appealing to buyers who don't want to do a lot of gardening.
- A well-kept garden not only enhances the attractiveness of your home but also signifies to prospective buyers that the property has been well-maintained.

DRIVEWAYS + PATHS

- Pressure washing: Thoroughly clean driveways and paths to remove any dirt, stains, and moss.
- Crack repair: Inspect and repair any cracks or damages in the pavement to present a well-maintained property.
- Tile replacement: For tiled paths, consider replacing any cracked tiles to improve the overall look and feel of the entrance area.

Consider repairing issues highlighted in the home report

Addressing the concerns detailed in the home report can significantly enhance the appeal of your property to potential buyers. While rectifying every single issue may not yield a full return on investment, properties with minimal defects often sell faster. This allows prospective buyers to concentrate on personalising their new home rather than allocating funds for immediate repairs, making your property that much more attractive.

If you have not yet obtained a home report and wish to make your house more appealing on the market, prioritise addressing common defects such as:

- Dampness and condensation
- Rotting timber, including wet and dry rot
- Structural issues, such as cracks or subsidence
- Problems with plumbing and electrical systems
- Faulty heating systems and poor insulation
- Roof issues, including broken or missing tiles
- Blocked or damaged gutters and downpipes
- Inadequate ventilation and faulty drainage systems
- Compromised windows and doors, considering energy efficiency and the property's age
- Issues with chimneys, flues, and air bricks
- Pest infestations, such as woodworm or rodents

Ensuring these elements are in good condition not only increases the likelihood of a quicker sale but also potentially increases the perceived value of your property. Remember, a tidy and well-maintained home makes a huge difference in creating a positive first impression and can be a decisive factor in a competitive market.



Preparing your home before listing is essential for making a strong impression on prospective buyers. A well-presented home not only attracts more interest but also increases its perceived value, leading to a quicker and possibly even more profitable sale.

By taking the time to follow these tips, you can enhance your home's appeal and make it easier for buyers to imagine themselves living there.

Every detail, from kerb appeal to interior staging, plays a crucial role in setting your home apart in a competitive market.

If you need more help with preparing your property for sale, contact one of our estate agents who'll be happy to share their advice. Their expertise can guide you through the process and help ensure you make the most of your home sale.

Estate Agents + Solicitors

At Harper Macleod, we offer a full range of services to support you at every stage of your property journey. Whether you're buying or selling, our experienced estate agents and conveyancing solicitors are here to guide you.

As Scotland's Law Firm of the Year 2025*, our team of professionals have a full understanding and strong track record within the property market. This, along with our legal expertise and experience, ensures a smooth, stress-free experience from start to finish.

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AWARDS + ACCREDITATIONS

