

Helping our clients to achieve

Dry runs and wet HIPs

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by Alex Preshaw, partner specialising in residential property

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After all the time, money and business effort that has gone into preparations for the introduction of HIPs (Home Information Packs), the 'go-live date' on 1st August came and went with a whimper. All the professionals involved in the buying and selling of property have spent many hours adapting, each time the government have watered down the contents; the public is still totally confused about whether they need a HIP or not and the Domestic Energy Assessors who invested in training have watched with dismay as prices for the Energy Performance Certificates have tumbled.

So what does it all mean for the home buyer? Well, it's pretty certain that many sellers will try to pass on the cost of the HIP (starting around £300) to the buyer by adding it to the selling price. So the buyer will lose out, eventually hitting the first time buyer for whom house prices will spiral even more out of reach.

Alex Preshaw, partner specialising in residential property at Phillips Solicitors commented: 'There's no doubt that the property buying and selling process could be simplified, but the introduction of the HIP is not going to speed it up. There is a case for keeping the new Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) but the truth is we don't need a whole new pack – we already provide all the documents in the HIP so the EPCs could simply be added before exchange of contract. However, our clients can rest assured that we can provide their HIP, using our own software, and help them move house as have done for well over 21 years. The important thing to remember is that if we produce the HIP then it will belong to the client, whichever estate agent they choose.'

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