

New property search agency designed to help expats find homes in London

Expatriates searching for a London home can now get help from a bespoke property search service.

By Leah Hyslop

Published: 5:50PM GMT 07 Nov 2010

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The agency, [expafindaproperty.com](http://www.expafindaproperty.com) (<http://www.expafindaproperty.com>), offers a range of services to overseas clients, from finding suitable properties, to arranging advice from conveyancing solicitors, and organising expatriate mortgages.

Founders Erica Evans and Guy Stephenson say they hope the agency will provide solutions to the problems commonly faced by overseas buyers when trying to buy a property in London



Premium homes such as these houses in Chelsea are among those being snapped up by overseas investors Photo: Iconpix / Alamy

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“Unlike people who living in Britain, who are bombarded with data and figures about the housing market every day, expats are often a little behind on the realities of the market,” said Mr Stephenson.

“They need advice on where and how to buy, and they also need someone to view properties for them, especially if they aren’t going to visit themselves. Estate agents work for the vendor, and they can give quite misleading information. What we do is visit the properties and draw up a shortlist, giving accurate information on what it is like, from transport links to the quality of the nearest school.”

The service is aimed both at expats looking for a personal residence in London, and overseas investors hoping to build up a property portfolio. The most popular areas for buyers, according to Mr Stephenson, include Chelsea, Westminster, Clapham and Wandsworth.

According to recent research by property agent **Knight Frank** (<http://www.knightfrank.co.uk/>), the proportion of foreign buyers in central London has increased from 53 to 68 per cent between June 2009 and June this year.

Sales of million-pound properties are believed to have more than doubled in London in the past year, due largely to increasing demand from wealthy foreign buyers looking to take advantage of sterling’s weakness.

Oliver Hooper, director of London estate agency **Huntly Hooper** (<http://www.huntlyhooper.com/>) said in the last year his

agency's proportion of foreign buyers has shot up from twenty-five per cent to nearer fifty per cent. "They're coming in thick and fast. It's due partly to favourable exchange rates, but its also because prices have dropped slightly, making this a good time for investors to buy a London property," he said.

He added that buyers came from a wide range of locations. "In our experience, they're from all over the world, including Italy, France, the US, South Africa, and Malaysia. Some are looking for places to live, but a lot are looking for investments. We try to provide them with as much data as possible about the housing market, to make sure they understand what kind of deal they're getting."

Expatfindaproperty.com (<http://www.expatfindaproperty.com>) charges an initial £395 for its services, which is deducted from the final fee of one per cent of any agreed property sale.

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