

No Regrets for Buyers

The media is buzzing with reports of slow sales and falling house prices and it would be tempting to assume that the future looks gloomy. However, these things always come in waves and it will probably not be long before we look back at this time and wonder what all the fuss was about.

From a buyer's perspective the question is whether this is a good time to buy because prices have fallen, or a bad time on the basis that they might fall further. Curiously, it is probably both for several reasons.

Firstly, we should look at things in perspective and understand that there is a difference between a regular buyer and a professional property investor. Certainly investors are currently doing well as they take advantage of the fact that many sellers are now more likely to accept low offers from cash buyers.

However, from a 'normal' buyer's perspective, in some ways it wouldn't matter if prices were to fall further after having bought, because presumably, you wouldn't be selling. The value of a property is only relevant when it is on the market, just as the tourist exchange rate for the Euro is only really relevant when you cross The Channel.

There is also some comfort to be taken from the fact that the long term trend for prices has always been upwards, so any fall could be expected to be followed by another rise before you move on in, say, four or five years time. So any immediate 'losses' would probably have been cancelled out whilst you have been enjoying your home.

As rents rise, property ownership remains a bedrock of our personal satisfaction and security. The key is to take advantage of the choice available to you, buy somewhere you can really call home and ignore short-term price fluctuations, knowing that the roof over your head is your own.