

Amanda Ake of Stacks Property Search & Acquisition explains her role and looks at current trends

Establishing a good relationship is key. I take a detailed brief about what they want from the house and their lifestyle, including medium- and long-term plans. I then view a number of houses on their behalf and make a shortlist. The initial viewing with my clients always includes a mix of houses so that I can refine their true likes and dislikes.

Location is important too, so I need to orientate my clients to the area. Although they may have decided on the place they want to live, I make sure they are aware of alternatives that might meet their needs just as well.

What does Somerset offer for house buyers?

Somerset offers a real variety, from traditional farmhouses with land to beautiful cottages and even some fantastic new builds. It also provides an excellent quality of life for people trying to escape city life without losing its opportunities. It's perfectly feasible to commute into Bristol or Bath on a daily basis, and many who live here split their life between London and the country, using the efficient road and rail networks.

What trends or changes in the property market can prospective buyers expect over the next few years?

Large country houses that are perfect for families will always be sought after. A gradual change in recent years is the popularity of houses with separate accommodation. This allows several generations to pool resources and live together, avoiding potentially large inheritance tax bills. Also, houses with solar panels, and consequently cheaper heating costs, could well have more appeal in the future.

I do not predict huge changes in property prices in the next two years as buyers are realising that they need to invest with a view to the long term. However, there are still great opportunities, especially for those buyers brave enough to get involved in a renovation project. stacks.co.uk/services/



Clevedon estate agent reports strong new activity

Clevedon and North Somerset estate agent Mark Templer and Company is reporting a local boom in the property market, with more than twice as many newly-listed homes coming on to its books during April than in March. The rise has been matched by an increase in new applicants registering to purchase a new home.

"The bank holidays and the fine weather have naturally helped, but there is clearly an underlying improvement," commented Mark Templer. "People are responding very strongly to our promotional and advertising activity.

"Both buyers and sellers appear highly motivated. With property pricing more stable than last year, the market is flourishing. This is good news for all who are interested in making a move."

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Greenslade Taylor Hunt expansion

Chartered Surveyors Greenslade Taylor Hunt, whose head office is in the county town of Taunton, reports the opening of an additional office to their network in South Molton, North Devon. The office is to be run by partner Richard Webber MRICS, who comes from a farming family in the district. This office opening brings the total of Greenslade Taylor Hunt offices to 13, covering approximately 100 miles of West Country territory all the way through to Dorchester in west Dorset.

The office opening is to be followed shortly by a relaunch of the firm's website (ath.net), which will be in the public domain from mid-May onwards.



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