



housedoctorplus.com
creative solutions for selling and renting property fast

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Mr & Mrs B
15 H Road
Chislehurst
Kent
BR7 XXX

Dear Mr & Mrs B

RE: My recent Housedoctor visit

Thankyou very much indeed for inviting me to assess your property and for the excellent hospitality shown to me on my visit.

I understand you are having difficulty in selling your property, having been available on the open market for some 4 months now. You say you have had only 4 viewings in that period and that although you believed one party appered to show strong interest, no sale has materialized .

I believe the reasons you have had very little response to your agents marketing, resulting in very few viewings , lie in 2 very different but important areas. Firstly your agents details are appalling and do not encourage a potential buyer to view. Secondly, once a buyer does eventually view, the property has a dowdy dated appearance, and your buyer is incorrectly thinking it will be too much work and too much expense to "put right". At present it does not deliver the style or quality they are looking for. If they do view , they are adding up huge expense in their minds (which it would not be) and are deciding that your house is currently overpriced (considering what they believe it would cost to improve) , too much money to rectify and too much work. All incorrect assumptions. So they buy the house down the road, perhaps even paying a premium for it , as they believe it may offer them better value for money, and less hassle, than yours.

With my extensive experience as an estate agent, I am sure your property is not being promoted in the correct way, to gain maximize interest. I will deal in more detail about this aspect later in the report.

One issue potential purchasers will have with the property itself , is with the exterior styling of your house. Being an "architect designed" 1960's ultra mod house, of cutting edge design at the time of construction , it is now somewhat dated and appeals to a niche market, which substantially narrows the appeal of your home. I am not confident anything major can be done economically to overcome this issue, however I include some advice in this report that will go some way towards helping increase its appeal.

One of the biggest problems of your home however, is that the internal fixtures, fittings and features are all somewhat original, and therefore regarded as dated now. Your prospective purchasers will have the false impression that these issues cost a fortune to rectify, however I am sure, following my discussions

with you at the house, that you now have good ideas of how to improve the appeal of your home without spending too much money. For brevity in this written report, I will deal with each room separately, in list format.

GENERAL: Replace all dated 60's flush paneled doors with modern light wood doors , with darkwood inlaid details (art deco style would look good with your style of architecture, although not normally specified generally) and replace all door furniture with stainless steel or chrome fitments as shown.

FRONT DOOR: Sadly the replacement upvc door you changed only very recently is not in keeping with the exterior of the house, being dark wood effect, when all other exterior doors and windows are white. You have unfortunately wasted your money here . This should be replaced with a white faced door with colonial style panels.

HALL: This room features attractive wood strip flooring, yet it is covered in part by 2 mats...remove these to expose the floor. The wall opposite the entrance is of dated paneled and painted wood. This should be covered with large unframed mirror, making a whole mirrored wall, updating its looks, and effectively doubling the size of this shallow entrance area (by reflection), and reflecting more light throughout. The cloakroom door, central to this wall should be replaced with a modern wood paneled door with inlaid line detail (art deco style as before) and add chrome or stainless steel furniture. The door to the garage is very unsightly and should be updated by adding beaded panels and changing the lock to a modern version in stainless steel. The door should be repainted white.

CLOAKROOM: Rehang the door to open outwards, as this is not practical now, opening into the already small space. The walls are fully tiled in grey tiles and these should be painted white with tile paint. The plastic fixtures /fitments should be replaced with stainless steel or chrome fitments and the toilet seat changed for a wooden one.

LOUNGE: Remove and replace the dated spotlight fitment above the entrance door. Remove the red felt covered shelf in the display niche area and replace with a sandblasted frosted green glass shelf, retaining a wooden upstand at the rear to conceal the lights illuminating these shelves. Add a slate top the concrete fire hearth to conceal the dated exposed concrete and paint the upstand matt black. Do the same to the shelf to the side to conceal the concrete. At the base of the "pillar" flue, top the concrete with modern green frosted glass. By removing the dated elements and replacing with trendy materials , you will dramatically enhance and modernise the fireplace, which in this room is the dominant focal feature. The pillar to the left of the patio doors needs to be repaired , as your prospective purchasers may think you have structural problems, when in fact it's only a stud wall ! Place a large plant in front of the pillar to soften its lines and also to conceal the unsightly warm air vent. The curtains and pole should be replaced with more modern ones (I suggest Ikea here, as they are cheap but very effective...a metal pole with light coloured linen style curtains, and should not cost any more than about £100). Remove the "net" style curtains, as their design looks as though they are dusty , and give the room a dull , dirty look. The carpeting needs replacing, and I suggest a cheap (but not cheap looking!!) oatmeal berber loop carpet from somewhere such as Carpet Rite. I recently used them, to supply about 151 sq metres of 100% wool berber carpet from their Imperial range, at a cost of under £2000 incl fitting and underlay. This style of carpet will match the exposed wooden floor to the upper area of this room. The fake plant should be removed , as it blocks access to the patio doors. The rug "runner" should be removed from the wooden floor as it slips badly , potentially dangerous to viewers and their children and it hides the great wooden flooring beneath. Replace the net curtains to the front glazed area with modern light wood slatted blinds (again Ikea have a really well priced range). This will dramatically alter the appeal of the house both internally and externally, as this large glazed area dominates the front of the house. At the moment , your visiting potential purchaser , when first driving by and viewing from outside, will see the nets and think the whole house interior is dated (which it is at present of course, but not after my magic !). First impressions count for a huge amount and those who just look from the outside prior to viewing internally, I believe, would be frightened away by misconceptions about the interior. So it is important that if you continue to refresh the interior, you must remove these dowdy nets as otherwise potential

viewers will still make assumptions about the house interior. Remove all the 60's dated cupboards, and replace with a number of lush plants. The open tread staircase is very outdated now, and can be simply modernized by painting the side rails white and the black metal balusters silver, to give a metallic finish, and the treads covered in the same new carpet as in the lounge. As you know, I would have preferred to go "more funky" with the staircase as it would appeal to the type of buyer I profiled on my visit, however I understand your resistance to do this, it being a bit "whacky" for your taste. Don't forget my opening lines...we are not trying to do things to appeal to you the owner...only your new buyer!! Repaint all ceilings and walls in the lounge and dining and upper hall level.

DINING ROOM: Replace net curtains as before. Ideally remove the 6 mirror tiles to the wall, and replace with one large unframed mirror, from wall to wall, and floor to ceiling. The compromise you suggested of simply adding more mirror tile panels to the existing is not acceptable. By adding a huge mirror, you will effectively double the size of this area by reflection, and enhance the reflected view of your Japanese style garden area. The door connecting to the family room, should be sealed up properly, not just concealed with beads! I understand the flow of the house does not require a door here, however, in case your future purchaser wants the door back, I suggest you box in the door from the dining side, forming a useful video/book cupboard in the family room. One job...double benefit!

KITCHEN: Replace the "fuzzy felt" carpet tiles with wood effect vinyl (again Carpet Rite are cheap). Paint over all dated tiling with white tile paint. Paint the kitchen cupboard fronts a "trendy" colour (the aquamarine on one of your ornaments would be perfect) and paint the dated handles silver. You could try your idea of painting the whole door including the handle rail in the same colour, and adding trendy stainless steel new handles (Sainsburys Home Base do a really funky range). All your utensil holders/jars etc on display here, are very dated now, and should be replaced with a wooden range (Ikea again!). The window in this room has a venetian blind fitted between the double glazed panes, however this is really dated now and somewhat grubby in appearance. I suggest fitting an Ikea wooden slatted blind to this window, and drop the blind say 9 inches, with the slats open, to conceal the existing fitted blind and modernize the look. It will tie in with the new flooring too. You have made a (not) very nice feature of the wall hung microwave! Remove it from the wall facing you, and place on the worktop in the corner. Replace the dated 70s spotlights with one of Ikeas low voltage range. Replace the back door, which looks dated and in poor condition. Replace the dated breakfast chairs with more modern range (either chrome or green glass effect).

FAMILY ROOM: This is very much open to the kitchen. The carpet in this area is different to the kitchen and looks unsightly, and makes each "zone" appear smaller than it is. Differing colourways on the floor of open room areas breaks up each area and makes the whole feel smaller than it perhaps is, whereas with one colour flooring running through different open areas of a house, the whole feeling of space is amplified. Replace with the same vinyl as recommended in the kitchen, but add a large rug as this will soften this area, which is used for lounging. Remove the unsightly open video shelves (as you will have a nice new built in cupboard, as described in the dining room detail!). Repaint the walls cream as currently they are too strong being a bright "lemon" colour at the moment, finish by dressing the room with a number of lush plants as the room feels too empty and bland at the moment. Plants add colour and contrast, and also a lush, almost luxurious feel too.

LANDING: By removing the badly placed box at the top of the stairs, you remove the dated light on it at the same time, ridding the landing of wires trailing across the floor...another example of one job with 2 benefits. Place a plant in this area and if you wish it to be illuminated still, tack the supply cable to the skirting. Remove the strong coloured silk curtain, and replace with a slatted wooden blind, for the same reasons as before with the window behind the stairs. Take away the untidy shelves to one wall and remove the modern storage from the small bedroom and place on the long landing wall, and place a very large mirror over it (one job, 2 benefits again) releasing precious space in the small bedroom, and updating the look of the spacious landing at the same time. Replace the dated drop lights over the stairs, and hang the modern replacement we discussed, much higher. The airing cupboard door is very odd and very unsightly.

Replace with the same doors as recommended throughout, but ensure an adequate air supply. Paint walls and ceiling white.

BEDROOM 1 : This is a good sized room , but it feels very empty and unloved ! It has a bland hard feel about it, which can be softened by placing a large modern picture or framed mirror above the bed head, and by placing 2 or 3 large plants around the room. The wall wide range of wardrobes are very dated now, and should be modernized very economically , by adding beaded panels and repainting pure white. Change the fittings here to stainless steel ones to complete the modern look.

EN SUITE BATHROOM : Remove the TV in here !! Place a mirror on the end facing wall.

BEDROOM 2 : Nothing to do

BEDROOM 3: Remove the net curtain as it's dated , and in fact not needed as no one can see in. It spoils the view to the garden, which I believe is one of the strongest selling features of your house.

BEDROOM 4: Repaint the mustard coloured wall opposite the entrance door, white. Never have a strong colour on a wall opposite an entrance to a room (which, by the way, is why we can leave the other strongly coloured wall in the other bedroom...just in case you think I either missed it or contradicted myself!). Colour is ok, but in the right location within the room. Move the small table and lamp to the left hand wall , which tidies the trailing wires again. The reasons we are moving these by the way, is not just to place them better in a room, but also to tidy the wires, as the incoming purchaser may well conclude that there are not enough plug sockets.

GARDENS: Not much to do here , because they are absolutely fantastic, and a really good selling point, in terms of both size and quality. A few minor things though...

Courtyard outside cloakroom window: Looks untidy and dull from the cloakroom, and can be brightened by staining the fencing and rear of shed in this area (trendy colours as shown on the colour chart are widely available now) , and buy a large (it can be plastic here, as not going to be seen much or close up) pot and put a large lush structural plant in it, something like a Palm or Cordyline, and place centrally in this area. As the courtyard part of the boundary is now going to be stained a lighter colour, and the remainder of fencing to remain stained as it is, you will need to screen this area a little from the main garden , with a small panel of trellis. Remove all builders debris from side passage.

Front Garden: Place 2 or 3 very large palms in good quality terracotta pots (its important they are not plastic here) , on the front terrace, to soften the "boxy" look of the front façade of the building and add a quality feel.

I made reference earlier to your agents marketing material. I think they are appalling, and they have missed the most saleable points of your house completely, in both written word and photographs. I quote their details ...

- "60's is the best period " WRONG

- "Japanese style gardens" WRONG, only part are, and they have not enthused about the size or content of the remainder

- "further piece of garden" Implies a very small area, when its very large and very useful as a kids only area as it is separate from formal garden.

“kitchen/sun lounge” WRONG Its not a sun lounge at all, it’s a family room, and should be promoted as such , as all families are searching for a family room especially off the kitchen. Sun lounges are things from the 60’s and 70’s and therefore outdated (apart from being of different construction too).

Here is a list of omissions or errors in their sales particulars

- The gardens get just a 2 line mention and its one of the main features of your property
- No mention of easy access to the mainline commuter station...surely a very saleable feature of your house
- No mention of being very close to protected common land or woodland. Important to families with children and dogs.
- No mention of being originally designed by an award winning architect
- They keep saying “open plan”...people in the main hate open plan everything, so why do they keep mentioning it?
- “In/Out Driveway”...WRONG its not at all.
- No mention of the garden being walled. A Good feature as the walls add character, texture and atmosphere, and provide great security too.
- No photos of the gardens !
- No floorplan
- No photo of the rear of the house. This being its best elevation, this photo should be the main house photo.
- No mention of it being in a very well regarded and hugely popular private road
- They should separate the lounge and dining room in the details

With all these points in mind, I believe the agent is not best representing you, by not appealing to the typical buyer of your home. With exterior styling issues playing an important (negative) part at present, the brochure of your home needs to be very positive, comprehensive and detailed , and should include many interior and exterior photos (only though, after you have done all I suggest!) and also MUST include a floor plan. Your house flows very well, and is very practical and functional in its design and layout, so it needs to be highlighted with a floor plan.

I enclose a copy of a style of brochure my old estate agency company would use in such an instance. The advantages are obvious, but there is a significant subliminal message too. If a “product” is perfectly packaged and well marketed, it implies the product is something special and worth it! The more attractive the packaging, the more attention it gets, the more sales you get. Your purchaser will be one looking for the “lifestyle” your property provides, and will likely be a creative, emotionally driven person, who would respond well to the marketing material I enclose.

Your current agent is severely limiting the number of viewings on your house, because of lack lustre, inaccurate , incomplete and boring sales details, which are not inspiring the potential purchaser to go inside

SUMMARY:

Your house is a specialist style of house, with a more narrow appeal than perhaps others in the road, and one that is dated throughout, and therefore not immediately appealing to your purchaser when they view, if indeed they get as far as viewing . At present it does not deliver the style nor the quality they are looking for. If they do view , they are adding up huge expense in their minds (which it would not be) and are deciding that your house is overpriced, too much money to rectify and too much work for them to undertake . All incorrect assumptions. You need to upgrade the interior, and make it more appealing, and by doing so you reduce the potential purchasers "spend guesstimate" and also add some "emotional hooks" which they will respond to. In short, the interior has the basic "wow" factor in design, but lacks "wow" in its fixtures, fittings and presentation.

I gather you found my visit very interesting, and both surprising and enjoyable and I hope you embrace my ideas wholly, and begin to transform your house very soon. I hope too, you either motivate your agent to alter their sales material or consider changing agents altogether. As discussed, if you would like me to draft a "positive" set of sales particulars for your house, which you could present to your agent, I would be happy to do so.

Please let me know if I can help any further at any time.

Whilst writing I thank you for prompt payment and enclose a receipted invoice for your records.

Yours Sincerely

Giles Newby FNAEA

SAMPLE REPORT