

This article was written by Ed Chamberlain, Chairman of the Consumer for Home Information Pack Support group (CHIPS). Their web site is:

<http://www.chipsgroup.org.uk/index1.htm>

First time buyers cannot fail to benefit from the introduction of HIPS

With the introduction of compulsory Home information Packs only about 12 months away, all sectors of the residential property industry are working hard to make the necessary changes required. For example, even now there are over 4,000 prospective home inspectors in training to re-qualify as government licensed inspectors. The Council of Mortgage Lenders recently welcomed the "timeline" for the introduction of HIPs issued by the government which they said would allow them to get prepared with a set timescale to work to.

However, the "wreckers and spoilers" are also out there doing their utmost to try and cast doubt in the minds of consumers, commentators, and even the government. Meanwhile, the government is committed to these reforms which are long overdue and supported by over 80% of consumers. The announcement of the implementation date (1st June 2007) was proof of the government's determination to see HIPs a reality next year.

As more evidence of successful voluntary HIPs trials come to light, the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA - seemingly dancing to the tune of the anti group SPLINTA) is having to admit that elements contained within the pack will be very helpful to buyers.

Time and time again the weak arguments put up against HIPs have been proven wrong. So much so, that now the "rear-guard action" has to concentrate on peripheral, transitional matters such as concerns that they expect a "blip" in the housing market around 2007 when HIPs become compulsory.

One of the latest bizarre arguments put forward was that, whilst HIPs will certainly help first time buyers, it would add costs for "first time sellers". What the NAEA fail to tell us is that most first time sellers are moving up the housing "ladder" to a more expensive house and therefore will benefit from receiving a HIP worth more than the one they have to provide for their sale. It is glaring omissions like this that, unfortunately, reveal that the NAEA are far from impartial in their stance. The attached press release also helps to highlight this further.

Whilst we all understand that "bad news stories" sell papers, I also think it is true that on issues such as HIPs, the public want to know both sides of the story so they can make up their own minds.

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