

Roger Trower – Chief Executive - Broadlands Estates

Thank you for your email with the note attached from Deputy David Johnson.

I note the questions contained in your letter and will answer each of them in the order presented.

1. We are members of the Jersey Estate Agents Association and various other associated schemes in the UK (NAEA) as we feel that as a responsible and professionally run office, such as ours, needs to show that estate agents should abide by an agreed code of conduct. We think that membership of these various bodies is extremely important and that local legislation needs to be put in place. Jersey's housing market and the way it conducts transactions is different from the UK.
2. 'Gazumping' is a very inflammatory word that is mostly completely misunderstood by the general public with regard to property transactions. An estate agent should be acting for their clients (the vendor in most cases) and ensure they get the best price for their property. Once an offer has been accepted and the legal process starts we have done our job. If another prospective purchaser comes along and offers over the previously accepted price we as agents are duty bound to let our clients know the situation. It then comes down to the morals and greed of the vendor: whether to stick with their agreed buyer or change purchaser for more money!! I know of no way of legislating against a person's greed! The housing market is now completely different from 2018, with a lack of stock, cheap mortgage finance and a high number of potential purchasers. In some cases property is making more than the asking price and the agent's job is particularly important in ensuring that all parties concerned are aware of the facts.
3. Most people's highest value possession is usually their house/flat. To have someone with no previous experience or knowledge to call themselves an estate agent and then give advice to those people, should not be allowed. All agents should be qualified – full stop!!
4. I agree with the statement that some sort of regulation is required to prevent bad practice and drive cultural change.
5. I have already stated that ALL agents should have a qualification to practice as estate agents. They should be guided by a professional body in Jersey and be part of best practice in the UK.
6. We should be regulated and a standard 'Code of Practice' set up.

As a final note I think you should be aware that Broadlands would like to see the whole legal process for selling property in Jersey overhauled. Lawyers have already been asked but seem reluctant to change.

Having spoken and consulted with my co-directors we feel that a meeting, face to face with the respective parties, would be of benefit. It would be a lot easier to have a 'full and frank' discussion than try and cover everything by email.