

NLIS DELIVERS FAST RESULTS

Of late we have seen a lot of discussion centering around Home Information Packs, be it the variance in quality of the personal searches or the likelihood of a Conservative Government abolishing them altogether or changing their format. As regulator of the National Land Information Service (NLIS), Land Data's view is in line with the Law Society and RICS, searches should be sourced directly from the Local Authority (LA) by the purchaser's conveyancer, at a point where they can be relied upon throughout the purchase process. Based upon feedback received, the reality appears to be 95% of 'secondary' searches (those ordered by a buyer's conveyancer to replace the personal searches within a HIP) are official Local Authority searches every time.

Reliable and Accurate Data

Land Data believes that land and property searches are only of benefit to the consumer if they are of the appropriate standard and quality. They should be current and from a reliable and accurate source i.e. sourced directly from the Local Authority. If the widely held belief that HIPs are to be either scrapped or the contents greatly reduced following next years election comes to fruition, it will create a dilemma for those companies who supply data using alternative sources of information and who interpret the answers themselves, be they personal search or non-local authority data providers. We therefore expect to see a rise in the level of press coverage criticising Local Authorities for being slow to respond to personal search requests and requests for other land and property information. Recent coverage has cited lack of cooperation between the LA and alternative data collation company as the main reason for perceived delays. However, it is not the Local Authority that should be blamed for being slow, in our view the fault lies with the time consuming, labour intensive manual data collection methods that these alternative providers use to gather information. Time is taken up sending a person to the Local Authority, setting up appointments with different departments, trawling through data, as well as waiting to obtain data that is not available via a public register.

NLIS Searches take 4.5 days

National Land Information Service (NLIS) data shows the very same LAs accused in recent press reports of taking a month or more to deliver information manually, turned around the same information, over the same period, electronically via NLIS in under 5 days. In fact, looking at data from all Local

Authorities over the past 12 months, we can see the average turnaround of NLIS electronic searches has been 4.5 days.

Official conveyancing search data delivered electronically is not only the fastest way to obtain searches it is also the most secure, and the benefits do not stop there.

NLIS is the only regulated electronic land and property information process in the market. The NLIS channels operate under strict licence agreements which protect the users, clients and the data providers, this creates an environment which is secure, robust and fully supported. NLIS electronically connects essential data providers such as Local Authorities, water companies and the coal authority via the NLIS Hub to the licensed channels. Conveyancers can easily connect to a licenced NLIS channel via their desktop. Where a Local Authority returns its search transaction electronically, results can arrive in a conveyancer's case management system within minutes. Searches can also be tracked with reports, (depending upon the Conveyancer's internal IT set up), being sent onto customers resulting in better communication and enhanced customer service.

Through its channels, NLIS operate a fully electronic payment system, meaning a Conveyancer's professional time and that of his legal and financial support staff can be spent effectively elsewhere. NLIS channels also offer a host of other search services, many connecting to other specialist data providers, giving Conveyancers a one-stop shop for all search requests.

NLIS Hub charges reduced by 50%

From 1st October this year, NLIS Hub is reducing its transactional fees by over 50%, thereby making the benefits of ordering an electronic search through NLIS even more attractive. SearchFlow has confirmed they will pass this saving on to Conveyancers (www.searchflow.co.uk) and other new NLIS channels will be offering the cost saving as well. Announcements shortly will provide further details about the new NLIS channels who we believe will offer a great choice of products for Conveyancers.

With lower costs, speed, quality, reliability, and greater choice, the NLIS online property search market has never looked better.

For further information please go to:
www.land-data.org.uk, www.nlis.org.uk

