

### **Covid-19: Impact on the work of the BBH Conveyancing Department - 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020**

BBH's Conveyancing Department is, as best it can, operating on a 'business as usual' viewpoint. However, due to the current COVID19 situation, whilst we are open for business, we are operating under certain constraints brought about by the need to comply with Government guidance on social distancing and keeping people safe and well. At present, we are operating with staff working alternatively between the office and home.

The conveyancing market involves people and organisations across a wide range of disciplines. All those people and organisations, such as, for example, surveyors, estate agents, and mortgage lenders and others, play an important part in ensuring the conveyancing process operates smoothly. However, the constraints on BBH also affect those people and organisations as well. This has resulted in the usual timescales for transactions being affected and some activities being disrupted. These issues are outside our control. Transactions will take longer than usual.

Since the re-opening of the property market on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020, in England, and subsequently in Wales, there has been an unprecedented demand for transactions to be completed within very short or unrealistic timeframes. Completion dates should only be agreed once BBH has confirmed to you that all legal matters on your transaction have been addressed and all parties involved are 'ready'. This is the same advice we have always given, and certainly gave before the 'lockdown', and remains appropriate today. Attempting to complete a transaction too quickly or within an unrealistic deadline often results in all parties becoming frustrated and unnecessarily stressed by the experience. Such situations need to be avoided and we ask that you trust and rely on the advice of your conveyancer during this time. Our conveyancers will always look to act in your best interests even if this means explaining how unrealistic your suggested timescale may be.

**We will always look to meet your expectations as best we can and to progress your transaction in a timely manner, however, we will be honest with you over how realistic your proposed timescale is and where it is not possible to achieve, we will tell you. Ultimately, if you are unwilling to accept our advice then we will not be able to continue to act for you.**

**Please note** that whilst the Government continues to impose restrictions due to COVID19 your transaction may be affected, for example, by someone contracting Covid-19 during the transaction and being required to self-isolate thus resulting in completion being delayed OR due to the constraints in place, search results cannot be obtained as quickly as usual OR a localised 'lockdown' prevents house moves, and so on.

COVID19 is a risk to all conveyancing transactions. Any delay due to a COVID19 scenario impacting the transaction may well result in the parties facing large financial penalties as well as not being able to move on the required day.

**BBH will conduct your transaction in line with conveyancing best practice and will provide you with appropriate advice & guidance. That advice and guidance, and the options we suggest to you to progress your transaction, will take into consideration the constraints on all of us within the conveyancing process imposed on us by COVID19. We ask that you respect and follow that advice and guidance.**