

There has rarely been a truer word spoken - selling property can - and indeed, does- prove to be a mighty stressful undertaking for all but the boldest hearted....never more so than when the property in question is somewhat non-standard for the typical high street agent...ie. a buy-to-let, in a market veritably flooded with similar properties, all bearing enticingly, even incredulously low asking prices aimed at catching the interest of a dwindling number of investors and setting their hearts- a-flutter and eyes aglaze in anticipation of picking up a bargain to end all bargains. A nightmarish scenario in which to attempt a property sale when one is mortgaged to the gills, perilously close to negative equity territory and keen as mustard to be debt free asap! So what does a woman do? Having previously sold a few properties privately, I initially chose the ubiquitous "internet agent" route in my endeavours to minimise sale expenditure - but after crafting what I took to be an eye catching ad, yet receiving not the merest whiff of interest in the first, critical month, I duly ate humble pie and concluded that I was undoubtedly going to require some assistance with this one.... which could only mean going with a high street agent. But which one?

There are new agents springing up almost weekly, each offering eye-popping, competitive packages aimed at cutting the feet from under countless competitors, even offering rates comparable with or even lower than online deals. Mmmm! Puzzling, given the overheads allied to maintaining a physical office presence in town, with attendant pricey overheads. Must be cutting back somewhere....I wonder if it could be on real, personal service??? Bit cynical perhaps....but it doesn't take an Einsteinian intellect to figure out the kernel of truth in the old adage that essentially, you get what you pay for! So I set about arranging a visit from a few local "contenders".

Cutting to the chase, from the day that Steve, the Director/Valuer at the Leeds Rd. McDonalds branch visited to value my property to conclusion of sale, I can say, hand on heart that I made the right decision! Steve did not come armed with pie in the sky statistical claims that McDonalds are the best Estate Agents in this and any other parallel universe and would be able, without raising a sweat, to sell my property, at full asking price, before it even went live on the 'net..... No! He came armed with his endearing "sound-northern-common-sense" attitude and laid back assurance, borne out of years of local agency experience, and gave a valuation which he supported by the production of an array of brochures of local comparables, to prove he wasn't feeding me any porkies! He also warned me that given the limitation of my target market ie. cash buyers or buy-to-let investors, it wouldn't be easy. No disingenuous, comforting "telling-me-what-I-wanted-to-hear" in order to convince me to go with his agency...just the facts...and a sober presentation of the statistics showing their sales success in the area. The message conveyed was "We're good - not desperate for business". His confidence was not in any way misplaced. And notably, he maintained professional dignity....other agents had exhibited an almost embarrassing/amusing "desperation" to take my property on their books, whereas Steve's approach was more "Look, we'd love to market this for you...but the choice is yours". Decision made - I was sold! And soon after, so was my property!

From Steve's great photography, which really did justice to my property and created a brochure that I would have been proud to have produced, to the stream of viewings that ensued as a result of their marketing efforts, the sterling service-with-a-smile, with which I was invariably treated during my many trips to the office, the useful feedback and timely updates during the sale process...all convinced me that McDonalds are a hard act to follow..

The service from Siobhan, my appointed property manager and Shirley, the branch manageress was impeccable. Without these girls, the journey to Sales-land would have been such a cold, stressful and lonely one! Siobhan has been perennially delightful to deal with - utterly professional with a reassuring calm demeanour, relaxed and helpful approach and genuine, welcoming smile. I enjoyed our many chats immensely! Shirley is quite simply a force of nature....I've a sneaking suspicion that she is the archetypal "Super-Woman", exuding efficiency-on-steroids! A failed sale in the early weeks, which threatened to seriously disrupt my equilibrium, didn't faze Shirley one bit. ...she's been there before! After delivering the news, she calmly assured me that they would continue to market the property and get potential buyers through the door...and my buyer would appear eventually. And

sure enough, these proved not to be hollow, well-worn words of reassurance, as the viewings continued almost immediately in a steady stream until my eventual buyer appeared only a month or so later! She is also amazing at chasing-up-that-which-needs-to-be-chased-up and keeping you abreast of proceedings....whilst maintaining her calm professionalism even in the face of stressed-out-strops from certain clients....Who? Moi??

Having now thankfully sold at a price which, in the current market, I despaired of ever achieving. I can only express my sincere and heartfelt thanks to the team at McDonalds, for helping me to achieve my sale in under 5 months! I purchased through McDonalds, sold through McDonalds and my experience has been positive all the way. Do I recommend these guys?cue for a song! "Oh, McDonalds sold my house - eeh, I'm tickled pink!"

Karen S (34, Leeds Road, Blackpool..sold 31/05/17...another victory for the Big "M"!)