

Downes & Daughters

ESTATE AGENCY

Covid-19 Operating Protocol.

Due to the Government's recent lifting of restrictions for Estate Agencies you can now move home again. We are able to visit your home for valuation and instruction purposes and to conduct viewings. It will obviously involve strict social distancing and hygienic measures that will need to be agreed prior to any home visit.

Our High Street office will remain shut except for visits on a strict 'appointment only' basis. Only one customer will be allowed in the shop at any one time with both parties required to wear face coverings. Our telephone lines, email, website and social media pages remain open, as they have throughout the lockdown, and we actively encourage you to get in touch.

Downes & Daughters new operating procedures will include...

- We will ask whether any party is showing symptoms or has been asked to self-isolate before going ahead with any viewing, or visits to home or offices.
- We will give detailed information on our house visit protocol before any valuation, take on or viewing. This will include strict hygiene measures, social distancing and face coverings.
- We will operate using an appointment system for visits to our office and when conducting viewings.
- We will not carry out any open house viewings.
- Under Government guidance we will strongly encourage clients to view properties virtually in the first instance and then only physically inspect properties which they have a strong interest in.
- We will ensure that both buyers and sellers clearly understand how the viewing should be conducted safely.
- Where the vendor is not present we will seek to maintain a minimum of 2 metres distance from others wherever possible. We will also insist on face coverings when inside the property in line with government guidance.
- We will not drive clients to appointments.
- All parties viewing a property should wash their hands with soap and water (or hand sanitiser if not available) immediately after entering the properties, with internal doors opened and surfaces having been wiped down before they enter. Separate towels or paper towels should be used if possible and washed or disposed of safely after use.

- We will do what we can to promote flexibility when arranging move dates, for example advising clients to ensure contracts have explicit terms to manage the timing risks presented by coronavirus.
- We will work with our clients and other agents to broker a new date to move where sales are due to complete and one of the parties falls ill with coronavirus or has to self-isolate.
- We will ensure that any keys are appropriately cleaned before handover.

Further Information On Guidance For Related Industries...

Conveyancers

Conveyancers can open for business and can take on new instructions. They should make sure their clients are aware of the differences in completing transactions during this period.

- Conveyancers should aim to conduct as much of their business remotely as possible.
- Where client meetings need to take place, measures should be put in place to ensure appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures.
- Conveyancers should do what they can to promote flexibility making provisions for the risks presented by coronavirus, for example when advising their clients who are ready to move not to exchange contracts on an occupied property unless they have made explicit provision for the risks presented by the virus.
- Conveyancers should prioritise support for anyone who is clinically vulnerable or shielding, or with symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating to agree a new date to move.

Surveyors and EPC assessors

Surveyors and EPC assessors are free to visit properties to carry out surveys. Surveyors should follow the latest government guidance for [working in other people's homes](#). Where surveys are carried out, all public health guidance on [social distancing](#) must be followed. Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

- Surveyors should contact the owners of the property to be surveyed prior to the survey to make sure they understand which areas will be surveyed and ensure that all doors and access panels are open and surfaces have been [cleaned](#) with household cleaning products in line with public health advice. During a visit, members of the household should follow social distancing guidance, staying 2 metres away wherever possible, for example by staying in another room.
- No work should be carried out by a person who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild or anyone who has been asked to self-isolate.
- Surveyors should wash their hands immediately upon entering the property, using separate towels or paper towels which need to be washed or disposed of safely after use.

- Surveyors should be clear in any reports about areas which they weren't able to inspect due to public health limitations.

Removals firms

Removal firms are able to operate and should follow the latest government guidance on safer working. Where moves are carried out, social distancing should be followed. Companies should ensure employees understand how to operate safely and communicate this to customers.

- Removers should contact the household in advance to check that no member of the household is showing symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating. If they are, works should be delayed.
- They should also encourage households to ensure all internal doors are open and surfaces and possessions have been cleaned with household cleaning products prior to them entering the property.
- No work should be carried out by a person who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild.
- Removers should wash their hands on entering the property using separate towels of paper towels which need to be washed or disposed of safely after use.
- Removers should seek to minimise contact with homeowners and remain 2 metres apart from householders at all times.
- Removers should implement a buddy system and ensure that the same people work together when moving bulky items and furniture.
- Removers should bring their own refreshments but you should ensure they have access to hand washing facilities, using separate towels or paper towels if possible, which should be washed or disposed of safely afterwards.

The safety of our staff and our clients remains our greatest concern and any changes to our operations will be made only to safely fulfil our promise to them.

Please continue to STAY SAFE.



Not All Agents Are Equal...