

## When is a good time to sell my home?

Hello again, and (a little belatedly) happy New Year.

Summer is always an interesting time in real estate. It's certainly a great time to *buy* real estate. Many home sellers from last year perhaps got their properties on the market a little late, after the spring surge, and they remain unsold in January. A lot of them bought first and are now committed to other properties, or they already have their children booked into new schools in a few weeks, and are very, very keen to relocate, and fast! So there are usually bargains to be had, if you are a buyer at this time (especially if you can offer short settlement).

Curiously enough, however, it's also a good time to be selling. In a very real sense, the answer to the question I'm posing in this issue's headline is - NOW!

The laws of supply and demand work not only with crude oil, bananas and airfares to the Gold Coast. They work in real estate too. After the glut of homes that reach the market in spring, creating a massive flurry of activity, many buyers coming to the marketplace now can't find what they're looking for. In the suburbs they're searching in, all the houses that were on the market before Christmas now have SOLD signs on their boards.

If you've looked around in your own area, chances are that most of the homes which came on the market near you last year (your potential competitors) are now no longer available. Someone looking now in your street, your locale, your suburb, may only have a fraction of the homes to look at that were there in spring. But they still need to buy - their kids start school there in February, they've been transferred to a new job nearby, they themselves sold last year, they're all cashed up and are still looking for that perfect home (and are now starting to wake up during the night in a nervous sweat!)

As a homeseller, this spells o.p.p.o.r.t.u.n.i.t.y for you.

But - and it's a big BUT - you can't just throw up a "For Sale" board, brace yourself for the onslaught and hope for the best. There's a lot to consider, because your sale proceeds probably have to fund the rest of your life! Real estate's a minefield, with pitfalls at every step for the inexperienced, and Golden Rule Number One applies - never lose money!

In previous articles, I've referred to the booklet we produced some time back, "Fatal Real Estate Traps Exposed". Here are just some of things you have to get right BEFORE the first buyer walks through your doors: the pricing, the agent, the commission fee, the marketing, the presentation, the copywriting, the photography, all your Section 32 paperwork. For starters!

And what about the processes once your marketing begins? How are offers going to be dealt with? Who is in charge of the negotiations? Is there transparency? Do you KNOW beyond doubt that every buyer has put their MAXIMUM offer forward?

By the way, of the 15 Fatal Traps we write about in our book, 4 of them are about pricing your property correctly, another 4 are about agent selection, plus 3 on marketing and advertising, 1 on commission (a very important consideration), and more. If you want to learn about them all, ring me and I'll send you a free copy of the booklet. Knowledge is power!

Meantime, there are buoyant signs in the market in these first weeks of 2015. Interest rates remain stable. Housing approvals are healthy. There's encouraging buyer enquiry across the spectrum of property. Even the banks are feeling more kindly (for the time being). And as far as I know, in the entire history of humanity, people have never once stopped wanting to buy houses to live in!

So, finally, here's the Q and the A: when would NOW be a great time to consider selling?

Thoreau said, "If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours."

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### Elder abuse is a family violence issue too Royal Commission into Family Violence must address it.

Seniors Rights Victoria welcomes the announcement of the Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission into Family Violence, but says it must address elder abuse too.

'Women and children suffer enormously from family violence, but thousands of older people are suffering as well. Elder abuse must be recognised as a serious family violence issue, and older people should be encouraged to speak up,' said Seniors Rights Victoria's Manager, Jenny Blakey.

Elder abuse is defined as any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust, such as a family member or friend. The abuse may be physical, social, financial, psychological or sexual and can include mistreatment and neglect. While it is vastly under-reported, it is estimated that up to 10 per cent of older people worldwide suffer from elder abuse (WHO).

Seniors Rights Victoria received thousands of telephone calls on its Helpline last year. Financial and emotional/psychological abuses were the most common forms of abuse reported, with adult children the most common perpetrators. Women made up 72 per cent of callers, and a significant number of clients were from culturally and linguistically

diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Elder abuse will increase in Australia as our population ages.

'Many people lack understanding of elder abuse. There must be greater resources dedicated to raising awareness of this terrible problem, and law and policy responses that are sensitive to the particular needs of older people, said Ms Blakey, 'In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Royal Commission could look, for example, at how elder abuse can be prevented and how victims can be better supported to access justice. More education of politicians and the community is vital too.'

Seniors Rights Victoria provides information, support, advice and education to help prevent elder abuse and safeguard the rights, dignity and independence of older people. Services include the Helpline, specialist legal services, short-term support and advocacy for individuals and community and professional education. Seniors Rights Victoria also provides leadership on policy and law reform and works with organisations and groups to raise awareness of elder abuse.

The helpline number is 1300 368 821 or you can check out the website [www.seniorsrights.org.au](http://www.seniorsrights.org.au)



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