THE UPSIZING PLAYBOOK

More space. Make it count.

If you're thinking about upsizing your home in Sevenoaks or the surrounding area, chances are something has changed.

Perhaps the children are getting bigger and the house suddenly feels smaller. Working from home has turned the spare bedroom into an office. The kitchen that once worked perfectly now feels crowded every morning.

Or maybe you're simply ready for more. More garden. More privacy. More room to entertain. A different location. The house you've imagined living in for years.

Upsizing isn't simply about adding bedrooms or square footage.

It's about finding a home that works better for the life you're living now - and the one you're planning next.

Here are the things we'd think about first.

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1. Work out what you've actually outgrown

It's easy to say you need a bigger house. But what do you really need more of?

Another bedroom might be the obvious answer, when actually the problem is downstairs space. Perhaps you need a home office, a bigger kitchen, more storage or a garden the children can disappear into.

Think about where your current home frustrates you. Then think about what you love about it. The aim isn't simply to buy more space. It's to solve the things that aren't working without unnecessarily giving up the things that are.

Our advice: Don't start your search with the number of bedrooms.

Start with **what do we want our next home to do better?**

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2. Think beyond the next couple of years

A bigger home is usually a longer-term move. So think ahead.

If you're moving for young children, what will you need when they're teenagers? Could the playroom become a study or snug? Will you still need that home office? Is there enough

storage? What about parking when the children eventually start driving? And will the location still work as family routines change?

Nobody can predict exactly what life will look like in ten years. But a little forward thinking can prevent you from outgrowing your next home almost as quickly as the last one.

Our advice: Buy for the life you're moving towards, not just the problem you're trying to solve today.

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3. Know what your next move really costs

Moving from one price bracket to another can change the numbers considerably.

Before falling in love with properties, understand what your current home is realistically worth and what that gives you to work with.

Then factor in the complete cost of moving. Stamp duty. Estate agency and legal fees. Mortgage costs. Removals. And any work the next house might need.

It's also worth thinking about the ongoing costs of owning more space - particularly if you're considering an older property, a larger garden or a significant renovation.

Knowing your position doesn't restrict your search.

It gives you confidence when the right property appears.

Our advice: Get the numbers clear before you start making decisions around asking prices.

What you can buy and what you're comfortable spending aren't always the same thing.

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4. Be realistic about where the extra space comes from

In and around Sevenoaks, upsizing doesn't always mean moving a few streets away.

Your budget might buy an extra bedroom in one location and an entirely different way of living in another.

Perhaps staying close to Sevenoaks station is essential. Perhaps you'd exchange a shorter commute for more land or a larger garden. Maybe school catchments dictate the search. Or perhaps moving slightly further out gives you the kind of family home you couldn't otherwise achieve.

This is where priorities matter. Knowing what you're prepared to compromise on - and what you aren't - makes the search much more focused.

Our advice: Decide which matters most: the house, the location or the lifestyle. If you can have all three, brilliant. But know the order before you start looking.

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5. If schools are driving the move, plan early

For many families moving in and around Sevenoaks, schools are an important part of the decision. And that can make timing particularly important.

If you're moving for a particular school or catchment, understand the admissions criteria and relevant dates before building your property strategy around them.

Also think beyond the school itself. What will the daily routine actually look like? Can the children walk? Will you be driving across town twice a day? How does the commute work alongside it?

A house can look perfect on paper and make family life considerably harder in practice.

Our advice: Don't just put the school into the property search. Put the whole Monday morning into it.

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6. Decide whether to sell first or find first

This is one of the biggest questions for anyone upsizing. And there isn't a universal answer.

If you're searching for a very particular family home in Sevenoaks, you may be reluctant to sell until you've found it. Understandably.

But when that house does appear, the seller may have several interested buyers - and your position can matter enormously.

Having your own property already on the market, or ideally under offer, can make you a much more attractive buyer.

The answer is to plan for both sides of the move rather than treating the sale and purchase as separate events.

Our advice: Before you start viewing seriously, know exactly what position you'd be in if your ideal home came onto the market tomorrow.

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7. Get your current home ready before you need to move quickly

You find it. The house you've been waiting for. Suddenly, everything needs to happen at once.

That's not the moment to start thinking about how your current property should be presented, who might buy it or what price it should come to market at.

You don't necessarily need to put your home up for sale before you're ready. But you can prepare.

Understand its value. Decide what needs doing. Get the small jobs out of the way. Think about the marketing and the likely buyer.

Then, if your next home appears, you're ready to make a move.

Our advice: Preparation doesn't commit you to selling. It simply gives you options.

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8. Think about the buyer coming up behind you

There's a useful symmetry to the property market. While you're looking for the home that gives you more, someone else may be looking for exactly what you're leaving.

Your first family house might be their long-awaited next step. The garden that now feels too small could be a revelation after an apartment. The third bedroom you've outgrown might finally give their child a room of their own.

Understanding that buyer matters. Because the stronger the marketing and positioning of your current home, the stronger your own position becomes when negotiating for the next one.

Our advice: Your purchase may be the exciting part. But don't let that make the sale of your current home an afterthought. The two are directly connected.

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9. Don't get so attached to the next house that you weaken your position

This one can be difficult. You've finally found the house. You can already picture where the sofa will go. You've mentally allocated the bedrooms. You've checked the journey to school.

Now you have to negotiate. This is precisely when clear thinking matters.

Understand the property's value. Understand the seller's position. Know what competition there is and decide how far you're genuinely prepared to go.

Sometimes securing the right home means being decisive. Sometimes it means knowing when not to chase it.

Our advice: Decide your position before the emotion of negotiation takes over. A dream home still has to be the right move.

10. Keep sight of the reason you're doing it

Upsizing can become all-consuming.

Selling. Searching. Viewings. Mortgages. Offers. Surveys. Chains.

It's easy to become so focused on getting the move done that you forget why you started. More room around the kitchen table. A garden for the children. Space for friends to stay. A quieter road. A better commute. The home you want everyone to come back to for Christmas one day.

Whatever your reason, keep coming back to it. Because the objective isn't to own a bigger house. It's to create more room for the life you want to live.

Thinking about upsizing?

You don't need to have found the next house. And you don't need to put your current home on the market tomorrow.

Sometimes the best place to start is simply understanding what your home is worth, what your budget could buy locally and how to put yourself in the strongest position when the right property appears.

We can help you look at both sides of the move and build a strategy around what you're trying to achieve - not simply what you're trying to sell.

Your home. Your move. Your strategy.