

# New Homes Buyers Guide

Together, we can help you make your move



# Understanding the buying process

At Knight Frank we understand that purchasing a new home can be a lengthy and confusing process. In order to simplify this process we've put together this Buying Guide to help you understand the process of purchasing a new home with Knight Frank.



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Stamp Duty changes

What are the upcoming changes to SDLT for first time buyers?

- Upon your offer being accepted, your Knight Frank representative will ask you to provide the following documents in order to comply with the anti-money laundering requirements.
  - A certified valid photographic ID for the named purchaser.
  - A certified proof of address for the named purchaser.
  - All documents will need to be dated within the last 3 months, for example, utility bills.
- Once a purchase price has been agreed and the reservation form has been completed, the reservation form will then be sent to all parties, the developer, their solicitor and your solicitor.
- Within 24 hours of reserving, you will be required to pay the set reservation fee.
- If you are purchasing your new home with a mortgage, the named purchaser will need to formally instruct a mortgage broker. Knight Frank Finance are leading independent mortgage advisors, with a breadth of knowledge in all aspects of lending. Please ask your Knight Frank representative for more details.
- Formally instruct your solicitor to act on your behalf and complete all relevant paperwork. If you do not have a solicitor, your Knight Frank representative can recommend one.
- Once instructed, your solicitor will request funds to be placed on account for disbursements and searches.
- At this stage the full legal pack will be sent to your solicitor. You will be sent a draft contract with a copy of the title and lease, and any other relevant files. Your solicitor will then carry out the necessary due diligence required for the purchase.



2

After reservation

- Your nominated solicitor will carry out the required searches in relation to your purchase.
- All relevant enquires will be raised with the developer's solicitor.
- Draft contracts will be finalised, your solicitor will ask you to review the contract and the title documents.

3

Exchange of contracts

- At this stage you will need to sign the contract and return the documents to your solicitor.
- The initial deposit (stage payment) will need to be transferred to your solicitor.
- Exchange of contracts!
- After exchange of contracts your solicitor still has a number of tasks to carry out.
- Final searches will be carried out, such as Land Registry Checks.
- A transfer document will be drafted in order to transfer the ownership of the property into your name.
- They will help to finalise your mortgage documents and help you to sign them.
- They will also help to ensure the mortgage funds are available to complete the sale.

4

Time to complete

- You officially become the owner of the property.
- Legal completion will take place after exchange of contracts and when your new home is ready to move into. It is not uncommon for exchange and completion to happen on the same day, but usually they are a week or two apart.

5

Stamp Duty changes

**WHAT DO I DO ON THE DAY OF COMPLETION?**

- Your mortgage lender releases the money to pay for your new home.
- Your solicitor will inform you of any additional costs, such as stamp duty and solicitors fees.
- Your solicitor registers the transfer of ownership of the home with the Land Registry.

A member of the developer's customer care team / your Knight Frank representative will meet you to hand over the keys to the property!

## CHANGES TO STAMP DUTY FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS

For first-time buyers, the thresholds at which you start paying Stamp Duty are changing: Reduced nil-rate band: Currently, you don't pay Stamp Duty on the first £425,000 of a property's value, but this will reduce to £300,000 from 1 April, 2025.

Brackets 2024	2024 Rate	Brackets 2025	2025 Rate
£0 - £250,000	0%	£0 - £125,000	0%
£250,001 - £925,000	5%	£125,000 - £250,000	2%
£925,001 - £1.5m	10%	£250,000 - £925,000	5%
Over £1.5m	12%	£925,000 - £1.5m	10%
		Over £1.5m	12%

**For those attempting to get on the housing ladder, first time buyers can avoid paying stamp duty tax on properties up to £425,000 by purchasing before this comes into effect.**

- The nil rate threshold which is currently £250,000 will return to the previous level of £125,000.
- The nil rate threshold for first-time buyers which is currently £425,000 will return to the previous level of £300,000.
- The maximum purchase price for which First-Time Buyers Relief (a reduced stamp duty rate) can be claimed is currently £625,000 and will return to the previous level of £500,000.

# The mortgage process *explained*



**Nathan Bakhbakhi**  
Partner, Sales Manager  
Knight Frank Finance

To help on your journey of buying your first home, we've broken down the steps involved. If you would like to discuss your borrowing options with one of our specialist New Homes brokers, please do email [new.homes@knightfrankfinance.com](mailto:new.homes@knightfrankfinance.com) or call 020 7268 2580. We would be delighted to help.

1

## Check how much you can borrow

*Check our mortgage calculator*

Reach out to a mortgage broker, like Knight Frank Finance, early on in your property search. After an initial, no-obligation consultation with one of our brokers, not only will you know how much you can borrow, but we will also talk you through the costs of borrowing and of buying a property.

Why not scan the QR code below to try our simple mortgage calculator to see how much you might be able to borrow based on your income.



Once you've found your dream home, it may be helpful to secure an Agreement in Principle (AIP). This details, in writing, how much a lender is willing to offer, and is a good way of showing sellers that you are serious.

As a whole of market broker, we have access to all the major lenders in the market and know their lending criteria inside and out. This means we can help find the most competitive terms with the right lender for you.

2

## The initial steps

3

## Submit your mortgage application

The lender will carry out a more thorough check of your application and look through your finances for proof of income. Once this has been done, the lender will then instruct a surveyor to value the property to make sure it is worth what you are paying for it and there are no major issues.

We will look after this process for you, from speaking to the lender and providing them with the required legal documents, to submitting your mortgage application. We will also keep in regular contact, so you're informed.

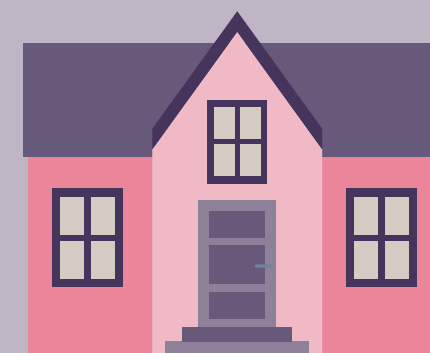


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## Almost there

A few checks will happen in the background. A conveyancer will be instructed to carry out the necessary legal aspects of buying the property, checking contracts, and finalising stamp duty.

This can seem daunting, which is why many first-time buyers opt to use a mortgage broker, who will liaise with the conveyancer and look over their propositions on your behalf.



5

## The property is yours!

Once all background checks are complete, contracts have been exchanged and a completion date is in place, the property is yours!

If there are any complications during the process, we will step in to ensure your purchase is successful.



# Benefits of buying *new build*

## Why purchase off-plan?

1

### Higher energy efficiency

Energy efficient homes save bills in winter and keep the heat out in summer when temperatures soar. Knight Frank's analysis of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data of over 600,000 new and existing properties transacted over the last three years, points to an average 56% saving on annual energy costs (lighting, heating, hot water) when comparing a new build to an existing property.

2

### More input into designing purchases from the outset

Purchasing off the plan or new build provides the opportunity to make changes or add personal touches prior to construction to features such as floorplans, choice of finishes and colour palettes.



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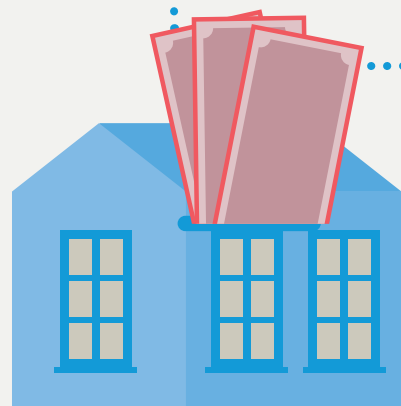
### No seller chain

Without a prior chain of ownership, the purchase of a brand new property can be a straightforward process as it comes without the fuss, hassle, stress and history of dealing with prior owners.

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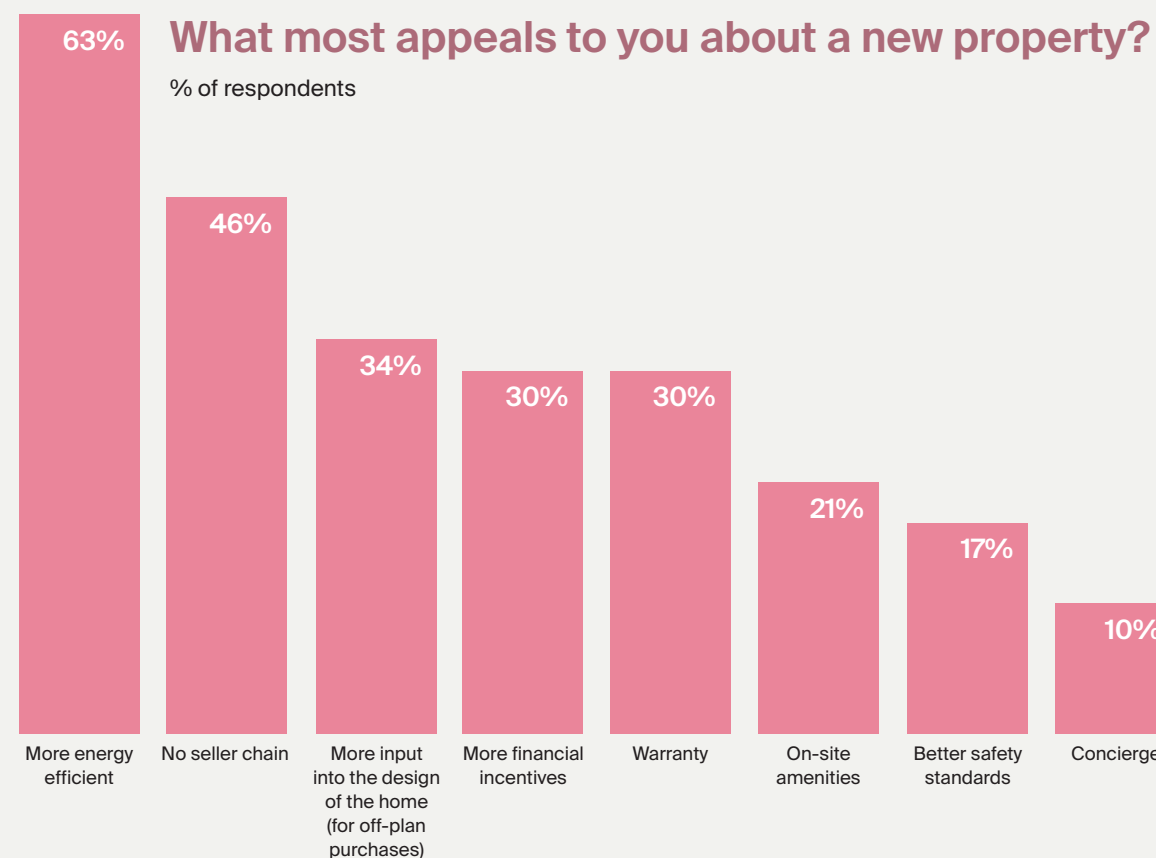
### More financial incentives

Green finance is an exciting and growing part of the mortgage market, available only on new home property purchases. Not only does it allow owners and buy-to-let landlords be kinder to the environment while reducing their energy bills but more advantageous rates are available with green mortgages and sometimes cashbacks ranging from £200 – £1,000.



Growth in the availability of green finance solutions is being driven by a combination of factors. Homes account for almost 30% of energy use and around 20% of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK, according to official figures. That puts homes with low ratings at risk of future government regulations to limit emissions, whilst also making them vulnerable to rising energy costs.

Mortgage applicants buying or with homes which have an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating of A or B are eligible for Green mortgage products.



Source: Knight Frank's 2024 Sentiment Survey of over 300 individuals based in the UK



# London New Homes Perfect for First Time Buyers

## Artisi, Hammersmith



1-2 bedroom apartments



Completing Q1 2025



Prices from £630,000



## Chiswick Green, Chiswick



1-2 bedroom apartments



Complete and ready to move in today



Prices from £585,000



## Hanwell Square, Hanwell



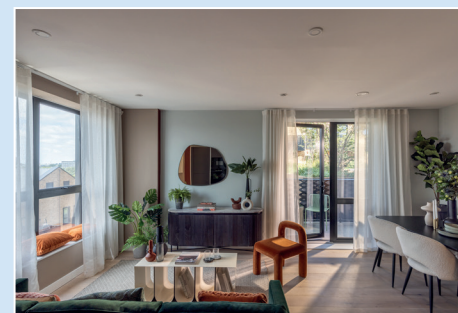
Studios & 1-2 bedroom apartments



Complete and ready to call home



Prices from £325,000



## 8 Harbord Square, Canary Wharf



Studios and penthouses



Complete and ready to occupy today



Prices from £690,000



## The Clay Yard



1-3 bedroom apartments



Complete and ready to call home



Prices from £650,000



To discover our portfolio of new homes across London, visit **The London Collection**





To find out more about buying a new home,  
please get in touch [newhomes@knightfrank.com](mailto:newhomes@knightfrank.com)



Your partners in property

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