



Frequently asked questions

1. What is a Home Information Pack (HIP)?

A Home Information Pack (HIP) is a collection of documents relating to a residential property and is intended to ensure that all relevant documents, including a home energy rating and searches are available to prospective purchasers when a property is marketed.

2. Must I have a Home Information Pack before I can sell a property?

From 14th December 2007, Home Information Packs (HIPs) are compulsory for all sellers of residential property in England and Wales. It is now an offence to market a property unless a HIP has been commissioned for inspection by a prospective buyer.

3. What should go in a Home Information Pack?

Compulsory documents are:

- A list of the contents of the HIP
- A statement summarising the terms of sale of the property
- Standard searches (Local authority enquiries, drainage and water search etc.)
- An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Commonhold information (where appropriate)
- A copy of the lease (where appropriate)
- A copy of the seller's title to the property
- For leasehold properties, a copy of the last 3 years service charge details
- Building insurance details for leasehold properties
- For leasehold properties, details of planned or recent work

Optional documents include:

- A Home Condition Report (HCR)
- Other searches relevant to the particular area (i.e. mining etc)
- Copies of any current planning applications
- Copies of Building Regulation approvals and certificates
- Copies of any warranties and guarantees
- Additional leasehold information
- List of fixtures and fittings

4. What happens if the HIP is incomplete?

If a seller has experienced problems with obtaining certain documents, he/she may market the property if it can be established that all reasonable efforts to obtain the documents have been made within 28 days from that date.

5. Who compiles the HIP?

Sellers may:

- Hire an estate agent
- Hire a solicitor
- Hire a Home Information Pack Provider
- Do it themselves

6. What is a Drop Dead Date?

A Drop Dead Date is a date which may be set when all properties which remain on the market will need a Home Information Pack even if they were put on the market before the appropriate commencement date of HIPs.

So far, no Drop Dead Date has been announced.

7. Are any properties exempt?

- Sales of new homes built to the most recent Building Regulations (Regulation 17C, Part L, 2006) are currently exempt from the need to have HIPs. It is intended to bring these properties within the HIP scheme on 6th April 2008 – the date on which Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) will be required on construction for all dwellings
- A property sold privately where no marketing takes place (i.e. to a family member) is exempt. If a property is marketed in any way, even by putting a 'For Sale' sign in the window, a Pack must be provided
- First day marketing – properties first placed on the market during the temporary period, which was introduced to smooth the implementation of the Packs and take into consideration the delays in production of guidance to local authorities, are currently being marketed without Packs. The temporary period expires on 31st May 2008

8. Who pays for the HIP?

Generally it is the seller who pays the cost of the Home Information Pack although this can vary by arrangement between the seller and the compiler of the pack.

9. How much will a HIP cost?

Average costs are expected to be £300 - £350

10. How do I become a HIP Home Inspector?

A. Obtain an approved qualification:

- Information and advice on qualifications, training courses and assessment centres is available from the learndirect/Asset Skills free helpline **08000 567 160** or via www.energy-assessors.org.uk
- Qualifications for Home Inspectors are offered by three awarding bodies:
 1. The Awarding Body for the Built Environment (ABBE) www.abbega.co.uk
 2. City and Guilds www.cityandguilds.com

3. National Association of Estate Agents www.naea.co.uk
(Contact the awarding bodies directly for details of assessment centres and approved training providers).

B. Apply directly to the accreditation scheme of your choice (details shown below) using the 'Experienced Practitioner Route';

- Building Research Establishment (BRE) – www.breassessor.co.uk
- Elmhurst – www.elmhurstenergy.co.uk
- NES – www.nher.co.uk
- Northgate – www.northgate-ispublicservices.com
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) – www.rics.org/hips
- EPC Ltd – www.epc-solutions.co.uk
- Quidos – www.quidos.co.uk
- Home Inspector Certification Ltd – www.hicertification.co.uk
- Home Inspector.eu Certification Ltd – www.homeinspectoreu.co.uk

11. Where can I find further information?

Further information on Home Information Packs is available from:

- Department for Communities and Local Government
www.communities.gov.uk/housing/buyingselling/homeinformation/
- www.homeinformationpacks.gov.uk
- Association of Home Information Pack Providers
www.hipassociation.co.uk

This Information Sheet has been produced for general guidance. It does not constitute specific legal advice, which should be sought if any of the above issues arise. Except as required by law, we accept no liability for your reliance on the information provided here.