

FRIDAY 13th, SUPERSTITIONS AND SPOOKS HAUNT HOUSEBUYERS

Over a third of Britons (35 per cent) are adamant that they would not move house on **Friday 13th**, according to new research from **mortgages at Lloyds TSB**. The fear of the number '13' (which even has a proper name – triscadecaphobia!) would also put off a quarter (26 per cent) of homebuyers from buying a house with that number.

When it comes to property, Britons are a superstitious bunch easily spooked out of making a purchase. Half (50 per cent) would take a grave view of a house overlooking a cemetery – almost matched by those haunted by the idea of sharing their new home with a ghost (47 per cent) - while the thought of living in a house where somebody has died sends shivers down the spines of four in ten (39 per cent).

Over a quarter of Britons admit that they would even consider it unlucky to buy a house that simply looks spooky. There is also a fear that bad luck can linger, as over a third (35 per cent) would consider it unlucky to buy a house which had previously suffered a serious fire.

Jon Pain, managing director of mortgages at Lloyds TSB, says: “When we think of buying houses we tend to focus on the hard facts involved - the location, number and size of rooms, the price, getting a good mortgage deal etc. But it is now apparent that purchasers are also swayed by their instincts, superstition and a general aversion to houses they consider ‘unlucky’. This really underlines the truly individual nature of each house purchase and why it is so important for the professionals involved to understand the fears, concerns and motivation of each house buyer.”

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Those who are selling a house should also take note of traditional superstitions and ‘old wives’ tales’ if they want to clinch a quick sale. Over a third of people (37 per cent) would take notice of an open umbrella in the house while a further third (34 per cent) believe new shoes should never be put on a table.

If you are selling, never tell a viewer that you’ve broken a mirror, as almost a half of people (45 per cent) think it brings bad luck. Similarly, hanging a horseshoe upside down doesn’t just offend people’s taste – a quarter (25 per cent) believe that it can bring bad luck too.

However, if you want to convince people that buying your home is a blessing in disguise, then it’s worth investing in just that - a blessing. Twenty nine per cent of people believe that this brings good luck or gets rid of bad luck. Two in ten are swayed by feng shui (20 per cent), matched by those who think that pets can be an influence on luck (21 per cent). And for those who are really concerned about all things ghostly and spooky – 16 per cent think that exorcism will change luck for the better.

Jon Pain, managing director of mortgages at Lloyds TSB, says: “We might not be able to influence whether you are making a lucky or unlucky purchase, but we can certainly help take out the element of chance when choosing a mortgage. With an all round good mortgage deal, a great rate and individual advice to remove the fear factor from a major financial decision, the only blessing people won’t get from us is of the spiritual kind!”

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Notes to editors:

The survey of 1984 respondents was carried out by 72 Point 25 April – 4 May.

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