



PRESS RELEASE

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4th April 2009

Flood information in the PIQ does not provide the full picture of the risks

“Seller compiled” questionnaire in Home Information Pack could result in mis-information for homebuyers

With one-in-four properties in the UK at risk from flooding, Landmark urges homebuyers to obtain a conveyancing-ready flood report for a clear assessment on flood risk*

The 6th April will see the delayed introduction of the Property Information Questionnaire (PIQ) into the Home Information Pack (HIP). Designed to provide consumers with more information about a property at an earlier stage in the conveyancing process, Landmark Information Group advises homebuyers that much of the information about flooding included in the PIQ is based on the subjective opinion of the seller and that the answers provided may not be reliable, nor provide homebuyers with the true picture on the issue of flood risk.

With flood risk generally assessed in terms of 75 year, 100 year and 1000 year risks, there is every chance that a property could be at significant risk, without the current occupier having any knowledge of it – particularly in light of the fact that it is only recently that flood reports have started to be used more frequently as part of the conveyancing process.

Landmark, the UK’s leading provider of property, environmental and flood risk information, expresses concerns about the accuracy of the latest addition to the HIP particularly in relation to the issue of flood-risk assessment.

James Sherwood-Rogers, Managing Director of Landmark Legal and Financial comments: *“It is a positive step to see that the PIQ has introduced the issue of flood risk into the report, however the outcome is reliant on the seller to provide accurate details about a property. In reality a seller may not know if a property has been flooded or in extreme cases they may not want to admit such an event. Many potential purchasers might be forgiven for thinking that the PIQ will provide them with a full flood assessment on a particular property, however the reality is that the report does not even scratch the surface into real flood risk evaluation.”*





Furthermore the PIQ shows no differentiation between pluvial or domestic flooding and Landmark is concerned that a homeowner will be none-the-wiser regarding a specific property's true risk of flooding after receiving the HIP.

James continues: *"The PIQ does not specify what type of flooding a property has experienced; nor does it provide a definition for flood risk. For example, there is no differentiation in the report between a property that may have been flooded due to a faulty washing machine for example, or the more serious issue of a property being located in a potential flood risk area. With so many homes in the UK situated in a location at real threat from flooding, we would encourage all homebuyers to take proper precautions to determine a property's flood risk."*

The PIQ does direct homebuyers to the Environment Agency's (EA) website to find out further details about flood risk, however, Landmark stresses that the EA data does not provide the full picture about flood risk. Landmark has been first to market in producing the most comprehensive conveyancing-ready flood risk assessment report. As well as information from the EA, Norwich Union, the British Geological Survey and loss adjusters' data, the Homecheck Professional Flood Report now contains exclusive ground-breaking data on surface water run-off (pluvial) flooding and minor rivers that was reported by the Pitt Report of causing around 50 per cent of the damage from the 2007 summer floods.

James concludes: *"A conveyancing-ready flood report like the Homecheck Flood Report should be purchased in every property transaction to determine the true risk of flooding against an individual property. Without this information, homeowners could potentially purchase a home that is at real risk from flooding."*

As well as asking a solicitor for a flood report, homebuyers can proactively carry out their own research to determine the potential flood risk to a particular property. For just £18.57 the public can order a report from www.homecheckflood.co.uk.

