



7 OUT OF 10 SLOWEST COUNCILS ARE IN THE SOUTH EAST

It takes almost three weeks longer to buy a house in Hillingdon than in Crawley

Seven out of the ten slowest councils for search turnaround times are located in the South East, according to the latest figures* issued by LMS, the UK's leading provider of HIPs, outsourced conveyancing, remortgage, survey and valuation services.

The London Borough of Hillingdon has been named the worst council, taking an average of 17.33 working days to provide search data. This is almost 5 times longer than it takes the best ranked, Crawley Borough Council, which spends on average 3.56 days compiling the information.

These search turnaround figures are the monthly averages calculated using transactions in the past year and a half. However, in some months councils were far slower. For instance in June 2008 Hillingdon Borough Council took a staggering 44 days, almost nine weeks, to compile the necessary data. Another example is Hastings Borough Council whose average search turnaround time was over 32 working days in May of this year.

The national average search turnaround time is 7.04 days, over 10 days quicker than the London Borough of Hillingdon. These figures demonstrate the radical regional differences from council to council in the time taken to obtain the necessary information needed to sell a house.

Table of worst search turnaround councils in England:

Region	Ten worst councils	Average no. of days
London	London Borough of Hillingdon	17.33
South East	Taunton Deane Borough Council	15.02
South West	Sedgemoor District Council	14.49
London	London Borough of Greenwich	12.93
South East	Thanet District Council	12.37
South East	Gravesham Borough Council	12.31
North West	Halton Borough Council	12.24
West Midlands	Tandridge District Council	12.04
South East	Hastings Borough Council	12.02
South East	Salisbury District Council	11.92

Table of best search turnaround councils in England:

Region	Ten best councils	Average no. of days
South East	Crawley Borough Council	3.56
North West	City of Wakefield Council	3.88
Yorkshire	Kingston upon Hull City Council	4.11
Yorkshire	Calderdale Metropolitan Council	4.12
South West	Bristol City Council	4.13
West Midlands	Dudley Metropolitan Council	4.20
North	Alnwick District Council	4.23
London	London Borough of Harrow	4.26
North East	Fylde Borough Council	4.27
North West	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	4.30

Dominic Toller, Director of Marketing and New Business at LMS, commented:

"The introduction of HIPs has resulted in increased market transparency making it easy to identify which councils are performing well and it is certainly encouraging to see so many councils returning search data in such a short time.

"The longer a search turnaround time is, the more chance there is for a house sale to fall through. Thanks to HIP providers, there is now much greater pressure on the worst performing councils to reduce search turnaround times in order to make the house buying and selling process more efficient."

*All figures are compiled from LMS/ One Search direct data compiled monthly from January 2007 - June 2008