YOUR FREE GUIDE TO SELLING PROPERTY IN FRANCE

A step-by-step guide

Brought to you by award-winning Estate Agency
Selling property in France

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Here at Leggett Immobilier, we have been helping people sell French properties for more than 20 years, so if the time has come to sell yours, we will be happy to help you out.

If you would like to put your French property on the market with Leggett Immobilier, please feel free to contact us on: 08700 11 51 51 (UK only) +33 553 608 488 (other) or email info@leggett.fr and we will organise for your local Leggett Immobilier agent to contact you.
Mandat de Vente in a Nutshell

A Mandat de Vente is a legally binding document which allows an estate agent to market your property.

There are several different types of Mandat de Vente. The most common one used by Leggett Immobilier (and most other estate agents, although it is always worth checking) is the ‘mandat de vente sans exclusivité’. This type of mandat allows you to market your property yourself as well as with other estate agents.

A Mandat de Vente contains information on each person that owns the property and must be signed by all parties to signify that they are all in agreement with the sale of the property.

The document contains a brief description of the property, as well as the cadastral references of the parcelles of land included in the sale of the property. It is important that this information is correct as it can be difficult to iron out inaccuracies when a sale is agreed on your property.

Every owner of the property which is being sold must sign and return TWO COPIES of the Mandat de Vente to the Leggett head office. Our in-house mandat team will then sign both copies, keep one on file and return the other fully signed document to you for your records.

Should you wish to cancel the Mandat de Vente, you can do so by sending a recorded delivery letter to our mandat team. Before you decide to cancel your mandat it is always worth having a conversation with your Leggett Immobilier agent.

Step 1.

Getting started...

All Leggett Immobilier agents live in the area in which they work, so your local agent will probably be the one that lives closest to you. This reflects the unique way that Leggett Immobilier is structured.

With offices in France, a network of local agents spread across the country and a cross-section of trusted international marketing techniques to promote your property; Leggett Immobilier is able to reach a wide range of clients, whilst providing you with a consistent local agent to work with you whilst you are selling your property.

Should you decide that you would like to market your property with us the process is fairly simple. Your local agent will contact you to organise a suitable time for them to visit the property you want to sell. During this visit your Leggett Immobilier agent will:

- Provide you with an informed valuation based on local property knowledge and discuss the price and pricing strategy for your property sale.
- Take some details from you to allow them to draw up the ‘mandat de vente’ – this is a legal document which allows us to market your property.
- Take photographs of your property and write up notes to allow them to draft your property listing (if the weather is particularly bad, your agent may agree with you that they return another time to take photos of your property.)
- Request your full DPE (diagnostic de performance énergétique) and discuss the diagnostic tests that you are required to have carried out prior to the sale of your property.
- Ask you some general questions regarding your property, for example are there any droit de passages (rights of way) across your property? do you have a fosse septique? what condition is the roof in? - these are the types of questions which may be asked by prospective clients.

Following the visit your Leggett Immobilier agent will send you your mandat de vente to sign and send back to the Leggett Immobilier mandat team. The mandat de vente document is, of course, in French; but should you wish for a standard English translation, please just ask your Leggett Immobilier agent and we will be more than happy to provide you with one. Only when our in-house mandat team have received your correctly signed mandat de vente can your property listing go live on our website.
Pulling out the stops:
How we market your property

One of the things that we pride ourselves on here at Leggett Immobilier is our ongoing innovation when it comes to marketing properties for our vendors. We believe that exposing your property to a broad, relevant and engaged pool of potential clients is one of the keys to success. Our central marketing team work hard exploring new ways to present your property, as beautifully and as widely as possible, to prospective purchasers.

Where will we market your property?
We work hard to get your property in front of potential purchasers as we believe this is the primary way of generating sales. We use a variety of different marketing tools which include:

» Our websites
We view our websites as our shop windows and this is a strategy which proves very successful for our international client base. As well as our main website, we also have specialist sites for Leggett Prestige, Leggett Ski and tailored sites for the most popular areas of France.

The main Leggett website receives over 2.8 million visits per year from over 200 countries worldwide.

With over 14,500 properties listed on our websites at any one time, clients return regularly to see the latest additions, recent reductions and just to browse again.

» Property exhibitions
We are one of the few French estate agencies that have been attending property exhibitions for many years and continue to do so every year. We take all the property listings on our website to every exhibition.

We often run very well attended seminars on ‘Life in France’ or ‘Areas of France’ at these exhibitions, and clients are always very keen to talk to our teams and view the properties that we have listed.

The exhibitions we attend include all of the major UK foreign property events including: The France Show, A Place in the Sun (London, Birmingham and Manchester), French Property Show and...
Second Home International. We also attend an increasing number of international events.

» Press relations
Our in-house PR team is constantly gaining exposure for vendors in a cross-section of different media. We have close relationships with journalists in the UK, France and internationally and are regularly featured in publications such as The Daily Telegraph (UK), The Wall Street Journal (USA), Country Life International, The Financial Times (UK).

» Leading international property portals
To give wider coverage to your property listing, we work with targeted quality property portals. We work with portals in a range of countries, these include (but are not limited to): Rightmove, Le Bon Coin, Zoopla, A Place in the Sun.

» Partner Agencies
We have an association with Hamptons International and several other partners in the UK as well as a selection in the Channel Island and several across France.

Through these associations we are able to promote your property listing to a wider range of potential purchasers.

» Photography
The photographs included in the listing of your property are extremely important in attracting potential buyers. It is for this reason that, whenever possible, we like to have your property pictured with a blue sky, well lit and showing off the most beautiful features.

All Leggett Immobilier agents are trained in property photography and we have an in-house specialist who provides assistance and advice to agents on achieving the highest quality photography possible.

» Virtual tours
As part of the ongoing marketing innovation, Leggett Immobilier pioneered the use of ‘virtual-tours’ on property listings. Usually something that vendors are required to pay for, virtual-tours are available to all Leggett Immobilier vendors, free of charge. Virtual-tours can be made for any property, but are particularly useful for larger properties. They allow clients to ‘virtually’ tour a property prior to visiting and are a great way to whet a client’s appetite and excite them prior to their visit.
Step 2.
Agreeing an offer on your property

Once an interested purchaser has been found for your property, they will make an offer. We advise our clients that they should only ever make an offer on one property at a time and should stop viewing other properties as soon as an offer is made. In the same way, we urge vendors to feel committed to a purchaser once an offer has been agreed and to stop showing the property to other potential purchasers.

Your Leggett Immobilier agent will handle the negotiation and will keep all parties informed as the process progresses. It is possible that a purchaser may want to include some conditions, such as needing a mortgage to finance the purchase or applying for planning permission to put in a swimming pool. This is quite a normal part of the negotiation process and conditions can be written into the initial sales document – the Compromis de Vente.

As soon as the sale has been agreed, Leggett Immobilier will begin putting together all the necessary paperwork.

COMPROMIS DE VENTE

The Compromis de Vente is the first of two legally binding documents which make up the French property purchasing process. This document will contain almost all of the information which is in the final Acte de Vente. Information contained within the Compromis de Vente will include:

- Full details on the ‘civic status’ of both the purchaser and the seller (full names, DOB, POB, marital status etc).
- A description of the property, confirmation of the title deeds and confirmation of the plot references complete with surface area of the plots being sold (including buildings).
- The agreed price, including estate agency fees, estimated notaire’s fees and the deposit amount.
- Circumstances in which the deposit may be forfeited, obligations of the purchaser and declarations from the vendor.
- Results of the DDT (Dossier Diagnostic Technique).
- A series of standard suspensive clauses, as well as any agreed additions.
- A target completion date – this is not a confirmed completion date. It is subject to change in certain circumstances.
- A list of any furniture or equipment included in the purchase, if applicable.
Step 3.

Acte de Vente

Usually around three to four months after the signing of the Compromis de Vente, the notaire will have undertaken all of the necessary work and you will have agreed a date for the final signing of the Acte de Vente. This will take place in France, at the notaire’s office. Once this final document is signed, you will hand over ownership (and keys) of your property to the new owner.

Before this meeting the notaire will ensure that the balance of funds to complete the purchase is in their bank account, this includes any funds which are being paid by a mortgage company. You will be required to provide the notaire with an IBAN to enable him/her to transfer funds (minus taxes and any mortgage repayments or Capital Gains Tax you may have to pay) to your account.

REDUCING THE PRICE

There may come a point when you decide that you want to reduce the price of your property to stimulate more interest from clients. This is a simple process:

- Contact your Leggett Immobilier agent to inform them of your decision.
- They will send you two copies of a one page document called an avenant.
- This document will be in French, but if you require standard English translation, simply ask your Leggett Immobilier agent and they will be happy to provide one to you.
- Once you have signed this document, you need to send BOTH copies back to the Leggett Immobilier mandat team, they will sign both copies – keep one for our records and send the other fully signed document back to you for your records.
Prior to the marketing of your French property, it is compulsory to have a Diagnostique de Performance Énergétique (DPE) undertaken by an approved expert. Whether your property is advertised by an estate agent, or privately by yourselves, the results of this test must be displayed within the listing. Leggett Immobilier will not be able to put your property listing live until we have the full results of this test. The DPE test provides information on energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, levels of insulation and other factors which may affect heating bills.

Alongside the DPE there is a second set of tests which must be carried out by an approved expert. This is called the Dossier Diagnostic Technique (DDT), and again it is the vendor’s responsibility to have these carried out. We encourage vendors to have these tests undertaken as soon as possible and to pass the results to your Leggett Immobilier agent. If the tests highlight any anomalies, it is much easier for your agent to explain this to a client when they are first interested in your property. It can be unsettling for a client (and a sale) if these tests uncover an anomalie after an offer has been made.

These Dossier Diagnostic Technique tests for:

**Lead and Asbestos:** Paint is tested for lead content on all properties built before 1949; and all properties built before 1997 are tested for asbestos.

**Gas (fixed only) and Electricity:** If gas or electricity was installed or renewed in the property more than 15 years prior
to the property being sold, both of these installations are checked.

**Natural risk and parasites:** All properties are evaluated for natural risks (for example flooding) and also to ascertain if there are any risks posed by industry in the area. Properties in areas affected by parasites which can damage buildings, are tested to see if these parasites are present.

**Energy efficiency:** Prior to the property being advertised a test is carried out to assess the greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency of the property.

**Surface area:** Flats and apartments, or properties which are part of a shared building, are measured to confirm exactly what surface area is included in the sale.

**Swimming pool security:** If the property has a swimming pool (which is embedded in the ground by more than one meter) the security features will be tested.

**Smoke alarms:** From March 2015 all properties will be required to have a smoke alarm.

**Sewerage:** Many rural properties in France are not on mains drains and have a ‘fosse septique’ (septic tank.) If this is the case, your system will be subject to a test to ascertain whether this septic tank conforms to current norms – many don’t.

» Where properties are connected to mains drains a certificate confirming this will be requested from the Marie.

» It can take some time to obtain septic tank reports and this can hold up a sale or even result in it being lost so you are strongly advised to get this done at the time of putting the property for sale. Your Leggett Immobilier agent can help with this if necessary.

**Most of these tests are for purchasers information only. However:**

» If the swimming pool is is lacking security features, this will need to be rectified by the vendor prior to the sale of the property

» If there are problems uncovered by the termite test, these will need to be addressed by either the vendor or the purchaser (to be negotiated)

» If the septic tank does not conform, this will need to be addressed by the purchaser

Should the test on the fosse septique highlight that the system does not conform, the purchaser of the property is obliged to have it brought up to a conforming level within a year of purchasing the property. This can involve having a new system installed and therefore may have a cost implication to potential purchasers. This can cause a problem if this test is done after an offer has been negotiated on the sale of your property.

Unlike some countries, including the UK, France does not include a structural survey in these tests. It is possible for a purchaser to have a structural survey done, but the vendor is under no obligation to carry this out.
Talk to us today
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