

The Property Gazette

HOMES IN YOUR AREA

This month's homes

Replace each entry with a property, two lines of description and the price.



Two bedroom terrace
Short walk to the station, garden to the rear, no chain.
GBP 245,000



Three bedroom semi
Corner plot with off street parking and a converted loft.
GBP 320,000



One bedroom flat
Top floor, south facing, service charge included.
GBP 165,000



Four bedroom detached
Two receptions, utility room, large rear garden.
GBP 465,000



Cottage, needs work
Sold as seen. Bring a builder and an open mind.
GBP 190,000



Shop with flat above
Long lease, established pitch, available now.
GBP 275,000



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Short walk to the station, garden to the rear, no chain.
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The market this month

The rest of this column is placeholder text. Type over it. A newspaper column is narrow, so put the point of the story in the first two lines and let the detail follow; readers give a column about three sentences before they decide.

Keep paragraphs short. Two or three sentences reads as a paragraph in a column of this width, and anything longer arrives as a grey slab that the eye slides off. Break for a new speaker, a new fact or a new place.

Numbers, dates and names are what people actually read a small paper for, so spell them out and check them twice. A misprinted date on a printed page cannot be edited later, which is the one real difference between this and a website.

When you have replaced everything, delete any paragraphs left over rather than stretching the text to fill. White space at the foot of a column is normal in a newspaper and looks far better than padding.

Quotations do more work than description. One sentence from somebody who was there is worth three of your own, and it gives the reader a second voice to listen to halfway down a column.

Cut the first sentence you wrote. It is almost always a run up rather than a start, and the second sentence usually turns out to be the one the story wanted to open with.

Read the whole column aloud before it

goes to the printer. Sentences that trip you when you say them will trip the reader too, and on paper there is no way to fix them afterwards.

Photographs need names. A picture with no caption is decoration; a picture with the names of the people in it, left to right, is the reason somebody keeps the paper in a drawer for thirty years.

Leave the last paragraph short. Editors cut from the bottom when a story does not fit, so anything you would hate to lose belongs higher up the column than you first want to put it.

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Advice for buyers

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A line about the local market, set large, gives the page somewhere to breathe between listings.