



In residential sales and lettings most careers start at negotiator (trainee) level.

We have asked three of our recent entrants to describe their typical day.

The negotiator's tasks vary from office to office but they all follow a similar theme. Interfacing with colleagues, buyers and sellers, promoting property sales and lettings, managing transactions and cross selling company services.

We offer a high level of training starting with a two day Induction Course, leading to NVQ standard training on all aspects of Estate Agency.

Further information can be obtained from the Personnel Department, The Chancellors Group of Estate Agents Limited, 17 Hart Street, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 2AR. Tel: 01491 842413 Fax: 01491 411713. Email:

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A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LETTINGS NEGOTIATOR (1)

Each day begins with a team meeting to discuss the previous day's events and subsequently our targets for the day ahead. We are briefed on any new instructions and re-lets in preparation for our applicant call-out. The morning meeting provides a vital platform for communication to exchange ideas amongst the team members, and to ensure that we are on track to meet our targets for the week, month and year.

Once our applicants have been updated with any new opportunities we have for them, the diary quickly fills up and we are off on various appointments. These can be anything from furniture and furnishings checks, appointments with clients to value new properties, or viewings of student properties – part of our new venture for the next academic year. The diversity of the people we meet and of the types of property we encounter provide a constant source of interest.

Inevitably in a busy office like Headington our schedules are never entirely predictable, as we need to accommodate people who may walk through the door at any moment, and the phone is constantly ringing with new business and general

enquiries. An important skill to develop is the ability to juggle a wide range of tasks simultaneously. It is our responsibility to manage our time effectively to achieve our goals as individuals and as a team.

After the morning's viewings, it is important to provide our clients with feedback, so that we can discuss how we might continue to attract interest and to ensure that our marketing is at its most effective for each individual property. We liaise with our property management team to see if any maintenance or refurbishment work can be done to meet the demands of our applicants. Often it is also necessary for us to seek the advice of our sales team, who we work closely with, if we feel that it may be more profitable to sell a property or vice versa.

Once we have successfully matched an applicant to a property, offers are forwarded, and after negotiation a mutually agreeable deal is struck. This can sometimes require the ability to think of compromises to find a solution that suits everyone equally. We will have built up a trust with both parties, which is vital when it comes to negotiating the offer.

Although the role of lettings negotiator is centred on target-orientated deal-getting, there is consequently a good deal of paperwork to be done in order to ensure a secure tenancy for our clients and applicants. This can be a very satisfying part of the role, as there is always a sense of achievement when the keys are handed over and the file is sent to our management team at Henley for the duration of the tenancy.

Being on the graduate training scheme involves weekly target and mentoring meetings, which provide a forum to discuss any obstacles we are facing, as well as our aspirations for our long term career development. All graduates are expected to make an active contribution to our pooled commission and to the smooth-running of the branch. The meeting also provides an opportunity to take individual responsibility for input into the evolution of the business. This complements our regular graduate presentation evenings, in which we discuss new ideas for pushing the company forward.

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Chancellors actively encourages input from its staff in this way, and our innovative spirit is valued. The management training scheme fast-tracks its graduates for management potential, so that each graduate is groomed to reach the best of his or her abilities at the final review, ensuring that your successes will reflect your input to the company.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LETTINGS NEGOTIATOR (2)

0830 hrs

Shepherd's Bush Roundabout is absolutely grid-locked

No problem. Working in this area I have acquired a local street knowledge to rival any London cabby's!

0840 hrs

The day starts on a high note. I have an early appointment with a relocation agent and her clients. She is retained by a company to help find homes for staff relocating to this country. She is seeing three properties at £1400 per week so I am out of the office again at 0900. I get to the first property before they arrive and I dash around the house and open all the curtains, open the garden door and switch all the lights on so the house looks at its best.

1000 hrs

The viewings go well and the relocation agent and her clients seem keen on one of the houses so I head back to office with fingers crossed. From my desk I call the Landlords to give them feedback from the viewings. Its not an easy job but I have to tell a client with a highly individual decorating taste that her orange and green bathroom may not be everyone's cup of tea. I think I managed to phrase it right as she agrees to change it to something more neutral - as soon as I let the property!

1030 hrs

A young couple drop into the office and I register their details. They have just arrived from France and are looking for one bedroom flats at £350 a week - and need to move as soon as possible. They ask if they can view some flats today. I

wince at the thought of my packed diary, but manage to make a few adjustments so that I can fit them in. I have a property in mind that I think will be perfect for them.

The viewings are going well but from their feedback I think that they might be interested in some properties that I initially thought would be unsuitable. This means I need to pop back to the office and pick up some more keys and arrange for a colleague to cover my other appointments.

Seven viewings, some pidgin French and an hour and a half later, we are back in the office. I am rewarded as they decide to make an offer on a flat, a flat that couldn't be more different from the one I thought of initially! I ring the landlord who is happy with the offer and accepts - great! I return to my prospective tenants and take an administration fee. They retire to a local coffee shop to fill in their reference forms.

1230 hrs

I manage to grab lunch at the end of a very hectic morning. I wonder where my next new let is coming from, and have we taken on any new properties that will suit my current applicants. I also wonder what the plans are for tonight!

1330 hrs

Back to my desk and a Tenancy Agreement is waiting for me from an offer that I had previously agreed. I read through the agreement carefully. I need to make sure I understand all the clauses so that I can explain them to the client if necessary. I am unfamiliar with a couple of the clauses so I talk it through with my manager. I ring the landlord and we discuss the Tenancy Agreement. The landlord is happy so I arrange for a final draft to be couriered over to them.

I contact Nicki, the relocation agent from this morning - things are looking hopeful from this morning's viewings.

1500 hrs

Finally there is a break in the weather and some welcome afternoon sun. This is a good time to get pictures of our properties so I pick up the camera and head out to get some shots to update our window displays and website.

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1545 hrs

I have a market appraisal where I meet with a potential client who is considering letting their 2 bedroomed flat through us. We get on well and talk about the frustrations of being a Chelsea FC fan!

We discuss the services Anscombe & Ringland offer can provide from introducing a tenant to fully managing the property. Then I explain the benefits of instructing Anscombe & Ringland on a sole agency basis and run through our unique selling points. The potential Client is particularly interested in the Internet services we provide, including checking his account online. I show him examples of the account statements and some sample property details that I have already prepared in my presenter. We also discuss a few things that will improve the property's letting potential including removing flowery curtains and repainting the bedrooms from maroon to something more neutral.

Finally we agree on a price that we should start marketing the property at and the client instructs Anscombe & Ringland on a sole agency basis with the full management service!

When I return to the office I describe the property to my colleagues and ask them to see if they have any applicants that may be suitable. I also call our property management department and ask them to introduce themselves to the new client and discuss the specifics of the service he requires.

1645 hrs

I have been out of the office a lot and the day has gone very quickly. Back at my desk the paper work is piling up. I log this morning's offer from the young French couple on the computer system and get the offer letters out to the parties concerned. I am reminded about a tenancy that is moving in in two days time and have to arrange for the property to be cleaned and for an inventory check in. After a bit of grovelling and promising to buy a few drinks I manage to get them both booked in.

1730 hrs

Its time to review the day's action. I catch up with my colleagues for a brief meeting and find out if they have had any offers or if there is any new information regarding any of our instructions.

1830 hrs

Day over. To the pub. Buy a round. Mobile rings. It is Nicki the relocation agent calling, she puts forward an offer for £1300 per week. Fantastic!

Alex - Lettings Negotiator

6 months with Anscombe & Ringland

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LETTINGS NEGOTIATOR (3)

As I walk into the office at about 8:30am, I receive a cheery greeting from the other members of staff. I grab a drink and get ready for our morning meeting which starts at 8:45am. We discuss our new business and decide what each member of the team is doing for the rest of the day. The diary is quite full so we run through who is doing which viewing and who is going to draw up tenancy agreements. A round up of the meeting is followed by a chat about last night's television! This doesn't last long though as soon the phones are ringing. Our day has started.

As I take a pile of paperwork and files back to my desk, I can't help but glance at the clock and look back at my pile and wonder if I will get it all done today! I don't have much time to dwell on this thought as soon I am on the phone arranging a viewing for tomorrow. At the same time I'm picking up my car keys so that I can get to today's first viewing.

This viewing is with a relocation agent and her clients, and I meet them at the property. This property isn't right for them, I can tell, but I have another one available and I am confident they will like it. I head back to the office and have enough time to pick up my voicemail and fill everyone on today's viewings. This is very brief as soon I am on to meet a family who want to view a couple of houses. These go well and I will give them a call later when they have had a chance to decide. Fingers Crossed!

On my way back to the office, I stop to take photographs of some properties for our details. I

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enjoy doing this as it gives me some quiet time. There are a million things going through my mind that I have to deal with when I return to the office.

When I do get back, most of my colleagues are out on viewings. This means its time for me to deal with applicants in both lettings and in sales. It is nice to pitch in with sales as I get to offer different services such as Independent Financial Advice and Conveyancing Live. When I return to my desk, the pile of papers and files seems to be going down.

I call the Relocation Agent that I met this morning to get some feedback from the viewings. Her clients have some more properties to visit over the next couple of days and they will get back to me after they have seen everything. I also ring the

family I saw earlier and things look promising. I ring up the landlords to update them on the day's viewings.

The pile on my desk is now cleared and there are only 45 minutes until the end of my day. There is time to have a meeting to catch up with my colleagues. It has been a long day but I have been out and about in glorious sunshine and we have all achieved some good results. We have found some people a new home and we have successfully let our clients' properties. That's what makes me look forward to tomorrow.

Fiona - Lettings Negotiator 9 months with Chancellors