# Moving home often takes 41% longer than expected, leaving buyers like Steven Cryer feeling trapped



Moving home is frequently cited as one of life’s most challenging experiences, with many individuals considering it as traumatic as major life events like death or divorce. This stress is exacerbated by a protracted and often complicated process, which, according to research from the Open Property Data Association, typically takes 41 per cent longer than expected.

On average, prospective homeowners anticipate that the period from an offer being accepted to the exchange of contracts will be around 88 days. However, the reality is that it frequently extends to 124 days. The complete timeline for selling a home, as revealed by data from Zoopla, averages approximately six months, but many transactions can take significantly longer due to the intertwined nature of property chains. When one part of the chain encounters issues, such as a sale collapsing or delays occurring, it can affect all involved parties.

This scenario was starkly illustrated by Steven Cryer, a 43-year-old who, along with his family, faced an arduous 18-month ordeal in trying to relocate to their new house in the Wirral. After experiencing two failed purchases, encountering lost buyers, and dealing with broken chains, Cryer expressed a resigned determination not to move again. He described the journey as an emotional roller coaster, marked by dashed hopes, complicated negotiations, shifting plans, escalating costs, and an abundance of paperwork. “I think the system is completely broken,” Cryer stated. “It’s been stressful and very hard on the family, hard on the kids.”

Cryer recounted the frustrations of his moving experience, which included buyers pulling out of their transactions and himself withdrawing offers due to unexpected issues detected during surveys. “We felt stuck in this up and down roller coaster,” he explained. “Ultimately, our life went on hold for 18 months.” He had two buyers withdraw from the sale of his former home, and his attempts to purchase new properties were thwarted by substantial structural problems.

Cryer expressed a desire for a fundamental change in the property sales system, suggesting that sellers should be required to conduct comprehensive surveys of their properties before entering the market. He argued that this could have saved him considerable time and expense by identifying serious issues early in the process, such as structural faults and the need for a new roof, which only surfaced after he had incurred significant costs on surveys and mortgage valuations.

Even after eventually securing a property, Cryer faced unexpected financial burdens due to issues not disclosed by the seller. His initial budget for post-move renovations amounted to around £22,000, yet costs escalated to over £62,000. “There should be some policy that protects the buyer,” he remarked, highlighting a widespread concern about transparency in property sales. Cryer pointed out that sellers often undertake cosmetic improvements that conceal underlying problems.

In addition to the financial strain, the move exacted a heavy toll on Cryer's time and mental well-being as he grappled with extensive paperwork involved in the process. Research by the Open Property Data Association confirmed the frustrations faced by many home movers; nearly two-thirds reported that they were often asked to provide the same information multiple times during their move.

In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government announced last month an initiative to modernise the property transaction process through digitisation and secure data sharing. However, for Cryer and his family, the proposed changes come too late. “The stress on our family life, the time it’s taken, the emotional stress — you just have to put your life on hold,” he lamented.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20140709-is-moving-home-that-stressful> - This article discusses how moving house is considered one of the most stressful events, ranking just below the death of a spouse or divorce.
2. <https://propertyindustryeye.com/property-transactions-taking-over-three-times-longer-than-expected-to-complete/> - A survey by the Open Property Data Association revealed that property transactions often take over three times longer than buyers expect, with many taking between three and six months to exchange contracts.
3. <https://propertyindustryeye.com/property-transactions-taking-over-three-times-longer-than-expected-to-complete/> - The same survey highlighted that 62% of people took well over three months to exchange contracts, indicating a significant discrepancy between expected and actual moving times.
4. <https://propertyindustryeye.com/property-transactions-taking-over-three-times-longer-than-expected-to-complete/> - The article emphasizes that the intertwined nature of property chains can lead to significant delays, as issues in one part of the chain can affect all involved parties.
5. <https://propertyindustryeye.com/property-transactions-taking-over-three-times-longer-than-expected-to-complete/> - The survey also found that 57% of respondents thought the homebuying process would take less than two months from when the offer was accepted to exchanging contracts, but in reality, 46% discovered it took between three and six months.
6. <https://propertyindustryeye.com/property-transactions-taking-over-three-times-longer-than-expected-to-complete/> - The article highlights that nearly two-thirds of home movers reported being asked to provide the same information multiple times during their move, confirming the frustrations faced by many home movers.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/mortgageshome/article-14668691/We-wont-house-18-month-nightmare-one-family-LIFE.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data