

When <https://solihullobservers.co.uk/lifestyle/why-solihull-homeowners-are-extending-instead-of-selling-up/> you're living in an area like Solihull, known for its leafy suburbs and bustling commuter vibe, estate agent fees can feel like a punch in the wallet. It's not just in your head—the math backs it up. These fees, often calculated as a percentage of your property sale price, scale steeply with local house prices. With the Office for National Statistics (ONS) projecting a local baseline detached home price around £597,000 by May 2026, these costs can leap significantly beyond what buyers and sellers in other areas fork out.

The Solihull Price Gap and Its Impact on Moving Decisions

The soaring property values in Solihull create what I call the “price gap” effect. Simply put, higher house prices mean a bigger wedge between your current home's value and what you'd pay for your next move. This gap often nudges homeowners to consider extending their current homes rather than moving, to get more space and value without doubling up on costs.

Extensions can offer an attractive alternative to moving because moving has multiple costs that add no physical space—stamp duty, legal fees, and the dreaded estate agent fees all stack up fast. The catch? Extensions come with their own costs and planning considerations, so you need to weigh up your options carefully.

Estate Agent Percentage Fee Scales Explained

Estate agents typically charge a percentage of your sale price as their fee. In expensive areas like Solihull, where the detached home baseline is already around £597,000, even modest percentage fees can equate to large sums. Here's a rough guide to typical percentage fee scales:

Sale Price Bracket	Estate Agent Percentage Fee Example	Fee on £597,000
Under £250,000	1.5% - 2.5%	£8,955 - £14,925
£250,000 – £500,000	1.25% - 2.0%	£7,463 - £11,940
Over £500,000	1.0% - 1.5%	£5,970 - £8,955

So while the percentage fee might seem lower at higher price points, the absolute figure is still hefty. Sellers in Solihull are facing agent fees in the range of £6,000 to £9,000 or more, just to get their home on the market and sold.

Extension Costs by Size and Type in Solihull

Before you throw your hands up at estate agent fees, consider how much it costs to extend your current home. An extension adds usable space without triggering those hefty moving-related fees. But the price per square metre can vary depending on the extension type:

- **Single-storey extensions:** Typically costing between £1,200 and £1,800 per square metre.
- **Two-storey extensions:** More complex due to additional structural work, costing upwards of £1,500 to £2,500 per square metre.

For example, adding a 20m² single-storey extension might cost you roughly £24,000 to £36,000. A two-storey extension adding 40m² might easily exceed £60,000. While the upfront cost looks high compared to moving, you need to see the full picture by factoring in the fees you'd avoid by not moving.

Don't Forget Planning and Development Checks

Extensions in Solihull aren't just about cost; regulations matter. It's always wise to consult Solihull Council's pre-application enquiry service. This tool lets you get feedback early on your extension plans and whether you need a planning application or if your project qualifies under permitted development rights.

Permitted development rights generally allow smaller or less complex extensions to proceed without the full planning application process, which can save time and money. But be aware that conservation areas or specific local restrictions can add hurdles.

Moving Costs That Add No Space - The Hidden Drain on Your Wallet

When weighing up extension vs move, many forget to incorporate the hidden moving costs that tack on significant expenses, especially in high-value markets like Solihull:

1. **Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT):** At a detached home baseline of £597,000, SDLT can add tens of thousands. For example, you could pay over £23,000 in SDLT alone on a property around this price point.
2. **Estate agent fees:** As outlined above, these often run into several thousand pounds.
3. **Conveyancing and legal fees:** Typically £1,000-£2,000, depending on complexity.
4. **Moving expenses:** Removal companies, surveys, valuation fees, and interim housing bets.

These costs do not increase your property's usable space. They're like a hidden tax on moving in expensive markets.



What People Forget to Budget For

- **VAT on fees:** Many quotes and estimates for estate agent or builder services exclude VAT. In a high-cost area, that extra 20% can add up fast. Always check if VAT is included.
- **Contingency fund:** It's standard in the industry to add at least 10-15% contingency for unexpected costs on extensions or renovations. Many householders underestimate this and encounter budget blow-outs.

- **Professional fees:** Architects, structural engineers, and surveyors are often essential, especially for planning applications or complex extensions but are sometimes ignored in early budgeting.

How Trusted Platforms Can Help You Navigate Costs

Finding competitive quotes is essential. Platforms like Checkatrade allow you to find vetted local builders and extension specialists, helping you get realistic quotes and avoid surprises.

For moving-related costs, MyJobQuote can be helpful when sourcing services like removals or conveyancers, where local reviews can tip the balance in your favour.

Wrapping Up - What's the Best Choice for Solihull Homeowners?

Estate agent fees in expensive areas like Solihull feel worse because the local property values push absolute fees far higher. Coupled with significant stamp duty and associated moving costs, it's easy to see why many homeowners prefer extending over moving.



Extensions come with their own cost tags but offer added space and value that moving costs simply can't buy. Just make sure you sanity-check prices per square metre, include all hidden costs (VAT, contingency, professional fees), and research local planning restrictions with tools like the Solihull Council permitted development checks.

At the end of the day, your decision should balance the long-term value of extra space against the upfront cost and hassle of moving and fees. In areas like Solihull, a carefully planned extension often makes excellent financial and lifestyle sense.