



THE HOUSING MARKET, like any other market you care to mention at present, has seen better days. The average price of a house in London has fallen by 3.8 per cent since this time last year, and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors recently reported that property sales by estate agents in Britain were down by as much as 40 per cent for the same period.

These statistics make for grim reading if you're looking to sell your property, but they needn't be quite so alarming; by fully realising a property's potential you can minimise its time on the market and maximise its value.

As a developer or an agent, achieving this is vital, which is why the City's top agents and developers of prestige properties turn to BB Design House to elevate their homes beyond those of the competition. Founded in 2007 by industry pioneer Ben Bambrough, BB Design House offers a range of services from home staging (furnishing and decorating a property to put it to market) to full-blown interior design, property management and home-sale troubleshooting.

"We work with some of London's top agents and furnish the finest properties on the market, making them look as good and as lived-in as possible," Bambrough explains. "Our reputation is founded on the fact that we collect unusual and eclectic furniture, fantastic art work and we accessorise well, giving the property more of a homely feel than a showhouse feel." That furniture and art is available to purchase should the buyer

wish to retain BB Design House's fastidiously pieced-together style.

Much of the company's success has come through word-of-mouth referral, and Bambrough cites the recent example of a £5m flat being sold by administrators – with a quick sale essential, the agents recommended BB Design House's services, and within a short time the property went under offer.

It is, he concedes, more important than ever to present your property correctly in the current financial climate. "Around 18 months ago I could feel quite confident that our work would generate extra interest and

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perhaps bring in more than the asking price," he says. "Today, I'm operating on the other side of the line; my job is to help people to sell faster and, where the price is concerned, it's also about damage limitation."

Agents and private clients alike have sought out BB Design House to make their properties sell, but the company also maintains an increasingly productive relationship with property developers. Keen to get an early edge on competitors, developers are drafting in Bambrough's help well in advance of completion. "We may get involved with the design specs – putting on a hard hat and looking at the unfinished rooms, seeing how they work," he says.

Rather than simply being a home-staging specialist, however, BB Design House makes considerable use of its team's experience to offer property management and troubleshooting services – particularly useful when the property's owner or seller is based outside of the UK, as is often the case.

And the company has a full roster of builders, landscape gardeners and curtain makers on their books to help make the necessary changes required to bring a house to its full potential.

Far from being a jack-of-all-trades and master of none, though, BB Design House offers a comprehensive and eclectic service, and one that delivers demonstrable success and value for money to a growing client base. Says Bambrough: "Fundamentally, I know how to make a property reach its potential." ■

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