

## Top deals give market a boost

**B**ARKERS estate agents, who have three branches in Birkenshaw, Birstall and Cleckheaton has seen a positive upturn and improvement in the local property market over the last few weeks.

A healthy rise in the number of properties sold during January and February has become apparent and it is hoped that this trend is set to continue.

A property in Birkenshaw was sold recently for the full asking price within just 10 days of it going on the market. Whereas another property attracted multiple offers – a situation which is normally associated with a booming market!

Director Amanda Humphreys said: "We think the local property market is improving and are hopeful that this will continue this year, the recent steep interest rate cuts and price reductions will tempt even more buyers back into the market."

She added: "After house

prices across our region fell last year, the new year has seen many properties offered at extremely good value for money prices and this is encouraging buyers back into the marketplace.

"We have seen an increase in investors, cautious about trusting their money to the banks, beginning to buy up properties and first time buyers are starting to increase in number.

"The availability of mortgage funds, particularly for first time buyers, remains crucial to the upturn of the market and the government's focus should be on the banking sector to improve commitment from the major lenders to free up credit.

I spoke to a couple last week and the best deal they had managed to secure was one with a 30 per cent deposit.

"Obviously the announcement that Northern Rock is to start offering up to 90 per cent loan-to-value mortgages again is good news but more needs to be done."

*"We think the local property market is improving and are hopeful this will continue this year, the recent steep interest rate cuts and price reductions will tempt even more buyers back."*



Amanda Humphreys says cautious investors may be turning to the property market for the best deals