

Media release

Australians more likely to check for termites than neighbourhood 'pests' when searching for a home

- Research from ING DIRECT has revealed four in five (87%) Australians do not research their neighbours before moving into a new home or neighbourhood
- That's despite the fact 13% of Australians say they would move house to get away from bad neighbours
- When scouting a new home, Australians are most concerned about the proximity to public transport, route to work and to the nearest convenience store
- Research finds Western Australia (WA) has the greatest population of 'excellent' or 'good' neighbours (70%)

Wednesday 19 October, 2016: New research from ING DIRECT has revealed Australians are six times more likely to check for termites (25%) than other 'pests' when searching for a new neighbourhood to call home, with four in five (87%) Aussies admitting they do not research their potential new neighbours before moving.

The ING DIRECT 'Good Neighbours' report shows only 4% of Australians typically check with police for reports of parties or noise complaints in the neighbourhood prior to moving in. Aussies are also more concerned about the proximity to transport (34%), the route to work (28%) and to the nearest convenience store (21%), than what their new neighbours or neighbourhood is like (13%). This is despite the negative impact bad neighbours can potentially have on the standard of living.

John Arnott, Executive Director, Customers, at ING DIRECT says there is real financial value in home buyers doing their due diligence on new neighbours before picking out the perfect neighbourhood.

"While we take into consideration many factors when selecting a new home, what our neighbours are like is not typically high on the checklist. Your relationship with your neighbours can have a big impact on your day to day life, and given the high cost of buying and moving into a new home, it certainly pays to do as much research as possible. So make sure you check out the neighbours before signing on the dotted line for your new home," Mr Arnott said.

The research found 13% of Australians would consider moving house to get away from bad neighbours, with a fifth (21%) of neighbourhood newbies – people who have lived in their home for less than two years – most likely to move.

Western Australia has the greatest population of 'excellent' or 'good' neighbours

If you are in search of your very own 'Ramsay Street' experience, you're most likely to find it in Western Australia.

Western Australia has the greatest population of 'excellent' or 'good' neighbours (70%), followed by New South Wales (66%) and Victoria and Tasmania (62%). In comparison, 59% of Queensland's population and 58% of South Australia's population consider their neighbours to be either 'excellent' or 'good'.

ING DIRECT's research found Western Australia residents are more likely than other Australian states to say that even their worst neighbour is 'good' or 'excellent' (27%).

In terms of what makes a great neighbour, Aussies rated being there for you in an emergency (35%), bringing in the rubbish (34%) and clearing out the mailbox when you're away (32%) as the top three qualities of a good neighbour.

To help Australians avoid the potential financial and emotional costs of living next-door next to bad neighbours, John Arnott from ING DIRECT has developed these five top tips:

- 1. Speak to the current homeowner or real estate agent** – if the current homeowner is available, ask them about their relationship with the neighbours. Do they see their neighbours? What are they like? Are they friendly? Do they speak to them? Are they helpful? Has the real estate agent had any dealings with the neighbours? What is their opinion? If the answers to these questions are positive, you could be on to a winner.
- 2. Chat to the neighbours** – don't just take the current homeowner's or real estate agent's word for it, it's good to get a firsthand account. Introduce yourself to the neighbours before putting in an offer. Let them know you are thinking of moving to the area and ask them what the community is like. Get a sense of the type of people they are. Check for any red flags such as an untidy exterior or loud noise which may cause problems later down the line.
- 3. Check with police for complaints** – if you don't want to be stuck next to noisy neighbours check with the local police for any records of neighbourhood disturbances. Police hold a record of complaints and will be able to share these with you. Check these out for any neighbourhood 'pests' other than termites!
- 4. Scope the area** – is there a local shop or any other local businesses where you can pop in and ask about the neighbourhood? It's good to get accounts from as many sources as possible to avoid moving into a neighbourhood only to find you want to leave again shortly after arriving.
- 5. Open communication** – is there something that your neighbour is doing that is grating on you? In these situations, keep an open and honest line of communication. Talk to your neighbour about the issue early on and try to work towards a positive solution to keep the neighbourhood peace. This should help to nip any problem in the bud before it develops into a situation that might cause unwanted stress and discomfort. An open line of communication is a healthy foundation for building a good relationship with your neighbour, which in turn can enhance your standard of living.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The research was conducted by Galaxy Research on behalf of ING DIRECT in September 2016 and comprised an online poll of over 1,000 respondents.

Media contacts

Alistair Jedlin, N2N Communications, 0423 009 773 / Fran Chitoriski, N2N Communications, 0421 024 494
Kristen Costandi, ING DIRECT, 0413 317 225

About ING DIRECT

ING DIRECT changed the way Australians bank 16 years ago by launching the country's first high interest, fee free online savings account. Since then, we've brought this low fee value to home loans, transactional banking and superannuation.

With over 1.5 million customers – and \$34 billion in savings and \$40 billion in mortgages – ING DIRECT has the highest Net Promoter Score of any bank.

Australia's most recommended bank

Source: Nielsen Consumer & Media View Jul '15 – Dec '15 (n=9,552) when compared by customers of 14 other banks operating in Australia.