



THE

Countryside Move

Starter Kit

A calmer place to begin: enough structure to test fit, narrow places, and spot practical issues before you get lost in listings.

What is inside <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a simple route through the move• early red flags worth catching now• light shortlist and cost prompts• starter property reality checks	Best used when <ul style="list-style-type: none">• you are still figuring out if this move fits• you want a cleaner order before deeper planning• you need a generous free starting point
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Format	Use	Style
Printable PDF workbook	Research, comparison, and clearer decisions	Calm, practical, editable-friendly layout

How to Use This Starter Kit

This is a short practical starting point. The goal is not to organise every part of the move today - it is to help you ask better questions earlier.

Use this kit to

Use this kit to do four things:

1. work out whether the move fits your real life
2. narrow down the kind of place that might suit you
3. think honestly about first-year costs
4. spot property practicality before you fall in love with the wrong house

Start in this order

You do not need to solve everything at once.

A better order is:

fit -> place -> money -> property

That order usually saves time, noise, and bad assumptions later.

Best way to use it

- read it once from start to finish
- write short notes rather than trying to perfect every answer
- use it to identify the next right page or tool on the site
- come back to it once your shortlist becomes more realistic

Start With Fit, Then Place, Then Money, Then Property

A lot of people start with a dream cottage or beautiful village. That usually creates noise, not clarity.

1. Fit

Ask what kind of daily life you actually want, what you rely on now without noticing, and what would become harder.

2. Place

Choose a type of place before a postcode: village or market town, near a city or more remote, social or quieter.

3. Money

Pressure-test first-year costs once the move looks plausible: travel, heating, maintenance, access, and service costs.

4. Property

Only then go deeper into houses: drainage, heating, signal, access, flood risk, repair exposure, and practicality.

Why this order matters

It stops a beautiful property from pulling you into the wrong move. When fit, place, and money are weak, house research becomes misleading.

Early Red Flags to Watch For

The countryside can be a brilliant move. It is also easy to romanticise. Catch these early and you save yourself a lot of noise later.

1. Falling for a property before testing the area

A house can look perfect and still put you in the wrong routine, wrong location, or wrong cost structure.

2. Confusing peace with convenience

Quiet is not the same as errands, healthcare, or daily access being easy.

3. Underestimating transport costs

A countryside move often changes transport reality more than housing reality.

4. Treating list price as the real cost

The first year combines moving costs, surveys, heating, maintenance, and setup purchases.

5. Assuming every pretty village offers the same lifestyle

Two places can look similar online and feel very different in real life.

6. Organising too early

Admin lists can feel productive before you have tested fit, area type, and likely costs.

Starter Shortlist Prompts

Use this page to narrow the kind of countryside move that could suit you. Keep it light for now - short notes are enough.

What matters most in daily life?

Write a few short answers about weekday reality, not idealised weekends.

- access to shops, stations, or school runs
- walkability versus quiet
- dogs, storage, home working, or outdoor life
- how much driving you can tolerate long-term

Non-negotiables and nice-to-haves

Separate what the move probably needs from what would simply be lovely to have.

Three types of place worth testing

Think in place types before village names - for example: market town within commuting reach, village near a small city, or edge-of-rural with better services nearby.

Quick cost reality check

Where could the first year get tighter than expected? Note travel, heating, maintenance, setup costs, or extra service costs.

What would make this move feel like a mistake?

A good answer should survive wet Wednesdays, first-winter costs, and ordinary routines.

Starter Cost Prompts

Before you decide a move is affordable, pressure-test a few areas that often get underestimated.

Cost area	What to consider
Upfront move costs	deposit, legal fees, survey, removals, insurance changes, setup spending, and early repairs
Running costs that may increase	fuel, second car costs, train parking, heating, water or drainage, maintenance, and deliveries
First-year surprises	bad first winter, heating spikes, repairs, storage or outdoor kit, and making the house more practical

Quick stress test

Ask yourself:

- Would the move still feel comfortable if costs were 20-30% worse than expected?
- Would it still work if one inconvenience became permanent?
- Would it still work if you needed another car sooner than planned?
- Would it still work if the house needed more upkeep than you hoped?

What would make the numbers feel calmer?

Note the extra information, savings buffer, or compromises that would make the move feel more solid.

Starter Property Reality Check

A countryside property needs to work in real life, not just in photos. Use this page as an early practicality filter.

Access

Would the approach stay workable in winter, darkness, heavy shopping, children, or poor weather?

Heating and warmth

Does the house look easy or expensive to keep warm? Is the system simple or likely to become a project?

Water and drainage

Do you understand whether it is mains or private, and what upkeep that might bring with it?

Signal and broadband

Would phone signal or internet affect work, safety, or convenience? Is there evidence, not just assumption?

Storage and practicality

Is there room for boots, coats, dogs, tools, laundry, fuel, and everyday mess?

Maintenance exposure

Does the house look like it will quietly demand time and money in the first year?

Quick reality question

Would this property still appeal if you focused on Tuesday-morning practicality, winter running costs, muddy boots, errands, and repairs? If the answer changes sharply, pay attention.

Best Next Pages and Tools

Once you have used this starter kit, the best next step depends on what still feels unclear.

If you are still working out fit

- Start Here
- Countryside Suitability Quiz
- Village vs Market Town

If you are trying to narrow locations

- Countryside Shortlist Builder
- Create a Countryside Shortlist
- Test a Countryside Area

If you are worried about affordability

- First-Year Rural Cost Planner
- Hidden Costs of Countryside Living
- One Car in the Countryside

If you are looking at properties already

- Viewing Questions
- Property Practicality Scorecard
- Utilities Checker

When you want more structure after this

The next level is the Full Countryside Move Pack. It helps you compare areas properly, build a first-year budget, assess properties more clearly, and organise the move with less guesswork.