

Check Out Their Assets



With non incorporated businesses the problem of checking their credit worthiness is difficult to say the least. A similar situation arises if legal action is necessary when deciding if they have sufficient assets to make it worth while. Fortunately today you can find out such information very quickly and for a fee of only a few pounds www.landreg.gov.uk . And in the bargain you will have information that if things go radically wrong may help you to recover your money before any other creditors. Or at the very least help you to secure your debt as a preferential creditor.

Not a lot of people know this but some years ago the 'Land Registry' became an open book. This means that you and I can have a squint into it whenever we want without asking anyone's permission or them even knowing about it. First you must know your debtors private address. If you dont have it then you must do a little bit of detective work to find it. Given the fact that you have the address it's a very simple and straight forward search to undertake. Telephone any Land Registry Office and ask for Explanatory Leaflets No 9 & 15 which they will send to you free of charge. Alternatively go online and download them at the website shown above. The first tells you where all the District Offices are and for which areas they hold information. The second explains the information they provide and includes a search form.

Fill in the form with the subject property address and put it in the post with the fee. Alternatively complete the form on line and pay by credit card. The search will tell you who owns the property, when it was purchased and details of any charges. In many cases, of course, there would be at least one charge relating to the mortgage. To qualify the possible equity value a further step would be to contact a local estate agent and ask him to value the property for you at today's value. He could also give you an idea of what was paid for the property when it was purchased by the debtor.

It is worth bearing in mind that if the ownership of the property had recently transferred from say husband to wife, in an attempt to ensure creditors can't get their hands on it the transfer could be rescinded. For new customers the information could help you to decide on the credit limit you give them. Alternatively it becomes crucial information when wondering how to enforce a judgment given in your favour.
