



The **House Price Per Square Metre Survey** examines the movement in house prices on an average price per square metre (m²) basis in 467 UK towns (including 32 London boroughs which have been classified as towns for this research). Average price per square metre is a useful measure for house price comparison, helping to adjust for differences in property size and type across areas. The average price per square metre is calculated by dividing the average house price by the average square metres per property (excluding external space). **The price per square metre can be converted into price per square foot by dividing by 10.7639104.**

Scotland and the North dominate in list of property price gains over last decade

Scotland and the North of England command the top ten positions in a new list of house price performance in the UK, according to research from Halifax. Six of the top ten towns – and all of the top four - with the highest house price growth on a per square metre basis over the past ten years are in Scotland. Peterhead has recorded the largest gain in average price per square metre (m²) over the past ten years: the Aberdeenshire town has seen an increase of 160% to £1,254 per m² in 2011 from £481 per m² in 2001. **(Table 1)**

Inverurie, another Aberdeenshire town, has experienced the second largest gain in the UK (142%) since 2001 followed by Montrose (135%). The other four towns in the top ten are all in northern England. **(Table 1)**

The majority of towns that have seen the highest price growth over the past decade had relatively low prices in 2001. Strong economic growth over the decade as a whole has also helped to drive up prices in many of those areas that have seen substantial price gains. This is apparent in several towns in Aberdeenshire where the economy has been stimulated by the strong performance of the oil sector.

Ten towns with the smallest rises since 2001 are all in Northern Ireland and southern England. House prices in Belfast (25%) and Lisburn (31%) have increased the least on a per square metre basis since 2001. Four of the ten towns with the smallest gains are in Northern Ireland with the remainder all in southern England. The majority of towns recording the smallest rises over the decade had relatively high prices in 2001. **(Table 2)**

The average price per square metre is currently higher than in 2007 in only 12 areas in the UK. Epping has seen the biggest rise over this period (12%). The two best performers over the last decade as a whole have also seen increases since 2007: Peterhead (7%) and Inverurie (10%). There are five London boroughs amongst these 12 areas where prices are currently higher than in 2007, including Westminster (5%) and Islington (4%), reflecting the general outperformance of the London market compared with the rest of the country in the past two years.

Towns in Northern Ireland dominate the list of towns that have experienced the biggest falls in price per square metre since 2007, accounting for eight of the bottom ten. Craigavon (-50%), Lisburn (-48%) and Newtownabbey (-48%) have seen the biggest declines over the past four years. Most towns that have seen the biggest price falls per square metre since 2007 experienced very substantial gains in the preceding six year. Six of the ten towns recording the largest declines between 2007 and 2011 were amongst the 20 towns that saw the biggest rises during 2001-2007.

MOST EXPENSIVE AREAS

Kensington & Chelsea is the UK's most expensive area with an average price of £8,038 per m² in 2011. All 17 most expensive areas in the UK are London boroughs. There has been very little change in the areas with the most expensive property in the past decade with nine of the ten London boroughs that make up the most expensive areas in the country also in the top ten in 2001. The only change is that Hackney has replaced Ealing. **(Table 3)**

Cambridge is the most expensive town on a per square metre basis outside London and the South East with an average price of £2,783 per m².

Stratford upon Avon (£2,259) and the Cheshire towns of Wilmslow (£2,241) and Altrincham (£2,148) are the most expensive towns outside southern England. These are also the only towns not in the south that feature in the 100 with the most expensive property on a per square metre basis. **(Table 4)**

LEAST EXPENSIVE

Stanley in County Durham has the lowest average price (£784 per m²) of all UK towns surveyed. The average price per square metre in Stanley is less than a tenth of that in Kensington & Chelsea.

All ten towns with the lowest prices are outside the south*. Two seaside towns in Kent have the lowest prices per square metre in the South East: Dover (£1,361) and Margate (£1,378).

There has been more movement amongst the least expensive areas with only four of the ten least expensive UK towns in 2011 among the ten least expensive in 2001: Nelson, Merthyr Tydfil, Ebbw Vale and Bootle. **(Table 5)**

AVERAGE PROPERTY SIZE

Sevenoaks in Kent has the largest average property size in the UK: 146 m². Nantwich in Cheshire has the second biggest (144 m²). **(Table 6)**

Tower Hamlets has the smallest average property size in the UK, at 77 m²; about 50% of the average in Sevenoaks. Despite having the smallest property size, the price per square metre in Tower Hamlets is the tenth highest in the country. Nine of the ten areas with the smallest average property size are in Greater London. **(Table 7)**

Martin Ellis, housing economist at Halifax, said:

"When looking at property prices on a square metre basis, there has been a huge divergence in house price performance across the UK over the past decade, ranging from a rise of 160% in Peterhead in Aberdeenshire to 25% in Belfast.

Despite these differences, there has been little change in the composition of those areas with the most and least expensive properties. Nine of the ten London boroughs that were the most expensive areas in the country in 2001 are still in the top ten whilst four of the least expensive towns in 2001 remain amongst the ten least expensive places."

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Editors' Notes:

* Excludes towns in Greater London, South East, South West and East Anglia.

The average price per square metre is sourced from the Halifax House Price Index database and is calculated by dividing the average house price by the average square metres per property (excluding external space). Square metre per dwelling is based purely on the size of the house and does not take account of outdoor space attached to a dwelling.

The average property prices per square metre used in the release can be converted into square feet by dividing it by 10.7639104.

Data in this report is sourced from the Halifax House price index database. The Halifax House Price Index was introduced in 1983. It is based on the largest sample of mortgage data and provides the longest monthly series of any similar UK index. The index is based on the detailed records of the prices, physical characteristics and the regional location of all the houses on which the organisation has made a mortgage offer in each time period.

Table 1: Biggest Price Increases (%) 2001-2011

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Average House Price 2011 £	Price per M ² (£)		10 Year %	10 Year £
				2001	2011		
Peterhead	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£150,709	£481	£1,254	160%	£772
Inverurie	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£230,263	£741	£1,795	142%	£1,054
Montrose	Angus	Scotland	£126,460	£521	£1,222	135%	£701
Ellon	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£178,643	£736	£1,725	134%	£989
Carnforth	Lancashire	North West	£213,329	£762	£1,763	131%	£1,001
Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£179,892	£849	£1,958	131%	£1,109
Arbroath	Angus	Scotland	£117,838	£491	£1,126	129%	£635
Wallsend	Tyne And Wear	North	£104,099	£513	£1,158	126%	£645
Cleethorpes	South Humberside	Yorkshire and the Humber	£127,797	£501	£1,127	125%	£626
Seaham	County Durham	North	£124,584	£476	£1,070	125%	£594

Table 2: Smallest Price Increases (%) 2001-2011

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)		10 Year %	10 Year £
			2001	2011		
Belfast	Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	£944	£1,183	25%	£239
Lisburn	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£820	£1,076	31%	£256
Swindon	Wiltshire	South West	£1,168	£1,536	31%	£367
Bangor (Co Down)	County Down	Northern Ireland	£859	£1,142	33%	£283
Basingstoke	Hampshire	South East	£1,524	£2,034	33%	£510
Newtownabbey	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£742	£1,007	36%	£265
Newbury	Berkshire	South East	£1,676	£2,282	36%	£607
Slough	Berkshire	South East	£1,675	£2,294	37%	£619
Bracknell	Berkshire	South East	£1,680	£2,305	37%	£625
Aylesbury	Buckinghamshire	South East	£1,568	£2,168	38%	£600

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Table 3: Most Expensive Towns in the UK in 2011

Post Town/Borough	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Kensington and Chelsea	Greater London	£8,038
Westminster	Greater London	£6,988
Camden	Greater London	£5,984
Hammersmith and Fulham	Greater London	£5,537
Islington	Greater London	£5,209
Wandsworth	Greater London	£4,588
Richmond upon Thames	Greater London	£4,459
Hackney	Greater London	£4,115
Southwark	Greater London	£3,979
Tower Hamlets	Greater London	£3,924

Source: Halifax

Table 4: Most Expensive Towns outside Southern England in 2011

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Stratford Upon Avon	Warwickshire	West Midlands	£2,259
Wilmslow	Cheshire	North West	£2,241
Altrincham	Cheshire	North West	£2,148
Edinburgh	Midlothian	Scotland	£2,101
Ilkley	West Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	£2,066
Solihull	West Midlands	West Midlands	£2,020
Leamington Spa	Warwickshire	West Midlands	£2,018
Harrogate	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	£2,012
Warwick	Warwickshire	West Midlands	£2,005
Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£1,958

Table 5: Least Expensive Towns in the UK in 2011

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Stanley	County Durham	North	£784
Nelson	Lancashire	North West	£817
Consett	County Durham	North	£836
Merthyr Tydfil	Mid Glamorgan	Wales	£840
Ebbw Vale	Gwent	Wales	£848
Port Talbot	West Glamorgan	Wales	£866
Londonderry	County Londonderry	Northern Ireland	£868
Craigavon	County Armagh	Northern Ireland	£870
Bootle	Merseyside	North West	£889
Ashington	Northumberland	North	£903

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Table 6: Towns with largest average property size (2011)

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Average Size M ²
Sevenoaks	Kent	South East	146
Nantwich	Cheshire	North West	144
Dunmow	Essex	South East	137
Inverurie	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	134
Wallasey	Merseyside	North West	131
Prenton	Merseyside	North West	130
Ballymena	Co Antrim	Northern Ireland	129
Craigavon	Co Armagh	Northern Ireland	128
Winchester	Hants	South East	127
Leatherhead	Surrey	South East	125

Source: Halifax

Table 7: Towns with smallest average property size (2011)

Post Town/Borough	Region	Average Size M ²
Tower Hamlets	Greater London	77
Westminster	Greater London	78
Camden	Greater London	81
Hackney	Greater London	81
Hammersmith and Fulham	Greater London	84
Newham	Greater London	84
Hitchin	South East	84
Hounslow	Greater London	84
Kensington and Chelsea	Greater London	85
Southwark	Greater London	85

Source: Halifax

"This report is prepared from information that we believe is collated with care, however, it is only intended to highlight issues and it is not intended to be comprehensive. We reserve the right to vary our methodology and to edit or discontinue/withdraw this, or any other report. Any use of this report for an individual's own or third party commercial purposes is done entirely at the risk of the person making such use and solely the responsibility of the person or persons making such reliance."

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