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The **Halifax property sales report** tracks home sales movements across England and Wales. The review is based on Land Registry data and covers more than 550 postal towns and London boroughs. **Property sales hotspots are defined as those locations that recorded a rise in home sales during the eight months to August 2015 compared with the same period in 2014.**

Housing market sees fall in sales with south faring worst

- Home sales in the first eight months of 2015 were 8% lower than in the same period in 2014.
- Salford in the North West sees the biggest rise in number of home sales, up 23%.

The number of property sales in the first eight months of 2015 were 8% lower than in the same period in 2014, according to new research by Halifax based on the latest Land Registry data.

All regions saw a fall in sales in 2015, but there was a clear north / south divide with sales falling more in the south. The biggest decline was in Greater London (-14%), whereas the smallest fall was in the North West (-3%) (see Table 1). However, there were still marked differences in local markets, with pockets of higher and lower activity in all regions. In Yorkshire & the Humber for example, the sales were down 6%, but whereas in Batley they were down 27%, in Pontefract they were up 20%.

Majority of towns see a decline in housing activity in 2015

The majority (82%) of towns in this survey saw a decrease in sales between 2014 and 2015. This was in stark contrast to 2014 when nearly all towns (97%) recorded a rise in sales (see Table 2). Those areas which saw the biggest declines in activity did not necessarily see a drop off in house price rises, so although Greater London saw a decline in sales of 6%, average house prices increased by £55,095.

Craig McKinlay, Mortgages Director at Halifax, comments:

"Activity in the housing market has generally softened in 2015 with sales in the first eight months of the year down by 8% compared with the same period in 2014. While sales have declined in all regions, there is a clear north versus south pattern with sales falling most in southern regions. An acute shortage of properties for sales has also added to the constraints on activity.

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“Nonetheless, there remain substantial local variations in housing activity with a small number of towns recording significant increases. These towns are largely in the north and are where prices are relatively low.”

Salford and Pontefract record biggest rises in home sales in 2015

Two towns recorded a 20% or more increase in sales between 2014 and 2015, with the biggest rises in Salford in the North West (23%) and Pontefract in West Yorkshire (20%). All ten towns experiencing the biggest increases in sales are outside southern England (see Table 3).

Market Rasen in Lincolnshire saw the biggest fall in sales with a 30% decline between the first eight months of 2014 and the same period in 2015. Seventeen towns saw a fall of 25% or more and seven of the ten towns recording the biggest declines are in London and the South East.

Kensington and Chelsea was the worst performing London borough with a 28% decline followed closely by Hammersmith and Fulham. Thirty London boroughs recorded a fall in sales with two experiencing an increase (see Table 4).

Table 1: Property Sales and % changes by region, 2014-2015

	Sales 2014*	Sales 2015*	% Change
North	28,171	27,050	-4%
Yorkshire and the Humber	51,545	48,297	-6%
North West	61,316	59,206	-3%
East Midlands	49,109	45,063	-8%
West Midlands	52,059	48,731	-6%
East Anglia	30,115	26,313	-13%
Wales	26,996	25,747	-5%
South West	67,960	62,503	-8%
South East	150,979	137,150	-9%
Greater London	80,531	69,435	-14%
England & Wales	598,908	549,639	-8%

Source: Land Registry, *January to August

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Table 2: % of towns with an annual rise/ fall in home sales by region, 2014-2015

	Hotspots 2014*	Coldspots 2014**	Hotspots 2015*	Coldspots 2015**
North	91%	9%	38%***	63%***
Yorkshire and the Humber	100%	0%	26%	74%
North West	98%	2%	29%	71%
East Midlands	98%	2%	2%	98%
West Midlands	98%	2%	20%	80%
East Anglia	100%	0%	4%	96%
Wales	93%	7%	39%	61%
South West	100%	0%	16%	84%
South East	97%	3%	15%	85%
Greater London	94%	6%	6%	94%
England & Wales	97%	3%	18%	82%

Sources: Halifax, Land Registry

*January to August

*Proportion of towns that recorded an annual increase in home sales, **Proportion of towns that recorded an annual fall in home sales

*** Figures rounded up – total is 100%

Table 3: Ten Towns with the highest % increase in property sales, 2014 – 2015

Post town	Region	Sales % Change 2014-2015
Salford	North West	23%
Pontefract	Yorkshire and the Humber	20%
Halesowen	West Midlands	18%
Bridlington	Yorkshire and the Humber	18%
Poulton Le Fylde	North West	17%
Aberdare	Wales	16%
Barrow In Furness	North	16%
Penrith	North	14%
Bedworth	West Midlands	13%
Pontypridd	Wales	13%

Source: Land Registry, *January to August

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Table 4: Towns with a fall in property sales, 2014 – 2015

Post town	Region	Sales % Change 2014-2015
Market Rasen	East Midlands	-30%
Uckfield	South East	-29%
Walton On Thames	South East	-28%
Esher	South East	-28%
Kensington & Chelsea	Greater London	-28%
Batley	Yorkshire and the Humber	-27%
Petersfield	South East	-27%
Hammersmith & Fulham	Greater London	-27%
Sutton in Ashfield	East Midlands	-27%
Westminster	Greater London	-26%

Source: Land Registry, *January to August

Table 5: 10 Towns with the largest % increase/fall in property sales in each region: 2014–2015

Region	Biggest Gainer	Sales % Change 2014-2015	Biggest Faller	Sales % Change 2014-2015
North West	Salford	23%	Clitheroe	-16%
Yorkshire and the Humber	Pontefract	20%	Batley	-27%
West Midlands	Halesowen	18%	Droitwich	-20%
North	Barrow In Furness	16%	Cramlington	-16%
Greater London	Barking & Dagenham	7%	Kensington & Chelsea	-28%
Wales	Aberdare	16%	Caerphilly	-21%
South West	Paignton	11%	Dorchester	-25%
South East	Halstead	10%	Uckfield	-29%
East Anglia	Woodbridge	7%	St Ives	-24%
East Midlands	Stamford	3%	Market Rasen	-30%

Source: Land Registry, *January to August

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Editors' Notes

Helping Britain Prosper

Lloyds Bank, part of Lloyds Banking Group is playing its part in delivering the Group's Helping Britain Prosper Plan (the Plan). Launched in March 2014, the Plan sets out seven separate and significant public commitments to do even more to help address some of the big issues facing its customers and Britain today. The first two commitments made within the Plan are:

1. We will help more customers get on the housing ladder - and more customers climb up it.
2. We will help our customer plan and save for later life

To find out more about Lloyds Banking Group's commitment to Help Britain Prosper, please visit <http://www.lloydsbankinggroup-cr.com/>

House Prices:

The house price and sales data in this report is sourced from the HM Land Registry. House price data is from the Land Registry and refers to crude average prices. These prices are not standardised and therefore can be affected by changes in the sample from period to period. The data in the research covers the period January to August each year.

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