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This is the 8th **Halifax University Town House Price Review**, tracking house price movements in 64 university towns across the UK. The review is based on Halifax's own extensive housing statistics database, along with data from the Times Top Universities League Table and the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Twenty three university towns see house price rises of more than 50%

Halifax has examined house prices over the last five years (June 2003 to June 2008) in university towns across five different categories: house prices in university towns trading at a premium; most expensive university towns; least expensive university towns; house price growth at the Times Top 20 ranked universities; and size of student population and house price growth during the past five years.

Key findings of the research include:

- Three university towns saw average house price rises by over 100% during five years; these are Belfast (105% increase), Dundee (101%) and Bangor (100%).
- A further twenty university towns saw average house price growth of at least 50% in the same five period; ranging from Stoke on Trent (52%), Preston (53%), Bradford (94%) and Aberdeen (95%).
- Guildford is the most expensive university town with an average house price of £363,503, rising from £285,592. This is followed by Winchester, home to University of Winchester, with an average house price of £343,332, and Bath (£326,403).
- The least expensive university towns are Hull (with an average house price of £124,108), Stoke on Trent (£130,336) and Bradford (£131,464).
- Nine university towns have an average house price premium in excess of £20,000 when compared to their county. The highest premium is in Winchester where the average house price exceeds the county (Hampshire) by £114,489 or 50%.

House prices in university towns trading at a premium (Table 1)

Nine university towns in the UK have an average house price premium in excess of £20,000 when compared to their county. These include Winchester (£114,489 or 50%), Bath (£98,562 or 43%), Cambridge (£90,699 or 44%), Warwick (£75,454 or 46%), Oxford (£39,797 or 14%), Newcastle (£25,005 or 16%) and Stirling (£20,296 or 13%).

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In total, 17 university towns have an average house price premium in excess of £10,000 when compared to their county.

Most expensive University towns (Table 2)

The ten most expensive university towns are in the South East. The most expensive is Guildford (£363,503), followed by Winchester (£343,332), Bath (£326,403), Oxford (£323,946) and Cambridge (£295,581). These top five most expensive towns also feature within the top seven university towns in the UK which trade at a premium to their county.

Outside Southern England the most expensive university towns are Bangor with an average house price of £245,855, Warwick (£240,332) and Cheltenham (£237,868).

Least expensive University towns (Table 3)

Hull, with a university student population of 22,275 from two universities (Hull and Lincoln), is the least expensive university town with an average house price of £124,108. It should be noted that average house price growth in Hull during five years was 79%.

There are eight other university towns with an average house price below £150,000. These include Stoke on Trent (£130,336), Bradford (£131,464) and Salford (£148,338).

Strongest house price growth during the last five years (Table 4)

Three university towns saw average house prices rise by over 100% during a five year period. The highest was recorded in Belfast where average house prices increased from £101,272 over the five year period to £207,669, a growth of 105%; followed by Dundee (101%) and Bangor (100%).

Twenty other university towns saw average house price growth of at least 50% in the same five year period; ranging from Stoke on Trent where average house prices increased from £85,722 to £130,336 (52%), Preston (53%) Bradford (94%) and Aberdeen (95%).

The 64 university towns in the survey recorded an average price growth of 42% over the five years, compared to the 44% rise for the UK as a whole.

House price growth during the last five years in the Top 20 Times University list (Table 5)

Eight towns within the Top 20 Times University list experienced more than 35% house price growth over the past five years. Eight of these universities recorded average price growth of over 35% during this period. The highest was in Durham, where the average house price increase was 59% followed by Newcastle (55%).

Ten of the Top 20 Times University list had an average house price over £200,000; the most expensive being Bath (£326,403) followed by Oxford (£323,946) and Cambridge (£295,581).

Size of student population and house price growth in last five years (Table 6)

Manchester, which has the largest student population of 73,160, recorded an average house price growth of 63% during the last five years. Liverpool, which has a student population of 53,705, saw average prices increase by 71% during the period.

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However, university towns with a relatively smaller student population have also experienced large average house price increases. Glasgow with a student population of 45,125 recorded average price growth of 74% and Preston with 29,845 students saw a price rise of 53% during the five years.

Nitesh Patel, Economist at Halifax, commented:

"Over a third of the university towns in this review experienced average house price growth of over (50%) in the last five years.

"While it can be a good investment, the decision to buy a property for a son or daughter at university ultimately depends on the parents' personal circumstances and property prices around the university in question."

Ends.

Editors' Notes

House prices – Halifax House Price Index, crude average prices 2003 to 2008 (12 months to June in all cases). Prices shown are the arithmetic average prices on which an offer of mortgage has been granted. These prices are not standardised and therefore can be affected by changes in the sample from quarter to quarter.

List of UK universities and the number of students in higher education in those institutions is from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

The Times Good University Guide ranks universities on eight key performance areas. These are student satisfactions, research, quality, student-staff ratio, services and facilities spending, entry standards, completions, good honours and graduate prospects.

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Table 1- House prices in university towns trading at a premium

University Town	County	Average House Price June 2008 *	Average House Price in County June 2008 *	Premium to County 2008* £
Winchester	Hampshire	343,332	228,843	114,489
Bath	Avon	326,403	227,840	98,562
Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	295,581	204,882	90,699
Warwick	West Midlands	240,322	164,868	75,454
Oxford	Oxfordshire	323,946	284,149	39,797
Guildford	Surrey	363,503	332,106	31,396
Newcastle	Tyne And Wear	178,733	153,728	25,005
Stirling	Stirlingshire	182,070	161,144	20,926
Stafford	Staffordshire	179,311	160,116	19,196
Bedford	Bedfordshire	230,490	212,236	18,255
Chelmsford	Essex	257,035	240,559	16,476
Cheltenham	Gloucestershire	237,868	222,449	15,419
Preston	Lancashire	166,818	152,486	14,331
Chichester	West Sussex	287,550	275,473	12,077
Loughborough	Leicestershire	185,751	175,071	10,679
Brighton	East Sussex	266,368	256,311	10,056
Sheffield	South Yorkshire	151,316	141,670	9,647
Northampton	Northamptonshire	192,536	183,207	9,330
Glasgow	Lanarkshire	170,324	161,652	8,672
Swansea	West Glamorgan	163,232	154,979	8,253
Bangor	County Down	245,855	207,669	7,330
Norwich	Norfolk	194,757	188,896	5,861
Leeds	West Yorkshire	165,682	159,874	5,807
Edinburgh	Midlothian	218,516	212,922	5,594
Pontypridd	Mid Glamorgan	141,720	137,988	3,732

*12 months to June

Table 2 - Most expensive University towns (Table 2)

University Town	County	Average House Price in June 2008 *
Guildford	Surrey	363,503
Winchester	Hampshire	343,332
Bath	Avon	326,403
Oxford	Oxfordshire	323,946
Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	295,581
Uxbridge	Middlesex	291,905
Chichester	West Sussex	287,550
Hatfield	Hertfordshire	286,204
Reading	Berkshire	267,567
Brighton	East Sussex	266,368
Chelmsford	Essex	257,035
Bangor	County Down	245,855
Warwick	West Midlands	240,322
Canterbury	Kent	238,558
Cheltenham	Gloucestershire	237,868
Bedfordshire	Bedfordshire	230,490
Bristol	Avon	223,094
Edinburgh	Midlothian	218,516
Colchester	Essex	217,851
York	North Yorkshire	215,343
Bournemouth	Dorset	214,542
Exeter	Devon	213,916
Southampton	Hampshire	212,633
Belfast	County Antrim	207,669
Worcester	Worcestershire	205,610

*12 months to June

Table 3 - Least expensive University towns (Table 3)

University Town	County	Average House Price June 2008 *
Hull	North Humberside	124,108
Stoke On Trent	Staffordshire	130,336
Bradford	West Yorkshire	131,464
Paisley	Renfrewshire	136,842
Middlesbrough	Cleveland	141,285
Sunderland	Tyne And Wear	141,526
Pontypridd	Mid Glamorgan	141,720
Durham	Co Durham	143,776
Salford	Lancashire	148,338
Bolton	Lancashire	150,100
Dundee	Angus	150,168
Birmingham	West Midlands	150,194
Lancaster	Lancashire	150,727
Sheffield	South Yorkshire	151,316
Nottingham	Nottinghamshire	152,424
Manchester	Lancashire	152,537
Carlisle	Cumbria	152,694
Liverpool	Merseyside	157,189
Derby	Derbyshire	157,836
Huddersfield	West Yorkshire	158,040
Wolverhampton	West Midlands	158,382
Lincoln	Lincolnshire	159,377
Swansea	West Glamorgan	163,232
Leicester	Leicestershire	164,617
Coventry	West Midlands	164,888

*12 months to June

Table 4- Strongest house price growth in the last five years

University Town	County	Average House Price June 2003 *	Average House Price June 2008 *	5 Year House Price Increase %
Belfast	County Antrim	101,272	207,669	105%
Dundee	Angus	74,826	150,168	101%
Bangor	County Down	122,639	245,855	100%
Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	101,830	198,336	95%
Bradford	West Yorkshire	67,702	131,464	94%
Swansea	West Glam	87,226	163,232	87%
Paisley	Renfrewshire	73,745	136,842	86%
Salford	Lancashire	81,989	148,338	81%
Hull	North Humberside	69,162	124,108	79%
Middlesbrough	Cleveland	79,368	141,285	78%
Huddersfield	West Yorkshire	89,733	158,040	76%
Carlisle	Cumbria	86,764	152,694	76%
Bolton	Lancashire	85,404	150,100	76%
Glasgow	Lanarkshire	97,826	170,324	74%
Liverpool	Merseyside	91,671	157,189	71%
Pontypridd	Mid Glamorgan	84,054	141,720	69%
Manchester	Lancashire	93,645	152,537	63%
Sunderland	Tyne And Wear	87,331	141,526	62%
Durham	Co Durham	90,609	143,776	59%
Stirling	Stirlingshire	117,377	182,070	55%
Newcastle Upon Tyne	Tyne And Wear	115,656	178,733	55%
Preston	Lancashire	108,876	166,818	53%
Stoke On Trent	Staffordshire	85,722	130,336	52%
Edinburgh	Midlothian	147,575	218,516	48%
Sheffield	South Yorkshire	102,481	151,316	48%
All University towns		140,096	198,255	42%
UK average		146,373	210,131	44%

*12 months to June

Table 5 - House price growth in the last five years in the Times Top 20 ranked universities

University Town	Average House Price June 2003 *	Average House Price June 2008 *	5 Year House Price Increase %
Oxford	268,005	323,946	21%
Cambridge	218,569	295,581	35%
Warwick	194,923	240,322	23%
Bristol	170,155	223,094	31%
Durham	90,609	143,776	59%
Bath	224,552	326,403	45%
Loughborough	136,265	185,751	36%
Edinburgh	147,575	218,516	48%
Southampton	171,310	212,633	24%
Aston	111,821	150,194	34%
York	156,490	215,343	38%
Exeter	165,595	213,916	29%
Nottingham	115,874	152,424	32%
East Anglia	152,230	194,757	28%
Leicester	122,660	164,617	34%
Sheffield	102,481	151,316	48%
Newcastle	115,656	178,733	55%
Reading	227,318	267,567	18%
Birmingham	111,821	150,194	34%
Lancaster	113,902	150,727	32%

*12 months to June

Note: In the Full Top 20 Times University list includes London universities which have been excluded this review. St. Andrews has also been excluded as their is insufficient sample to a draw a price comparison. House price data for Birmingham has been used for Aston

Table 6- Size of student population and house price growth in last 5 years

University Town	County	Average House Price June 2008 *	5 Year House Price Increase %	Student population (2006/07)
Manchester	Lancashire	152,537	63%	73,160
Birmingham	West Midlands	150,194	34%	70,485
Leeds	West Yorkshire	165,682	44%	64,090
Nottingham	Nottinghamshire	152,424	32%	57,460
Edinburgh	Midlothian	218,516	48%	57,120
Sheffield	South Yorkshire	151,316	48%	55,110
Liverpool	Merseyside	157,189	71%	53,705
Bristol	Avon	223,094	31%	52,385
Newcastle Upon Tyne	Tyne And Wear	178,733	55%	49,330
Glasgow	Lanarkshire	170,324	74%	45,125
Oxford	Oxfordshire	323,946	21%	43,410
Cardiff	South Glamorgan	169,193	18%	41,065
Norwich	Norfolk	194,757	28%	41,040
Canterbury	Kent	238,558	34%	38,605
Leicester	Leicestershire	164,617	34%	35,910
Southampton	Hampshire	212,633	24%	35,375
Plymouth	Devon	167,796	42%	34,005
Brighton	East Sussex	266,368	38%	33,580
Warwick	West Midlands	240,322	23%	30,320
Preston	Lancashire	166,818	53%	29,845
Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	295,581	35%	28775
Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	198,336	95%	27010
Belfast	County Antrim	207,669	105%	26590
Salford	Lancashire	148,338	81%	24065
Middlesbrough	Cleveland	141,285	78%	23535

*12 months to June

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), student population data is for all higher education students at institutions listed on the HESA website for enrollments for 2006-07.