



For immediate release

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The **House Price Per Square Metre Survey** examines the movement in house prices on an average price per square metre (m²) basis in 403 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.**

Merthyr Tydfil records highest property price growth per square metre since 2002

- Merthyr Tydfil has recorded the biggest increase in house prices per square metre (m²)* since 2002; a 203% increase from £439 per m² to £1,331 per m².
- Seven of the ten towns that have delivered the highest house price growth over the past five years are in Northern Ireland, led by Craigavon and Ballymena.
- Kensington & Chelsea has the most expensive property per square metre at an average of £8,386 per m². The ten most expensive UK areas are all in Greater London. The UK average price is £2,158 per m².
- Altrincham is the most expensive town outside southern England** with an average price of £2,507 per m².

Merthyr Tydfil delivers the largest gain in property prices over the past five years

New research from Halifax Estate Agents shows that properties in Merthyr Tydfil have recorded the largest gain in average price per square metre (m²) over the past five years. There has been an increase of 203% to £1,331 per m² in 2007 from £439 per m² in 2002. Merthyr Tydfil was the most inexpensive town in the UK on this basis in 2002. The Welsh town is no longer amongst the ten least expensive towns although the average price remains significantly below the UK average of £2,158 per m². **(Table 1)**

Seven of the top 10 performing towns in the last five years are in Northern Ireland

Seven of the ten towns with the highest house price growth on a per square metre basis over the past five years are in Northern Ireland. Craigavon has experienced the second largest gain in the UK (186%) since 2002 followed by Ballymena (180%). Property prices in Northern Ireland have been boosted in recent times by a combination of a strong local economy, high levels of immigration and high demand for properties from second homebuyers and buy-to-let investors in the Republic of Ireland. **(Table 1)**

* 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).

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

South Eastern towns account for nine of the ten smallest price increases since 2002

Nine of the ten UK towns that have delivered the smallest house price growth on a per square metre basis since 2002 are in the South East. House prices in Camberley, Waltham Cross and Hoddesdon all grew by 30% over the past five years: the lowest rate of increase across the UK over the period. **(Table 2)**

MOST EXPENSIVE / LEAST EXPENSIVE AREAS

The most expensive areas are all in Greater London.

Kensington & Chelsea remains the UK's most expensive area with an average price of £8,386 per m² in 2007; an increase of 67% on 2002 (£5,033 per m²). The same London boroughs make up the ten most expensive areas in the UK as five years ago. **(Table 3)**

Ten most expensive towns outside London are in the South East

Weybridge in Surrey is the most expensive town outside Greater London with an average price of £3,901 per m². Five of the ten most expensive towns outside the capital are in Surrey: Weybridge, Godalming, Leatherhead, Dorking and Epsom. The remaining five comprise three towns in Hertfordshire (Harpenden, Rickmansworth and St Albans) and two in Berkshire (Ascot and Windsor). **(Table 4)**

Altrincham is the most expensive town outside southern England**

The Cheshire town of Altrincham is the most expensive town outside southern England with an average price of £2,507 per m². Stratford upon Avon (£2,453 per m²) is the second most expensive. Edinburgh is the most expensive Scottish town or city (£2,448 per m²). Cardiff is the most expensive city in Wales (£1,802 per m²) and Belfast is the most expensive in Northern Ireland (£2,291 per m²). **(Table 5)**

Wishaw in Lanarkshire is the least expensive town in the UK

Wishaw in Lanarkshire had the lowest average price (£1,128 per m²) of all UK towns in 2007. Peterlee in County Durham recorded the second lowest price (£1,135 per m²) followed by Sutton in Ashfield (£1,187 per m²). Five years ago, the ten least expensive UK towns all had an average property price of less than £600 per m². Four of the ten least expensive UK towns in 2002 were still among the ten least expensive in 2007: Llanelli, Barrow in Furness, Accrington and Peterlee. **(Table 6)**

Sunderland has the least expensive semi detached properties in the UK

Semi detached properties in Sunderland were the least expensive in the UK in 2007 at an average of £1,563 per m². Scunthorpe (£1,564 per m²) and Mablethorpe in Lincolnshire (£1,579 per m²) were the second and third most affordable UK places for semi detached properties. Wandsworth is the most expensive area in the UK for semi detached properties with an average price of £5,407 per m²; 246% higher than in Sunderland. **(Table 7)**

AVERAGE PROPERTY SIZE

Sevenoaks has the largest average property size

Sevenoaks in Kent has the largest average property size in the UK: 153 m². Seven of the ten UK towns with the biggest average property size are in the South East. Ascot and Leatherhead (both 147 m²) are joint second. Ilkley in West Yorkshire (143 m²), Wilmslow in Cheshire (136 m²) and Inverurie in Aberdeenshire (136 m²) have the largest average property size outside the South East and all feature among the UK top ten. **(Table 8)**

Tower Hamlets has the smallest average property size but is still one of the ten most expensive UK towns

Tower Hamlets has the smallest average property size in the UK, at 81 m²; just over 50% of the average in Sevenoaks. Eight of the ten areas with the smallest average property size are in Greater London. The Scottish town of Clydebank has the smallest average property size (86 m²) outside London. **(Table 9)**

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

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

Globally, London** is the most expensive city*****

Internationally, London, at £9,805 per m², is the most expensive city in 2008 for an upper end of the market apartment. This is 24% more expensive than New York (£7,919 per m²) and 27% more expensive than third placed Moscow (£7,720 per m²). Cities in Europe and Asia dominate the most expensive cities, accounting for nine of the ten most costly cities. (**Table 11**)

Martin Ellis, chief economist at Halifax Estate Agents, 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 five years, ranging from a rise of 203% in Merthyr Tydfil to 30% in Camberley.

Despite these differences, there has been little change in the composition of those areas with the most and least expensive properties. The same ten London boroughs are still the most expensive areas in the country whilst four of the least expensive towns in 2002 remain amongst the ten least expensive places."

*** Data used in international comparisons sourced from the Global property guide. The average per square metre (sq. m.) prices are of 120-sq. m. apartments in US dollars (US\$) converted into pounds (£) at \$1=£0.49075 (the \$/£ exchange rate on the 11th March 2008).

**** Average price per square metre data for London used for international comparison is sourced from the Global Property Guide and is the average of London (prime) and London (other luxury) per square metre (sq. m.) prices.

Editors' Notes:

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.

International data was sourced from the Global Property Guide. www.globalpropertyguide.com

The average per square metre (m²) prices are of 120-sq. m. apartments in US dollars (US\$) converted into pounds (£) at \$1=£0.49075 (the \$/£ exchange rate on the 11th March 2008). Residential square metre prices published by the Global Property Guide are for upper-end apartments in prestigious areas and are based on in-house research, systematic scans of web advertisements, looking at offers for sale, and offers for rent, of resale apartments and houses. Newly-built and pre-sale property prices are not included.

Table 1: Biggest Price Increases (%) 2002-2007

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Average House Price 2007 £	Price per M ² (£)		5 Year %	5 Year £
				2002	2007		
Merthyr Tydfil	Mid Glamorgan	Wales	£127,817	£439	£1,331	203%	£892
Craigavon	County Armagh	Northern Ireland	£247,055	£664	£1,900	186%	£1,237
Ballymena	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£240,543	£660	£1,850	180%	£1,190
Lisburn	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£262,312	£855	£2,168	154%	£1,313
Newtownabbey	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£207,284	£821	£2,032	148%	£1,211
Irvine	Ayrshire	Scotland	£134,357	£534	£1,280	140%	£746
Carrickfergus	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£231,556	£779	£1,867	140%	£1,089
Londonderry	County Londonderry	Northern Ireland	£202,246	£654	£1,556	138%	£902
Belfast	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	£226,824	£970	£2,291	136%	£1,321
Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	£200,393	£910	£2,132	134%	£1,222

Source: Halifax

Table 2: Smallest Price Increases (%) 2002-2007

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)		5 Year %	5 Year £
			2002	2007		
Camberley	Surrey	South East	£1,988	£2,577	30%	£589
Waltham Cross	Hertfordshire	South East	£1,961	£2,553	30%	£592
Hoddesdon	Hertfordshire	South East	£1,825	£2,378	30%	£554
Waterlooville	Hampshire	South East	£1,589	£2,086	31%	£497
Southsea	Hampshire	South East	£1,404	£1,844	31%	£440
Aldershot	Hampshire	South East	£1,791	£2,372	32%	£581
Swindon	Wilts	South West	£1,366	£1,813	33%	£447
Fleet	Hampshire	South East	£2,097	£2,791	33%	£694
Borehamwood	Hertfordshire	South East	£2,198	£2,931	33%	£733
Reading	Berkshire	South East	£2,004	£2,704	35%	£699

Source: Halifax

Table 3: Most Expensive Towns in the UK in 2007

Post Town/Borough	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Kensington and Chelsea	Greater London	£8,386
Westminster	Greater London	£6,893
Camden	Greater London	£6,092
Hammersmith and Fulham	Greater London	£5,605
Islington	Greater London	£5,085
Wandsworth	Greater London	£4,871
Richmond upon Thames	Greater London	£4,646
Tower Hamlets	Greater London	£4,387
Southwark	Greater London	£4,315
Lambeth	Greater London	£4,080

Source: Halifax

Table 4: Most Expensive Towns outside London in 2007

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Weybridge	Surrey	South East	3,901
Harpenden	Hertfordshire	South East	3,838
Ascot	Berkshire	South East	3,519
Rickmansworth	Hertfordshire	South East	3,510
Windsor	Berkshire	South East	3,471
Godalming	Surrey	South East	3,418
St Albans	Hertfordshire	South East	3,371
Leatherhead	Surrey	South East	3,362
Dorking	Surrey	South East	3,352
Epsom	Surrey	South East	3,322

Source: Halifax

Table 5: Most Expensive Towns outside Southern England in 2007

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Altrincham	Cheshire	North West	2,507
Stratford Upon Avon	Warwickshire	West Midlands	2,453
Edinburgh	Midlothian	Scotland	2,448
Ilkley	West Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	2,422
Wilmslow	Cheshire	North West	2,373
Wetherby	West Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	2,341
Belfast	County Antrim	Northern Ireland	2,291
Harrogate	North Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	2,262
Solihull	West Midlands	West Midlands	2,246
Warwick	Warwickshire	West Midlands	2,246

Source: Halifax

Table 6: Least Expensive Towns in the UK in 2007

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Wishaw	Lanarkshire	Scotland	£1,128
Peterlee	County Durham	North	£1,135
Sutton In Ashfield	Nottinghamshire	East Midlands	£1,187
Blackburn	Lancashire	North West	£1,208
Llanelli	Dyfed	Wales	£1,223
Accrington	Lancashire	North West	£1,226
Airdrie	Lanarkshire	Scotland	£1,242
Barrow In Furness	Cumbria	North	£1,255
Carlisle	Lanarkshire	Scotland	£1,256
Scunthorpe	South Humberside	Yorkshire and the Humber	£1,256

Source: Halifax

Table 7: Least Expensive Towns for a Semi Detached Property (2007)

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Price per M ² (£)
Sunderland	Tyne And Wear	North	1,563
Scunthorpe	South Humberside	Yorkshire and the Humber	1,564
Mablethorpe	Lincolnshire	East Midlands	1,579
Kirkcaldy	Fife	Scotland	1,619
Skegness	Lincolnshire	East Midlands	1,644
Grimsby	South Humberside	Yorkshire and the Humber	1,652
Lincoln	Lincolnshire	East Midlands	1,653
Wisbech	Cambridgeshire	East Anglia	1,696
Morecambe	Lancashire	North West	1,704
Dunfermline	Fife	Scotland	1,707

Source: Halifax

Table 8: Towns with largest average property size (2007)

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Average Size M ²
Sevenoaks	Kent	South East	153
Ascot	Berkshire	South East	147
Leatherhead	Surrey	South East	147
Ilkley	West Yorkshire	Yorkshire and the Humber	143
Harpenden	Hertfordshire	South East	143
Weybridge	Surrey	South East	139
Winchester	Hampshire	South East	137
Inverurie	Aberdeenshire	Scotland	136
Godalming	Surrey	South East	136
Wilmslow	Cheshire	North West	136

Source: Halifax

Table 9: Towns with smallest average property size (2007)

Post Town/Borough	Region	Average Size M ²
Tower Hamlets	Greater London	81
Southwark	Greater London	85
Clydebank	Scotland	86
Westminster	Greater London	86
Newham	Greater London	87
Waltham Forest	Greater London	88
Camden	Greater London	89
Barking And Dagenham	Greater London	90
Hounslow	Greater London	90
Gosport	South East	90

Source: Halifax

Table 10: Towns outside London with smallest average property size (2007)

Post Town/Borough	County/Area	Region	Average Size M ²
Clydebank	Dunbartonshire	Scotland	86
Salford	Lancashire	North West	90
Wallsend	Tyne And Wear	North	90
Gosport	Hampshire	South East	90
Watford	Hertfordshire	South East	91
Edinburgh	Midlothian	Scotland	92
Luton	Bedfordshire	South East	93
Clacton On Sea	Essex	South East	93
Dartford	Kent	South East	93
Aldershot	Hampshire	South East	94

Source: Halifax

Table 11: Average Prices in Major Global Cities (2008)

Ranking	City	Prices (£), per M ²
1	London*	9,805
2	New York	7,919
3	Moscow	7,720
4	Paris	6,872
5	Hong Kong	6,262
6	Tokyo	5,900
7	Singapore	5,865
8	Mumbai	5,081
9	Barcelona	4,906
10	Geneva	3,745

Source: Global Property Guide

* The average of London (prime) and London (other luxury) per square metre (sq. m.) prices.

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