



Halifax First-Time Buyer Report: Halifax reveals up-and-coming locations for first-time buyers, with almost two-thirds (61%) looking further afield to get on property ladder

- **Looking further afield** – Four in ten (40%) first-time buyers aged 18 to 34 are turning to ‘up-and-coming’ locations to buy – with six in ten (61%) prepared to move to a different part of the country
- **Doubled in a decade** – The average first-time buyer house price has almost doubled in 10 years – from £148,474 to £288,030¹
- **Purchase pause** – Desire to own remains very high (87%), however over four in ten (41%) have delayed buying due to housing market challenges
- **Up and coming spots for first-time buyers** – Halifax highlights up-and-coming locations for first-time buyers, including Eastbourne, Neath Port Talbot and Falkirk.

London, 11th October, 2023: New research from Halifax reveals the extent to which first-time buyers are prepared to compromise when facing difficulties buying their first home. Over six in ten (61%) said they are prepared to move to a different part of the country to get on the housing ladder.

With house prices for those buying for the first time almost doubling (up 94%) in just a decade², and the average age of a first-time buyer now 32, compared to 30 a decade earlier³, the challenges are clear.

However, young people’s desire to own their first property remains consistently high (87%), with a third (33%) wanting to get on the ladder as soon as possible.

LOOKING FURTHER AFIELD

Almost half (44%) of prospective first-time buyers looking to get on the housing ladder are now researching locations they wouldn’t have considered prior to the cost-of-living crisis.

There is a huge range in average first-time buyer house prices, from £112,112 in Inverclyde, to £682,981 in Westminster⁴. With such variety across the country, many young people (40%) are actively exploring more affordable, up-and-coming areas to move to.

Over four in ten (41%) said that the location of their first home was more important than the property itself, with the research also highlighting first-time buyers’ top priorities when choosing where to buy.

Despite ‘proximity to family and friends’ appearing second on the list of top priorities, the fact “house price” appears top by some distance underscores why 61% of prospective first-time buyers are now willing to spread their nets and move further to get their foot on the property ladder.



Table 1: Halifax First-Time Buyer Report – Top priorities when choosing where to buy a home

Rank	Consideration when choosing a location of first home	% who selected as one of their top priorities
1	The price of the house	52%
2	Being close to family and friends	38%
3	Crime rate in the area	37%
4	Community feel (friendly neighbours, community events etc.)	34%
5	Number of transport connections	30%
6	If there is a supermarket nearby	29%
7	Proximity of schools	24%
8	Better job prospects	23%
9	Green spaces	21%
10	Proximity to a major city	20%

Halifax has launched a [First-Timer Buyer Report](#), combining its own house price data with a study of 3,000 18 to 34-year-olds yet to purchase a property, to better understand the challenges facing first-time buyers in 2023.

The report also shines a light on up-and-coming areas around the UK and advises how people can get started on their own homebuying journey.

With affordability topping the priorities list, Halifax has identified up-and-coming areas with lower average purchase prices compared to the surrounding region, and cross referenced with respondents' priorities, including: crime rates, transport links to major cities, access to good schools or other education, proximity to green spaces, ultrafast broadband availability, as well as investment in local regeneration.

Table 2: Halifax First-Time Buyer Report – Up-and-coming locations for first-time buyers⁵

Location (Local Authority)	Average first-time buyer purchase price	Price compared to regional average (e.g. NW, East Mids, Scotland, Wales etc.)
Kingston upon Hull - England	£156,509	-23%
Middlesbrough - England	£156,761	-11%
Neath Port Talbot - Wales	£158,702	-20%
Derry City and Strabane - Northern Ireland	£160,636	-8%
Falkirk - Scotland	£165,511	-12%
Blackburn with Darwen - England	£168,895	-21%
Aberdeen City - Scotland	£173,061	-8%
Telford and Wrekin - England	£213,741	-10%
Ipswich - England	£249,338	-25%
Eastbourne - England	£253,744	-29%



Kim Kinnaird, Mortgages Director at Halifax, said, “Despite fluctuating house prices, the desire to buy a first home isn’t going away, with almost nine in ten young people keen to get on the property ladder.

“There’s an appetite from under 35s to consider more affordable areas further afield, so we’ve identified up-and-coming locations that prospective first-time buyers might do well to look into. These are based on relatively low average house prices, alongside other positives such as access to green spaces, easy commutes and safe neighbourhoods.

“Buying a home is daunting, especially if it’s your first time doing so. That’s why we’ve launched Halifax’s First-Time Buyer Report, which is full of information and tips to support those embarking on their home-buying journey”.

PURCHASE PAUSE

Further findings from Halifax’s research showed that various challenges in the housing market, including increasing mortgage rates, have affected many first-time buyers. As a result, four in ten (41%) are pushing back their house purchase plans by four years on average.

Over seven in ten (71%) say they are prioritising other purchases over a house – 31% say that they have deprioritised buying a home in favour of saving to go travelling, while 30% say finances for a car are now a bigger focus.

DECISION TO DOWNSIZE

While decent square footage is on most homebuyers’ list of ‘must-haves’, almost half (49%) of those looking for a first home said they’ve downsized their expectations. Over four in ten (46%) are now willing to consider homes up to a quarter smaller than their ideal size, while more than half (55%) would reassess the type of property they are willing to buy.

GETTING SUPPORT

Almost a third (30%) of those surveyed said they don’t understand the home buying process, however Halifax experts have the following tips for those getting started on their homebuying journey:

- **Don’t only look at house price:** From community feel to green spaces, buyers should consider multiple factors and decide what’s really important to them when choosing a home. The Halifax [location finder](#) is a great way to explore new areas online.
- **Drop by a Halifax Home Hub:** Halifax [Home Hubs](#) are dedicated home buying spaces where anyone can drop in to chat and put a plan in place to get on the next step of the property ladder.
- **Use a mortgage calculator:** Halifax offers a free-to-use [First Time Buyer Mortgage Calculator](#) to help those starting their homebuying journey get to grips with potential costs

To view the Halifax First-Time Buyer Report and learn more about the house-buying process, visit www.halifax.co.uk/ftb2023.



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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the research

Research conducted by Censuswide on behalf of Halifax. Total sample size was 3,000 UK adults aged 18-34 who have not yet bought a property.

Survey conducted online between 9th August and 16th August 2023. Censuswide abides by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

1. Based on Halifax first-time buyer data - average purchase price across the UK (2012-13 compared to 2022-23)
2. Based on Halifax first-time buyer data - % increase of average purchase price across the UK (2012-13 compared to 2022-23)
3. Based on Halifax first-time buyer data - average buyer age across the UK (2012-13 compared to 2022-23)
4. Based on Halifax first-time buyer data – Local authorities with the lowest/highest average purchase price (2022-23)
5. To compile the list, Halifax identified areas (Local Authorities) with relatively low average first-time buyer purchase prices (2022-2023), compared to the surrounding region – the top priority when choosing a location to buy in.

These locations were cross referenced with a number of factors that also appeared high on the list of priorities, including: crime, transport and proximity to major cities, schools and education rates, proximity to green spaces and areas of outstanding natural beauty, access to ultrafast broadband, as well as investment in local regeneration.