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Scotland's most affordable locations for first-time buyers – and where Gen Z are getting on the ladder

- **New Bank of Scotland research reveals the most affordable locations for first-time buyers**
- **East Ayrshire tops the list for Scotland and the UK, with average first-time buyer prices below £150,000**
- **Inverclyde, Na h-Eileanan Siar and Clackmannanshire also rank among the most affordable**
- **Average first-time buyer age is 31 – but falls to 28 in some areas**
- **New £5,000 deposit mortgage, available via Bank of Scotland, open to applications from today**

East Ayrshire is the most affordable location in Scotland, and the UK, for first-time buyers, according to new research from Bank of Scotland.

The analysis looks at the average price paid by people buying their first home in local areas across the country.

With affordability continuing to be a major challenge for many would-be homeowners, the findings point to areas where getting on the property ladder may be more achievable.

The list is revealed on the day that applications open for a new £5,000 deposit mortgage, available on homes up to £300,000, and aimed at helping first-time buyers who may otherwise struggle to raise funds without financial support from family.

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Where are the most affordable areas in Scotland for first-time buyers?

With an average first time-buyer price of £147,353, **East Ayrshire** brings together market towns, former mining communities and rural villages. Homes range from characterful older properties to regeneration developments and family friendly neighbourhoods.

Kilmarnock is the most populous town in the area, which is also well connected to Scotland’s central belt, with direct routes into Glasgow and nearby employment hubs. That makes it possible to balance countryside living with a manageable commute.

Staying in the west, **Inverclyde** is next on the list with an average first-time buyer price of £149,929. Stretching along the River Clyde, the area includes coastal towns such as Greenock, Gourock and Port Glasgow, offering a mix of traditional flats, family homes and waterfront properties.

In all of the top 10 most affordable areas, buying with the new £5,000 deposit first-time buyer mortgage could result in a monthly mortgage cost of less than £1,000¹.

Table: Top 10 most affordable Scottish areas for first-time buyers

Local area	Average FTB price	Monthly mortgage cost*
East Ayrshire	£147,353	£843
Inverclyde	£149,929	£859
Na h-Eileanan Siar	£155,300	£891
Clackmannanshire	£156,041	£895
West Dunbartonshire	£159,437	£915
Dumfries and Galloway	£161,111	£925
Angus	£161,824	£929
North Ayrshire	£164,348	£944
North Lanarkshire	£170,096	£978
South Ayrshire	£172,472	£992

**Monthly mortgage cost based on a £5,000 mortgage deposit, with an interest rate of 5.89% fixed for five years, and a 30-year term, with no product fees. Bank of Scotland offers mortgages from Halifax.*

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How does the £5k deposit mortgage work?

Eligible buyers who have saved a minimum £5,000 deposit (without financial support from family) can borrow up to £295,000 on properties worth up to £300,000, subject to a maximum of 4.5 times their income.

The product is currently available with a five-year fixed rate of 5.89% and terms of up to 40 years. There are no product fees and it's available to both employed and self-employed applicants.

Bank of Scotland offers mortgages from Halifax. For more details, visit:

<https://www.bankofscotland.co.uk/mortgages/first-time-buyers.html>

Isla Benzie, Head of Mortgages, Bank of Scotland:

“Affordability remains a big challenge for many first-time buyers, so being flexible on location can make a real difference in finding a home that fits both lifestyle and budget. Scotland continues to offer some of the best value in the UK, with a wide range of property types and price points across its towns, cities and coastal areas.”

“For aspiring homeowners, saving for a deposit is often the biggest hurdle. The new £5,000 deposit mortgage is one practical way we’re helping more people take that first step and move towards a more secure future.

“If you’re thinking about buying, speaking to a mortgage expert early can be invaluable. They can help you understand what’s affordable and guide you through the support that’s available.”

Where are the youngest first-time buyers getting on the ladder?

The average age of a first-time buyer in Scotland is now 31, a year younger than the UK average.

However in some parts of the country, buyers are getting on the ladder much earlier. In the areas with the youngest first time buyers, the average age falls to 28 – highlighting pockets of affordability that are proving particularly attractive to Gen Z.

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Table: Top 5 Scottish areas with the youngest average first-time buyer age

Local area	Average FTB age	Average FTB price
Falkirk	28.9	£174,368
Shetland Islands	29.0	£182,632
South Ayrshire	29.5	£172,472
Na h-Eileanan Siar	29.7	£155,300
Renfrewshire	30.2	£179,588

Where are the most affordable areas in the rest of the UK?

The most affordable location for first-time buyers in **Wales** is **Merthyr Tydfil**, with homes there costing an average of £156,498. A historic South Wales town shaped by the Industrial Revolution, it combines that heritage with a dramatic setting between the Brecon Beacons and the surrounding countryside.

In **Northern Ireland** it's **Mid and East Antrim**, where a first home typically comes with a price tag of £175,308. A coastal and largely rural district spanning Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne, it reflects a mix of industrial, agricultural and maritime heritage.

In **England**, the most affordable local area is **Blackpool** in the North West, where people buying their first home pay £150,780 on average. One of Britain's most iconic seaside towns, Blackpool is known for its lively promenade, sandy beaches and classic attractions including the Tower and famous Illuminations.

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Table: Top 10 most affordable areas for first-time buyers in each UK region

Region	Local area	Average FTB price
East Midlands	Bolsover	£191,564
East of England	Great Yarmouth	£236,447
London	Barking and Dagenham	£363,748
North East	South Tyneside	£157,551
North West	Blackpool	£150,780
Northern Ireland	Mid and East Antrim	£175,308
Scotland	East Ayrshire	£147,353
South East	Gosport	£228,617
South West	Plymouth	£216,166
Wales	Merthyr Tydfil	£156,498
West Midlands	Stoke-on-Trent	£171,569
Yorkshire and The Humber	Kingston upon Hull	£151,171

Top tips for first-time buyers

1. **Do your research** – Get familiar with the homebuying process. From an Agreement in Principle to mortgage approval and completion. The Bank of Scotland First-Time Hub includes free guides, and access to [expert-led online sessions](#), to help explain the jargon and make things clearer.
2. **Get advice** – Speak to a mortgage professional early on, don't wait until you think you've saved enough or found you dream home. They can help explain what you can afford, typical costs and what to expect along the way. Bank of Scotland offers video appointments at times that suit you.
3. **Explore your options** – It's important to know what support is available. A mortgage expert will show you options you might not have considered and guide you on ways to build up the funds quicker. Schemes like Shared Ownership and low-deposit mortgages can make buying more affordable than you might think.

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Notes

The information contained in this release is intended for the sole use of journalists and media professionals. Any mortgage figures or calculations included are illustrative examples only and are not intended to constitute financial advice or provide an indication of customer outcomes. Mortgage customers or applicants should refer to the [Bank of Scotland website](#) for full details, including terms and conditions, eligibility criteria, and how to obtain regulated advice. Bank of Scotland offers mortgages from Halifax.

You could lose your home if you don't keep up your mortgage repayments.

References:

- 1) The first-time buyer mortgage scenarios referenced are illustrative examples of the monthly repayment amount only. They do not include additional costs such as legal fees or stamp duty, nor other ongoing costs associated with homeownership. Mortgage calculations are based on a five-year fixed-rate mortgage at 5.89% with a £5,000 deposit and a 30-year repayment term. Actual borrowing amounts, interest rates, and monthly repayments will depend on individual circumstances, including credit history, income, and affordability assessments. The interest rate quoted of 5.89% is available to eligible applicants on 18th May 2026 and remains subject to change thereafter.

Source: <https://www.bankofscotland.co.uk/mortgages/first-time-buyers.html>

Methodology:

This research is based on Lloyds Banking Group's own housing statistics database, drawing on mortgage approval data from customers of Bank of Scotland, Halifax and Lloyds Bank.

Prices are simple arithmetic (or "crude") averages, calculated over the 12 months to February 2026 inclusive. They are not mix-adjusted and may therefore be affected by changes in the sample over time.

At local authority level, smaller numbers of transactions can lead to greater volatility in average prices. In some cases, neighbouring local authorities have been combined to ensure a robust sample size.

The information in this release is intended for the sole use of journalists and media professionals. It has been prepared from information that we believe is collated with care, but 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. © Bank of Scotland plc all rights reserved 2026.

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