MAY 2026

UK Housing Market Report

House prices, rents, mortgage rates, auctions and the wider economy

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THE VERDICT

Bank Rate holds. Landlords face a new regime.

3.75%

Bank Rate

At the report's data cut off. The last change was the reduction on 18 December 2025.

63,500

Mortgage approvals

For house purchase in March 2026. Seasonally adjusted, net of cancellations.

68.6%

Auction lots sold

UK residential and commercial lots in March 2026; 68.2% a year earlier.

FARRELL'S VIEW

Holding Bank Rate does not mean borrowing conditions are unchanged. The latest quoted mortgage benchmarks are higher, and the new tenancy regime in England has now begun. I would assess the income, the tenancy and the exit together before committing to an auction purchase. A seller looking to leave the market may value certainty, but a buyer still needs a lawful and practical plan. Use a current finance quotation, independent legal advice and conservative rent and cost assumptions.

Data cut off 9 May 2026. Each figure carries its own observation period, because the sources report on different dates.

02 / MARKET DATA

The market on one page

Eighteen indicators from releases available by the data cut off. The period is shown beside each reading. Changes refer to the comparison described, rather than a single common reporting month.

INDICATOR	LATEST	PERIOD	COMPARISON
PRICES AND SALES			
Asking price, Great Britain	**£373,971**	April 2026	+0.8% on the month
Completed prices, annual growth	**+1.2%**	February 2026	+1.0% in the prior month, as revised
Mortgage approvals for purchase	**63,500**	March 2026	62,700 in the prior month
Nationwide prices, annual growth	**+3.0%**	April 2026	Mortgage based UK index
LETTINGS			
Average private rent, UK	**£1,377**	March 2026	+3.4% on the year
Private rent annual growth, UK	**+3.4%**	March 2026	+3.6% in the prior month
COST OF MONEY			
Bank Rate	**3.75%**	9 May 2026	4.00% before 18 December 2025
BTL two year fix, 75% LTV	**4.42%**	April 2026	3.75% in the prior month
ECONOMY			
CPI inflation, UK	**3.3%**	March 2026	3.0% in the prior month
Unemployment rate, UK	**4.9%**	December 2025 to February 2026	People aged 16 and over
Regular pay annual growth, GB	**3.6%**	December 2025 to February 2026	Excludes bonuses
DISTRESS AND AUCTIONS			
Homeowner mortgages in arrears	**80,490**	Q4 2025	-4% on the previous quarter
BTL mortgages in arrears	**9,520**	Q4 2025	-9% on the previous quarter
Homeowner repossessions	**1,210**	Q4 2025	First charge mortgages, UK
BTL repossessions	**770**	Q4 2025	First charge mortgages, UK
Personal insolvencies	**12,252**	March 2026	England and Wales; see page 7
Auction lots offered, UK	**4,222**	March 2026	+19.6% on the year
Auction lots sold, share	**68.6%**	March 2026	68.2% a year earlier

How to read it. UK HPI completed prices lag the market. ONS rents cover new and existing tenancies. BTL means buy to let; LTV means loan to value. Mortgage approvals are seasonally adjusted. Arrears are at least 2.5% of the mortgage balance.

03 / PRICES AND SALES

Different measures. Different stages of a sale.

An asking price is a seller's starting point. Mortgage indices and registered completed sales describe different samples and dates. Read the movement within each series, rather than comparing their price levels.

£373,971

ASKING PRICES

Rightmove, April 2026, Great Britain.
+0.8% on the month.

£268,000

COMPLETED SALE PRICES

UK HPI, February 2026, provisional.
+1.2% on the year.

OTHER INDICES / ANNUAL CHANGE

+3.0% Nationwide

£278,880, April 2026. Mortgage approvals sample.

+1.3% Zoopla

£271,700, March 2026. See source table.

From listing to a financed purchase

Zoopla reports agreed sales 3% below a year ago, buyer enquiries 2% lower and 5% more homes for sale. Its April update points to resilience, rather than an unqualified recovery.

STAGE / MEASURE	SOURCE AND PERIOD	READING
New seller asking price	Rightmove, April 2026	£373,971
Mortgage approvals for purchase	BoE, March 2026	63,500
Completed price annual growth	UK HPI, February 2026	+1.2%
Mortgage index annual growth	Nationwide, April 2026	+3.0%

Use completed comparables to set the bid

Match tenure, size, condition and location. An apparent discount to an asking price is not automatically a discount to market value. A lender can also value a property below the agreed price, increasing the cash needed to complete.

Sources 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Full dated references and method on page 8.

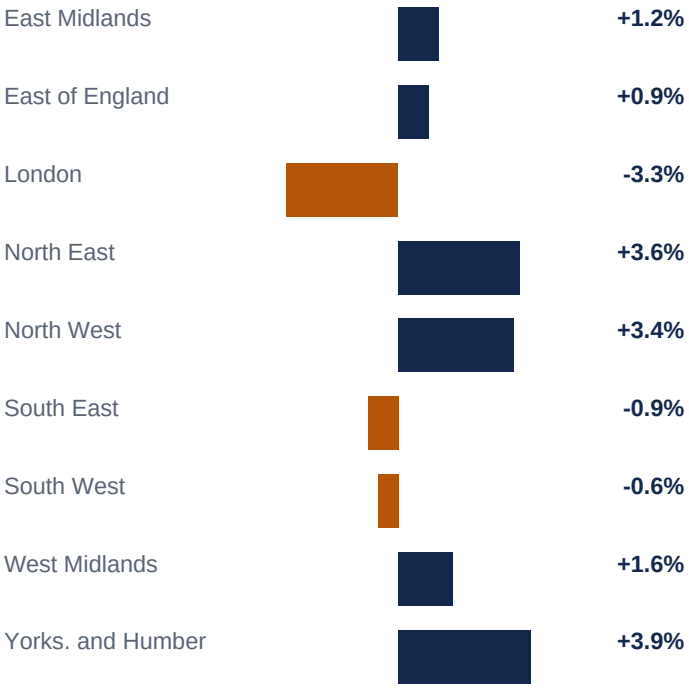
04 / REGIONS

How prices and rents vary across the UK

Registered prices across the nine English regions, alongside rent readings for the four UK nations. The geographical coverage and observation periods are labelled separately.

Annual completed price change

February 2026 / UK HPI



ENGLISH REGION	PRICE
East Midlands	£239,000
East of England	£335,000
London	£542,000
North East	£163,000
North West	£216,000
South East	£377,000
South West	£300,000
West Midlands	£249,000
Yorks. and Humber	£209,000

Private rent across the four nations

ONS, March 2026. Northern Ireland is reported two months earlier, to January 2026.

NATION	AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT	ANNUAL CHANGE
England	£1,434	+3.4%
Wales	£830	+4.8%
Scotland	£1,022	+2.1%
Northern Ireland	£880	+5.0%

The ONS advises caution when comparing Scotland and Northern Ireland with other nations because their data collection differs. These are regional and national averages, not valuations or letting appraisals for an individual property.

Sources 1 and 2. Full dated references and method on page 8.

05 / LETTINGS

Income starts with a realistic rent.

The ONS measures rents across the rental stock. A new contract index measures the latest lettings in its own sample. Neither replaces a local appraisal or the rent payable under the actual tenancy.

RENT MEASURE	SOURCE AND PERIOD	PER MONTH	ON THE YEAR
All tenancies, UK	ONS, March 2026	£1,377	+3.4%
Confirmed new tenancies, England	Goodlord, April 2026	£1,205	+1.7%

Periods and samples differ. The figures are context for a letting decision, rather than interchangeable measures of the same set of properties.

What the latest figures mean for a landlord

Rental growth has slowed in the latest official release. The first phase of England's tenancy reforms has now started. Review documentation and the practical management plan with the agent and solicitor before completing on a tenanted investment.

RENTS AGAINST PAY

+3.4%
UK rents

+3.6%
GB regular pay

Different populations and periods. Check local incomes and the affordability of the proposed rent.

THE COST OF A VOID

24 days

Goodlord, April 2026. At £1,000 a month, a 24 day gap costs about £789 in rent. Mortgage and insurance costs continue.

Tenancy reform in England

England's first phase of tenancy reform began on 1 May 2026. Ask the managing agent and solicitor to check the tenancy, paperwork and practical possession assumptions before a purchase. Other UK nations have their own systems.

Collected income is what matters: allow for management, maintenance, insurance, compliance, voids and the actual finance terms. Gross yield is only a starting measure.

Sources 1, 9, 14 and 15. Full dated references and method on page 8.

06 / ECONOMY AND BORROWING

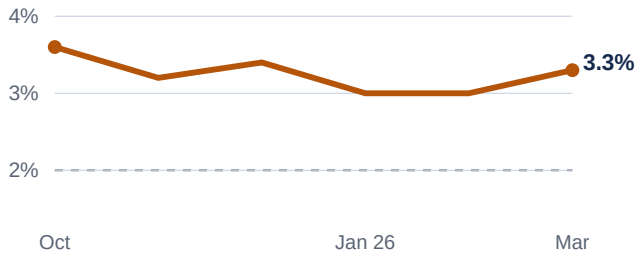
Bank Rate is only part of the borrowing cost.

On 30 April the MPC voted 8 to 1 to hold Bank Rate at 3.75%. One member preferred a rise to 4.00%. The Bank described high uncertainty around the energy shock and presented alternative economic scenarios. Do not treat an unchanged policy rate as a guarantee of cheaper finance.

BORROWING COST	PERIOD	LATEST
Bank Rate	9 May 2026	3.75%
Residential two year fix, 75% LTV	April 2026	5.14%
BTL two year fix, 75% LTV	April 2026	4.42%
BTL five year fix, 75% LTV	April 2026	4.82%
Effective rate on new mortgages	March 2026	4.03%

BoE monthly quoted benchmarks exclude fees. The effective rate describes lending actually drawn. These are different measures and are not a personalised mortgage offer.

CPI inflation against the 2% target



3.3% CPI inflation in March 2026, compared with 3.0% in the prior month.

4.9% UK unemployment in December 2025 to February 2026.

Next Bank Rate decision: **18 June**.

WORKED EXAMPLE / NOTIONAL PROPERTY

A £120,000 property let for £795 per calendar month has a gross yield of 7.95%. A 75% loan to value interest only mortgage is £90,000. This illustration uses the latest quoted BTL two year benchmark and a two point stress.

MONTHLY, BEFORE TAX	AT 4.42%	AT 6.42%
Scheduled rent	£795.00	£795.00
Management at 10% of scheduled rent	-£79.50	-£79.50
Void allowance, one month in twelve	-£66.25	-£66.25
Repairs and insurance at 10% of rent	-£79.50	-£79.50
Mortgage interest	-£331.50	-£481.50
Cash flow before tax and product fees	**£238.25**	**£88.25**

A two point rise costs £150 more per month (£1,800 a year). Purchase costs, tax and product fees are excluded.

07 / DISTRESSED ASSETS AND PROPERTY AUCTIONS

Separate financial pressure from saleable opportunity.

Mortgage arrears, repossessions and personal insolvencies measure different groups. They provide context for

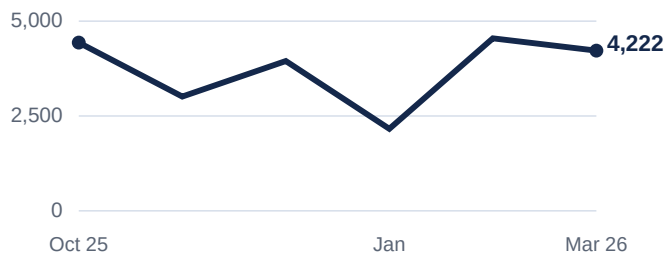
INDICATOR	SOURCE AND PERIOD	LATEST
Homeowner mortgages in arrears	UK Finance, Q4 2025	80,490
BTL mortgages in arrears	UK Finance, Q4 2025	9,520
Homeowner repossessions	UK Finance, Q4 2025	1,210
BTL repossessions	UK Finance, Q4 2025	770
Personal insolvencies	Insolvency Service, March 2026	12,252

UK Finance counts UK first charge mortgages with arrears of at least 2.5% of the balance. Personal insolvencies cover England and Wales and include more than bankruptcies.

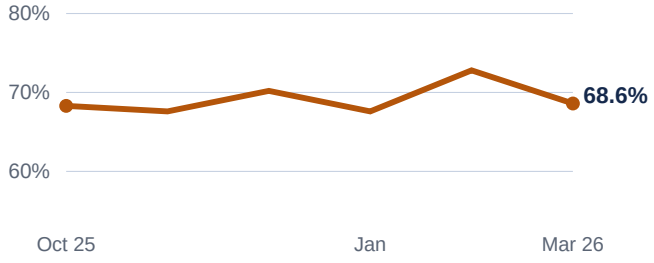
March registrations are 30% above a year ago and include 654 bankruptcies. Debt relief orders and voluntary arrangements account for most of the total. Each route has different implications for any property involved.

The auction room / six reported months

Lots offered, UK



Share sold, UK



UK AUCTIONS	OFFERED	SOLD	SHARE SOLD	RAISED
March 2026	4,222	2,897	68.6%	£559.1m
Same month a year ago	3,531	2,408	68.2%	See source

1,325 lots unsold

Across the UK in March 2026. Check current availability, the legal pack and the seller's requirements before offering. Unsold does not mean distressed or cheap.

Sources 10, 11, 12 and earlier EIG newsletters for the chart. Full dated references and method on page 8.

08 / FARRELL'S VIEW

What I would do with these numbers

Holding Bank Rate does not mean borrowing conditions are unchanged. The latest quoted mortgage benchmarks are higher, and the new tenancy regime in England has now begun.

Before you bid this month

The offer 1,325 UK lots went unsold in March 2026. Confirm availability and seller motivation. Work back from relevant completed sales, after all purchase and holding costs.

The finance The notional purchase leaves £238.25 a month before tax and fees at 4.42%, falling to £88.25 at 6.42%. Stress the valuation and the interest rate together.

The exit Confirm who can buy or refinance the property in its present condition. Allow time for legal work, remedial works and lender decisions. Keep a second workable exit and a cash reserve.

What to watch next

19 May. ONS labour market
20 May. ONS inflation, house prices and rents
18 June. Bank of England policy decision

Sources and method

1. ONS private rents and house prices
22 April 2026

2. HM Land Registry UK HPI: regional prices
22 April 2026

3. Rightmove House Price Index
20 April 2026

4. Nationwide House Price Index
30 April 2026

5. Zoopla House Price Index
29 April 2026

6. BoE Money and Credit
1 May 2026

7. BoE Monetary Policy Summary and Minutes
30 April 2026

8. ONS consumer price inflation
22 April 2026

9. ONS labour market overview
21 April 2026

10. UK Finance arrears and possessions
12 February 2026

11. Insolvency Service individual insolvencies
17 April 2026

12. EIG monthly newsletter
April 2026

13. BoE quoted mortgage rates: IUMZID4, IUMZO2B, IUMBV34
8 May 2026

14. England tenancy reform roadmap
13 November 2025

15. Goodlord Rental Index
6 May 2026

Data cut off 9 May 2026. Dated statistical releases govern the periods used. Official estimates are provisional and can be revised; prior readings follow each release's own vintage. Quoted mortgage rates are historical monthly benchmarks from the BoE database, which can be reweighted or revised. EIG uses national residential and commercial totals from its tables; these can differ from newsletter prose. Charts stop at the stated observation period. ONS data is used under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Learn to use these numbers at property auctions

One day property auction course, £97, in London and LIVE online. Twelve month mentorship programme. The Property Auctions Podcast. Property Auctions: Repossessions, Bankruptcies and Bargain Properties, fourth edition.

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