

Strongest price growth for a year

- Scotland outpaces England & Wales
- Higher prices in most local authorities
- Sales closely matching year-earlier levels

House Price	Index	Monthly Change %	Annual Change %
£223,525	292.7	1.4	1.9

Scott Jack, Regional Development Director at Walker Fraser Steele, comments:

“In March, average property prices in Scotland increased by 1.4%, or almost £3,000, following a five-month decline. This was a far stronger performance than that witnessed in the English and Welsh markets. Scotland's average house price is currently just over £223,500, which is about £300 less than its high price from June 2023.

“This significant turnaround speaks volumes about the negligible movement we have seen in recent months.

“Four authorities—Midlothian, Argyll and Bute, Falkirk, and Inverclyde—achieved new heights in terms of their regional average values and the total number of local authorities reporting rising prices was twenty-one, the highest since May of last year – another clear and welcome sign that the market is beginning to stabilize.

“Of particular note is the 1.5% increase for Midlothian which made it the fifth local authority with average property prices above £300,000.

“It's too early to assume the cost of living pressures are abating but mortgage pricing has been keen over the last couple of months as lenders fight for borrowers. With a general election due this year, we know housing is a key issue for voters and we may yet see some further promises made to buyers and owners before a vote later this year. That would give further impetus to this positive trajectory.”

Housing market commentary

After falling for five months in a row, average house prices picked up in March by 1.4%, some £3,000, and a positive outcome compared to markets in England and Wales. Scotland's average house price now stands a little above £223,500, that is within £300 of its peak level reached in June 2023. The seemingly marked turn-round speaks volumes about the narrow tramlines within which the market has moved over the past year.

Figure 1. Weakness in prices appears to have ended

Scotland annual price changes, last 3 years



Scotland's brief flirtation with **annual** price falls last December has been short-lived. The market swung firmly back into positive territory in March, climbing by more than £4,000 and 1.9% from a year earlier, as Figure 1 shows. This is the strongest performance in more than a year and compares favourably with that seen south of the border over recent months.

Table 1. Average prices in Scotland for Mar 2023 - Mar 2024

Month	Year	Property Price	Index	Monthly % change	Annual % change
Mar	2023	£219,259	287.2	-0.1	1.2
Apr	2023	£220,983	289.4	0.8	1.4
May	2023	£223,355	292.5	1.1	1.6
Jun	2023	£223,816	293.1	0.2	1.4
Jul	2023	£223,269	292.4	-0.2	0.5
Aug	2023	£223,014	292.1	-0.1	0.4
Sep	2023	£223,692	293.0	0.3	0.7
Oct	2023	£223,259	292.4	-0.2	0.4
Nov	2023	£222,885	291.9	-0.2	0.1
Dec	2023	£221,520	290.1	-0.6	-0.4
Jan	2024	£221,157	289.6	-0.2	0.0
Feb	2024	£220,517	288.8	-0.3	0.4
Mar	2024	£223,525	292.7	1.4	1.9

Local Authority prices

Table 2. How prices in March 2024 compare

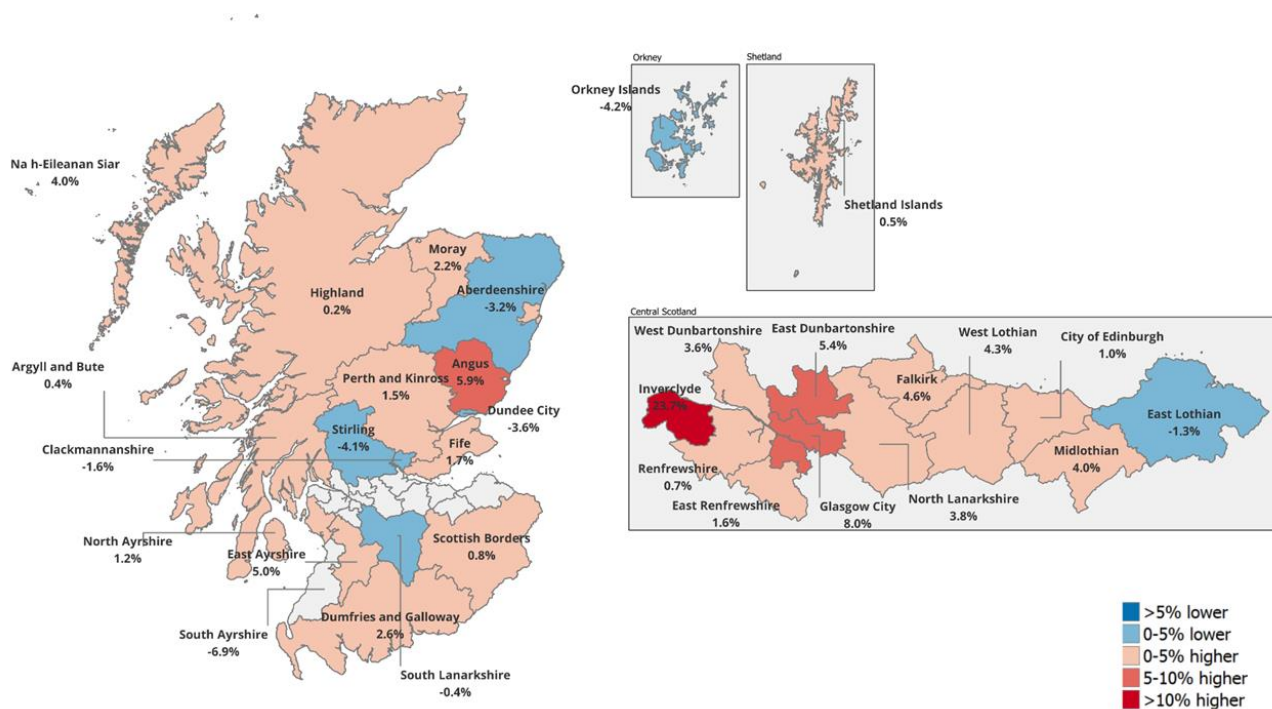
Rank	Prior Year Rank	Local authority	Mar 2023	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Monthly % chg	Annual % chg
1	(1)	East Renfrewshire	£334,191	£323,526	£339,681	5.0%	1.6%
2	(2)	City Of Edinburgh	£331,661	£329,598	£335,127	1.7%	1.0%
3	(3)	East Lothian	£326,566	£322,316	£322,342	0.0%	-1.3%
4	(4)	East Dunbartonshire	£292,939	£303,827	£308,629	1.6%	5.4%
5	(5)	Midlothian	£292,398	£299,546	£304,002	1.5%	4.0%
6	(7)	Perth and Kinross	£247,824	£254,109	£251,510	-1.0%	1.5%
7	(6)	Stirling	£259,388	£251,589	£248,795	-1.1%	-4.1%
8	(8)	West Lothian	£234,373	£239,002	£244,412	2.3%	4.3%
9	(12)	Scottish Borders	£229,712	£231,163	£231,656	0.2%	0.8%
10	(10)	Highland	£230,873	£226,679	£231,264	2.0%	0.2%
11	(11)	Argyll and Bute	£229,720	£221,915	£230,624	3.9%	0.4%
12	(9)	Aberdeenshire	£232,409	£226,976	£224,929	-0.9%	-3.2%
13	(13)	Moray	£208,836	£215,793	£213,461	-1.1%	2.2%
14	(19)	Glasgow City	£194,140	£203,937	£209,738	2.8%	8.0%
15	(17)	Fife	£196,492	£192,966	£199,841	3.6%	1.7%
16	(16)	Shetland Islands	£198,645	£193,201	£199,606	3.3%	0.5%
17	(20)	Angus	£185,100	£189,360	£196,077	3.5%	5.9%
18	(15)	Orkney Islands	£203,100	£187,801	£194,474	3.6%	-4.2%
19	(18)	South Lanarkshire	£195,090	£191,866	£194,347	1.3%	-0.4%
20	(14)	South Ayrshire	£207,864	£197,009	£193,579	-1.7%	-6.9%
21	(21)	Falkirk	£183,494	£189,738	£192,025	1.2%	4.6%
22	(23)	Aberdeen City	£179,846	£185,728	£185,557	-0.1%	3.2%
23	(22)	Dumfries and Galloway	£180,694	£181,359	£185,379	2.2%	2.6%
24	(24)	Clackmannanshire	£179,075	£179,633	£176,230	-1.9%	-1.6%
25	(25)	Renfrewshire	£174,721	£178,929	£176,028	-1.6%	0.7%
26	(27)	North Lanarkshire	£161,293	£165,211	£167,487	1.4%	3.8%
27	(26)	Dundee City	£169,339	£166,991	£163,171	-2.3%	-3.6%
28	(32)	Inverclyde	£130,471	£153,706	£161,424	5.0%	23.7%
29	(29)	Na H-Eileanan Siar	£155,072	£175,049	£161,327	-7.8%	4.0%
30	(30)	East Ayrshire	£152,998	£158,187	£160,573	1.5%	5.0%
31	(28)	North Ayrshire	£155,937	£152,422	£157,766	3.5%	1.2%
32	(31)	West Dunbartonshire	£139,091	£142,497	£144,106	1.1%	3.6%
Scotland			£219,259	£220,517	£223,525	1.4%	1.9%

Note: Lines shaded in darker blue reflect cases where Local Authority prices reached record highs in March 2024.

Twenty one local authorities experienced rising prices in the month - the highest number since May last year and a further sign that the housing market is stabilising. Higher values helped four authorities – Midlothian, Argyll and Bute, Falkirk and Inverclyde - to reach new peaks.

The five most expensive local authorities all reported higher prices in March, albeit marginally so in the case of East Lothian. A 1.5% increase for Midlothian made it the fifth local authority with average property prices above £300,000.

Figure 2. How prices have changed between March 2023 and March 2024, by local authority

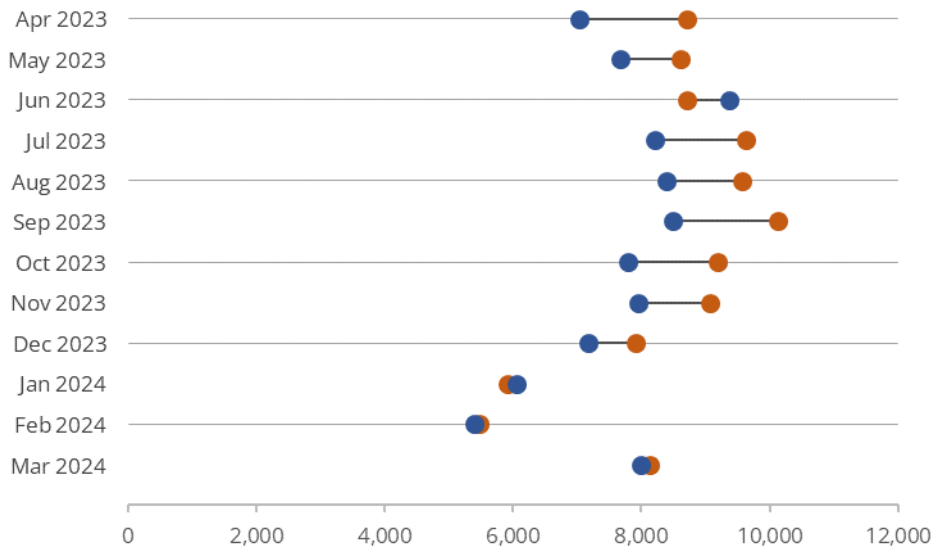


As can be seen from the heat map, in March the vast majority of local authorities (24) reported stronger prices than a year ago, the highest number since February 2023.

Inverclyde reported a double-digit percentage increase in prices over the year for the second month in a row. That said, we would not read too much into these figures, distorted as they are by a period of price weakness the year earlier.

Transactions analysis

Figure 3. Monthly sales over the **most recent year** compared with a **year earlier**



Note: Except for March 2024 which is an Acadata estimate, figures are based on the Registers of Scotland (RoS) figures for the Date of Entry,

The housing market has been lacklustre over much of the past year. For 2023 as a whole, sales totalled 91,600 properties, which is 12% down on 2022 and not much above the Covid-induced lows of 2020.

But the headwinds have eased over the past few months, helped by more attractive mortgage pricing and easing cost-of-living pressures. As can be seen in Figure 3, monthly sales are no longer lagging materially below year-earlier levels.

A positive shift in market sentiment helped lift sales in January marginally above those in January 2023 and sales for both February and March appear to be closely tracking year-earlier levels. Sales of property in the capital and of properties worth more than £750,000 already appear to be modestly outpacing the corresponding 2023 numbers.

For the time being, it is hard to know whether this is just a degree of stability returning to the market or a more significant recovery story. Sales are still down on pre-Covid levels and market confidence is likely to be sensitive to changing market expectations of interest rates and political uncertainties. However, without doubt analysts' expectations of significant price falls across Scotland, Wales and England in 2024 have fallen away over the past few months and forecasts have been revised upwards to suggest Scotland may see modest price growth over the year. While there remain uncertainties around interest rates and mortgage pricing, there is a general sense that the worst is behind us. The pent-up demand that built up over 2023 and into 2024 is beginning to come through and that should be reflected in prices. There may also be a move by the UK government to help support first-time buyers in the run-up to the General Election which could add further momentum.

Notes

The *Walker Fraser Steele Acadata House Price Index* is produced by Acadata, a consultancy specialising in house price data

The index is based on the actual prices at which nearly every residential property in Scotland is transacted, including prices for properties bought with cash, using the data provided by Registers of Scotland. Our property prices and indices are calculated on a seasonal- and mix-adjusted basis.

All Walker Fraser Steele Acadata HPI (Scotland) results are subject to change following receipt of updated data from Registers of Scotland.

See [Acadata's website](#) for additional information about the index and longer time series for the data highlighted in this report.

About Walker Fraser Steele

Walker Fraser Steele is the trading name of e.surv Chartered Surveyors in Scotland

Walker Fraser Steele is one of the longest established Chartered Surveyor brands in Scotland. We're proud of our Scottish heritage and reputation, which has allowed us to stay at the forefront of the residential property market in Scotland for well over a century.

In June 2013, the business joined forces with [e.surv Chartered Surveyors](#) (part of [LSL Property Services plc](#)). e.surv is the UK's leading provider of residential valuation and surveying services and brings technical expertise and award-winning know-how to complement our in-depth knowledge of local markets. This is a unique formula that adds huge value for our clients and customers.

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For further information, please visit our website: www.walkerfrasersteele.co.uk

Press contacts

Matt Beasley
Full Circle (PR agency for e.surv)
mbeasley@fullcirclecomms.co.uk
020 7265 7887

Walker Fraser Steele
communications@esurv.co.uk