

Press release: UK House Price Index (HPI) for March 2017

The March data shows an annual price increase of 4.1% which takes the average property value in the UK to £215,847. Monthly house prices have fallen by 0.6% since February 2017. The monthly index figure for the UK was 113.2.

In England, the March data shows an annual price increase of 4.4% which takes the average property value to £232,530. Monthly house prices have fallen by 0.6% since February 2017.

Wales shows an annual price increase of 4.3% which takes the average property value to £147,746. Monthly house prices have risen by 1.4% since February 2017.

London shows an annual price increase of 1.5% which takes the average property value to £471,742. Monthly house prices have fallen by 1.5% since February 2017.

UK [Property Transaction statistics](#) showed that in March 2017 the total number of seasonally adjusted property transactions completed in the UK with a value of £40,000 or above has remained at a similar level for the last 3 months. See [the economic statement](#).

Sales during January 2017, the most up-to-date HM Land Registry figures available, show that:

1. The UK House Price Index (HPI) is published on the second or third Tuesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. The April 2017 UK HPI will be published at 9.30am on 13 June 2017. See [calendar of release dates](#).
2. Data for the UK HPI is provided by HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency.
3. The UK HPI is calculated by the Office for National Statistics and Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, in particular, HM Land Registry's Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from [ONS](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency](#).
4. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based

on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three-month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.

5. Work has been taking place since 2014 to develop a single, official HPI that reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property in the UK. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the 'price' represents a valuation.
6. Information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process, is provided by HM Land Registry for properties that are sold for full market value.
7. The HM Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).
8. Repossession data is based on the number of transactions lodged with HM Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.
9. For England, this is shown as volumes of repossessions recorded by Government Office Region. For Wales, there is a headline figure for the number of repossessions recorded in Wales.
10. The data can be downloaded as a .csv file. Repossession data prior to April 2016 is not available. Find out more information about [repossessions](#).
11. Background tables of the raw and cleansed aggregated data, in Excel and CSV formats, are also published monthly although Northern Ireland is on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.
12. As a government department established in 1862, executive agency and trading fund responsible to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, HM Land Registry keeps and maintains the Land Register for England and Wales. The Land Register has been open to public inspection since 1990.
13. With the largest transactional database of its kind detailing more than 24 million titles, HM Land Registry underpins the economy by safeguarding ownership of many billions of pounds worth of property.

14. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry.
 15. Follow us on Twitter [@LandRegGov](https://twitter.com/LandRegGov) and find us on our [blogLinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#)
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Speech: “Ending sexual violence in conflict is central to peace building, conflict prevention and reconciliation.”

Thank you Minister, Mr President, for convening this important open debate.

And I would like to begin by welcoming both Amina and Adama back to the Council and to thank them for their very important briefings this morning. And I would like to pay particular tribute to Mina Jaf for sharing her powerful testimony with us, and for bringing the unique and valuable perspective of civil society into this Security Council Chamber.

It’s a perspective that we need to hear more of, more often. This Council works best when we are informed by the women and men most affected by the issues we discuss in this room. And sexual violence in conflict is no exception to that.

As we’ve heard today, ending sexual violence in conflict is central to peace building, conflict prevention and reconciliation. This is a message that should not need repeating in this Council. We’ve heard it many times before on our visits to South Sudan, Lake Chad, most recently Colombia.

We cannot forget the stories we heard in that dusty IDP camp in northern Nigeria. Stories of women whose daughters had been abducted by Boko Haram, likely forced into marriage and sexual slavery.

And yet, as the Secretary-General’s report clearly shows, those messages are not getting through. Not enough is being done. Women and girls, men and boys are still being subjected to sexual violence every day. In Mali, where survivors are forced to withdraw complaints so that the perpetrators can escape justice. In Syria, where not a single person has been prosecuted for Da’esh’s vile acts. In South Sudan, where we see the continuing abhorrent use of rape as a sickening means of punishing communities.

We know what needs to happen. We need to make ending sexual violence a key part of ceasefire deals. We need fewer women at kitchen tables and more women at negotiating tables. And we need even more women serving in uniform –

because for too many survivors a man in uniform is someone to fear, not someone to trust. This is a lesson that needs to be heeded by governments, by armed forces, and yes, by the UN and its peacekeepers too.

We cannot though be deterred. We must all play our part and do everything within our power to ensure these crimes are reported, that survivors are cared for, and that perpetrators, whether terrorists or state actors, are held to account.

And that's why the United Kingdom, in partnership with the UN Team of Experts and Justice Rapid Response, is running a campaign to tackle the stigma that so often surrounds survivors of sexual violence. It's why we worked with over 200 civil society experts to produce the International Protocol that helps document these crimes. And it's why we're now developing the Principles for Global Action to be launched at the General Assembly later this year. This is a new tool, developed again with civil society, but also with UN agencies and member states, to help policy makers and international organisations tackle stigma through their own work.

Ultimately, Mr President, if we want to address the appalling use of sexual violence by terrorists, and indeed by state actors, we need to look bigger; we need to look broader. We need to recognise that terrorists and state actors are enabled to carry out these sick acts when peace and security has broken down, when this Council has failed to uphold our duties enshrined in the UN Charter.

What happens in this Council, whether votes in favour, or vetoes against, has a very real bearing on that insecurity.

So let us make sure that tackling sexual violence is not something we talk about only once a year at this debate, but in every single Security Council item where it is relevant, starting with the upcoming Al-Qaeda sanctions regime review.

Nor can we shy away from the fact that these appalling acts are the direct result of gender discrimination and inequality. Until women are treated equally, paid equally, respected equally, we will have failed, not just to address this issue, but also to deliver the Global Goals that we all agreed less than two years ago.

I'd like to close, Mr President, by paying tribute to the former Special Representative, Zainab Bangura, for all her tireless efforts and exemplary leadership on this important issue. I wish her the best for the future and I look forward to working with her successor, Pramilla Patten.

News story: Public ACT following call from Counter Terror police

The news comes as one of the UK's most senior counter terrorism officers, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi, told an audience of security industry experts today that their role in protecting the public is more vital than ever.

Most of the concerns raised by the public as a result of the Action Counters Terrorism, or ACT, initiative turned out to be nothing to cause any alarm. However, a crucial number contained important pieces of information that resulted in further action from police – information that might otherwise have been missed.

A significant number of the calls were made following the Westminster attack.

DAC D'Orsi, who is the National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Protective Security, revealed the figures to an audience attending the annual CT Expo at London Olympia. She also told delegates the police aimed to increase its use of the National Barrier Asset – temporary protective structures – during short term summer events that attract large crowds.

“The increased response from the general public and from professionals whose job it is to keep people safe within crowded places, has been really heartening,” she says.

“But, as we have seen very recently here in London, we can not afford to stand still. We need to exploit every possible way of keeping people safe – and do all we can to keep everyone vigilant.

“We are working very closely with security managers in busy shopping centres, transport hubs and entertainment venues. The fact that record numbers are attending this event shows the desire to do more.

“Whether it is in business communities or local communities, we need to encourage everyone to keep contributing because, sadly, terrorism is a growing and increasingly complex threat.”

CT policing is promoting the National Barrier Asset (NBA) at the two-day Expo. This is a unique unit within world policing that manages, with the help of expert technicians, protective barriers that can be deployed by any of the England and Wales Home Office forces.

Some of the NBA equipment is placed around Parliament and is likely to have saved more people from Khalid Masood's devastating drive along Westminster bridge and around Parliament.

The ACT campaign was launched eight weeks ago. In addition to the 3000 calls, there has also been 300 referrals regarding online extremist material and 850,000 have watched the ACT films. The 'Code Severe' podcast – the first

ever podcast from police – reached number two in the charts.

Full information about the campaign, and how to contact police with concerns, can be found at gov.uk/ACT.

Notice: Rowing On and Summer Eights 2017: river restriction notice

River Thames restriction information for Friday 19 May 2017 from 1pm to 5:30pm, and Wednesday 24 to Saturday 27 May 2017 from 10:30am to 7pm.

Press release: Ransomware threat – keep your charity safe

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, is issuing this alert to charities as regulatory advice under section 15(2) of the Charities Act 2011.

Charities could be at risk and are urged to be vigilant.

Over 200,000 organisations, including the National Health Service (NHS), in 150 countries have been affected by a recent ransomware attack. The vulnerabilities exploited by the hackers are the same for charities as they are for individuals, public or private sector organisations.

The Charity Commission encourages all charities to follow protection advice recently issued by the City of London Police and National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

Key protection messages:

- install system updates on all devices as soon as they become available
- install anti-virus software on all devices and keep it updated
- create regular backups of your important/business critical files to a device that is not left connected to your network, as any malware infection could be spread to that too
- do not meet any stated demands and pay a ransom – this may be requested via Bitcoins (a form of digital or ‘crypto’ currency)

National Cyber Security Centre technical guidance includes specific software

patches to use that will prevent infected computers on your network from becoming infected with the “WannaCry” Ransomware.

Additional in-depth technical guidance on how to protect your organisation from ransomware can also be found on the [NCSC website](#).

Phishing/Smishing

Fraudsters may exploit this high profile incident and use it as part of phishing/smishing (SMS phishing) campaigns. Charities are urged to be cautious if they receive any unsolicited communications from the NHS.

The protect advice is:

- any email address can be spoofed – do not open attachments or click on the links within any unsolicited emails you receive, and never respond to emails that ask for personal/charity information or financial details
- the sender’s name and number in a text message can be spoofed – so even if the message appears to be from an organisation you know of, continue to exercise caution, particularly if the texts are asking you to click on a link or call a number

How to report

If you think your charity has fallen victim to cyber-attack, you should report it to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040, or visiting [ActionFraud](#).

Trustees are advised to also report suspected or known fraud incidents to the Commission by emailing RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

Serious incident reporting helps the Commission to gauge the volume and impact of incidents within charities and to understand the risks facing the sector as a whole.

Harvey Grenville, Head of Investigations and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:

Charities need to be aware of the imminent danger posed by ransomware threats and take appropriate steps to protect their charity from cyber-attack – a charity’s valuable assets and good reputation can be put at risk from these dangerous scams.

I urge all charities, if they suspect they may have fallen victim to cyber fraud, to report it immediately to Action Fraud and to the Commission, under its serious incident reporting regime.

You can visit [Charities against fraud](#) for advice and top tips on how to protect your charity against cyber-fraud.

Ends.

Notes to editors

The Charity Commission is the independent registrar and regulator of charities in England and Wales.

We act in the public's interest, to ensure that:

- charities know what they have to do
- the public know what charities do
- charities are held to account