



HARINGTONS

THE INDEPENDENT PROPERTY BUYING ADVISORS

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MARKET COMMENT

Haringtons Prime Residential Update:

Why the Smart Money Is Moving Quietly

This summer, we were delighted to welcome **Katie Neale** to Haringtons, covering **North London and the Northern Home Counties**. Her arrival strengthens our reach across the prime and super-prime markets just beyond the capital. With more than a decade's experience advising high-net-worth clients, family trusts and international investors, Katie brings both expertise and fresh perspective to the team.

The mood on the ground

Let's start with the reality check. Activity has picked up after summer, but prices remain soft. There are buyers out there, but they are cautious and selective. Competitive bidding is still happening, though only for the homes that truly deserve it. Those are the ones where sellers have listened to good advice and priced realistically. The rest are being left behind.

In September, Nationwide reported that UK house prices were rising at an annual rate of 2.2%, broadly in line with August's 2.1% — a sign that the market has stabilised after last year's turbulence. However, regional variations tell a more nuanced story. Across Southern England, including the South West, Outer South East, Outer Metropolitan area, London and East Anglia, growth slowed to just 0.7%, reflecting continued caution in higher-value markets. In London's most exclusive postcodes, prices remain 15 to 25% below their 2014 peak, underlining how far prime values have corrected over the past decade.

The biggest challenge remains the mismatch between seller expectations and buyer appetite. Deals are still happening, but only where pricing is realistic and both sides are motivated. For some vendors, the priority is to secure a sale before the Autumn Budget, wary of potential tax changes; others are holding fire until the New Year, waiting to see how the political and economic outlook evolves.

Silver linings for the switched-on

If there is one advantage in a hesitant market, it is that buyers who are properly advised can find excellent opportunities. Increasingly, the best homes never appear online. Sellers are wary of overexposure and "portal fatigue", preferring private introductions. That is where we come in. Hours spent previewing, phoning and quietly matching clients with properties are now worth their weight in gold.

Homes that tick the lifestyle boxes, with good light, space to work from home and gardens or terraces, are still holding their own. These are the properties that prove their worth when the market turns patchy. In other words, quality is outperforming quantity.

The view from the country

Beyond the M25, patience is a virtue. There is value to be found in the countryside, but not without effort. Too many homes were overpriced from the start and have since gone stale. Buyers are forensic these days; if something looks wrong, they move on. Even when asking prices are corrected, those listings can struggle to recover momentum.

The **delay to Rachel Reeves's budget** has made things worse. Many would-be sellers have convinced themselves it is a terrible time to move. Yet while some are sitting tight, others are quietly doing deals. The best houses are still selling, often off-market. And for buyers ready to move, the power balance is currently on their side.

Trouble in the fields

The rural land market is holding up for now. **Arable land in southern England** is still changing hands at around £10,000 an acre, although neighbouring farmers and rollover relief distort the numbers. One recent deal went through at **£8,500 an acre**. But beneath the surface, pressure is building. Harvest yields are down by a third, wheat prices have dropped and farm subsidies have been stripped back. Add it all up and the outlook is bleak.

In the north and west, the removal of inheritance relief has hit small family farms hard. Many will have to sell land to pay new taxes, yet local demand is thin. It is a worrying picture that could reshape the rural landscape over the next year.

The long game

Every downturn sparks talk of "distressed" sales and dream homes being sold for half what they were worth. It almost never happens. When good houses come to market, cash buyers appear and competition follows fast.

The truth is, timing the market perfectly is a fantasy. What matters is buying the right house, in the right place, with a long-term view. That is where experience counts. At Haringtons, we have guided clients through every type of market, helping them avoid the costly mistakes that come with chasing short-term gains.

Governments come and go, but homes and the lives lived in them last far longer.

If you are thinking about buying in London or the country, we would be delighted to help you make your move wisely.

MEET THE TEAM

"As one of the first independent buying agencies in the UK, you can expect a level of experience and expertise that no other firm of buying agents can provide. Whether London or the country, we are the most experienced buying team in the business."

Jonathan Harington, Director



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YOUR COUNTRY TEAM
