

UK Auction Market Feels the Heat of Stamp Duty Changes but Signs of Strength Remain

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The UK's fast-paced property auction market is feeling the ripple effects of recent Stamp Duty threshold changes but far from grinding to a halt, the sector is showing resilience, adaptability, and a clear path forward.

According to the latest data from the Essential Information Group (EIG), May 2025 marked a slight slowdown in activity, with auctioneers adjusting to shifting buyer behaviours and tighter margins. The number of lots offered dropped by 3%, and the number of lots sold fell

by 8.3% to 2,294. The overall amount raised dipped by just 0.4%, landing at £426.5 million, with a success rate of 68.8%. While not drastic, the figures hint at a market in recalibration.

David Sandeman of EIG said the picture isn't entirely gloomy; rather, it's mixed, with regional nuances shaping the broader story. "Supply is rising in many areas, but we're seeing sale rates come under pressure. Interestingly, places like the East Midlands, South-West, and Wales are holding up well, with increases in both entries and successful sales," he explained. "But in regions such as London and Yorkshire, buyer demand isn't quite keeping pace with the lots on offer."

One clear trend? Timing and pricing are everything. Properties that spark early bidder interest, especially those priced realistically, are still drawing competitive bidding wars. "There's still a strong appetite out there," Sandeman added. "But buyers are being more selective, and auctioneers are responding in real time."

Stuart Collar-Brown, President of NAVA Propertymark, believes the market's resilience is being underestimated. "Given the economic headwinds this year, high interest rates and the Stamp Duty shake-up in April, it's not surprising to see a dip," he said. "But the broader picture shows year-on-year growth. Residential and commercial auctions have seen a healthy rise of 7.2% and 7.5% respectively."

That year-on-year growth tells a different story: one of long-term confidence in the auction process, both for buyers hunting value and sellers looking for fast, no-fuss transactions.

So, while May may have offered a bump in the road, experts believe it's just that. With summer traditionally being a peak season for property sales, momentum is expected to return. Auctions continue to offer a dynamic and responsive platform in a market where certainty is scarce.

The message is clear: in today's economic climate, success in the auction room isn't just about what's on offer, it's about pricing smart, timing well, and adapting fast. And for those who get it right, the rewards are still very much up for grabs.