# American buyers shift focus to Edinburgh amid surge in UK property inquiries



In a notable shift within the UK property market, Rightmove has reported a significant uptick in inquiries from US-based house hunters, with a 19% increase compared to the same timeframe last year. This surge marks the highest level of interest from Americans since 2017, covering the period from January to early May 2025. Industry specialists suggest that the heightened inquiries may be partly attributed to global economic uncertainties sparked by recent announcements concerning tariffs by US President Donald Trump.

Edinburgh has emerged as the focal point for American buyers, surpassing traditional hotspots like London. This marks a departure from long-established trends where London typically dominated the interests of overseas buyers. The rising interest in cities such as Glasgow and areas in Scotland may be tied to relatively lower property prices, with the average home costing around £100,000 less than in England. This affordability is underscored by Toby Leek, president of the National Association of Estate Agents, who highlighted the allure of Scotland's picturesque landscapes coupled with its budget-friendly real estate.

Colleen Babcock, a property expert at Rightmove, emphasised the nuanced reasons behind this trend. “President Trump’s tariff announcements have led to more economic uncertainty globally, and we’re starting to see some of the effects of this on the UK property market," she stated. While the increase in inquiries could reflect a perception of the UK as a stable investment opportunity, Babcock noted that most US inquiries have been primarily for smaller properties, highlighting that many Americans view UK real estates as opportunities for short-term investments or holiday homes rather than permanent moves.

The number of high-net-worth individuals from the US entering the London market cannot be overlooked. Glynn Gibb, regional director at John D Wood & Co, observed a steady rise in inquiries for prime central London properties, particularly among those seeking to secure assets in what they perceive as a safe and stable investment environment. London offers not only a cultural hub but also global connectivity, positioning it as an attractive option for American buyers contemplating extended stays or investment rental properties. Gibb noted that many clients choose to temporarily reside in London while determining the length of their stay, often opting for rental arrangements to minimise financial commitments.

Despite this renewed interest, the current UK housing market is experiencing a cooling phase overall. According to a survey by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, house price growth has slowed, indicated by a decline in the net balance of house prices. However, there remains cautious optimism among surveyors about future sales and price stability, driven by anticipated changes in stamp duty and recent mortgage rate reductions.

Looking ahead, Rightmove's forecast for the housing market in 2025 anticipates a 4% rise in new seller average asking prices, signalling a potential resurgence in property values, particularly in London, which has lagged behind in recent years. The interest from international buyers, especially from the US, may substantially influence these trends, as they seek both investment opportunities and lifestyle changes in a changing economic landscape.

As the nature of property inquiries evolves, so do the dynamics of the UK real estate market, with foreign investments playing an increasingly pivotal role. The interplay between global economic conditions and local market factors will remain crucial in shaping where and how Americans choose to invest in UK properties.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2. Paragraph 3
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Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/us-uk-house-hunting-rightmove-where-b2751915.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/7cc645c7-1081-4d90-9400-9e7b70770f41> - Interest among Americans in relocating to Europe has surged, with estate agents noting significant increases in inquiries, particularly since early 2025. Countries such as Portugal, Spain, and Greece are top destinations due to relatively easier residency routes, favorable climates, and lifestyle appeal. However, stricter visa policies, abandoned investor programs (such as in the UK and Spain), and rising property costs are complicating the migration process. Various visa options are available, including digital nomad, passive income, and entrepreneur visas, but requirements are intricate and shifting.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/634e7274-4873-4fb7-bd43-9b170f85a955> - Eric Schmidt, former Google CEO, has purchased an £42 million mansion in Holland Park, London, marking a significant transaction among increasing property acquisitions by American buyers in the UK capital. Purchased in May 2024, the Grade II-listed, mid-Victorian villa includes mews houses and is located in one of London's most expensive neighborhoods. Schmidt reportedly plans to rent out the property, capitalizing on the growing luxury rental market in London, where tenants seek flexibility and reduced maintenance responsibilities.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-housing-market-cools-january-surveyors-stay-upbeat-rics-survey-shows-2025-02-13/> - The UK housing market experienced a notable slowdown in January, with a cooling in house price growth and buyer demand, according to a survey by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The net balance of house prices fell to +22 from +26 in December, the highest reading since September 2022. Despite the decline, respondents remained optimistic about future sales and prices, citing recent mortgage rate reductions and anticipated stamp duty changes as factors that could boost activity in the coming months.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/5c4421f2-e1ef-4566-abee-faf3500795ea> - Private equity firms are targeting struggling UK-listed real estate trusts, aiming to revitalize the sector after years of poor performance. Assura, focused on healthcare buildings, received an indicative takeover proposal from KKR and Stonepeak Partners, which it is considering. Blackstone and Sixth Street have also made proposals for Warehouse Reit. The interest from private equity stems from improved conditions in the sector, despite the real estate stock market not yet showing these improvements. Valuations have stabilized and shares are trading below asset values, creating an opportunity for buyout firms.
6. <https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-house-prices-jump-by-07-january-halifax-data-shows-2025-02-07/> - In January, UK house prices rose by 0.7%, outperforming the 0.2% increase predicted. This uptick is attributed to buyers expediting purchases before the property tax hike set for April, with prices experiencing their largest rise in nearly a year over the three months to January. Halifax's head of mortgages, Amanda Bryden, noted strong demand from first-time buyers keen to finalize transactions before the expiration of temporary tax incentives. The housing market is expected to perform decently in the months leading up to the stamp duty change.
7. <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/press-centre/rightmoves-2025-housing-market-forecast/> - Rightmove's 2025 housing market forecast predicts a 4% rise in new seller average asking prices by the end of the year, with around 1.15 million transactions expected. The forecast anticipates the beginning of a price resurgence for the London market, following years of price lag. Average mortgage rates are predicted to fall to around 4.0% by the end of the year, driven by four base rate cuts in 2025. First-time buyers are expected to be particularly active in 2025, despite stamp duty rising from April 1st.