

Property market 'healthiest' in more than a decade

Edinburgh's housing market is experiencing its strongest start to the year for more than a decade, according to Warners Solicitors and Estate Agents.

There has been no slowdown of activity so far in 2019 in Edinburgh, with conditions looking much healthier for both buyers and sellers – with the rising numbers of properties available for sale, in particular, helping to peg back prices.

Between February and April, Warners recorded a 24.2% annual increase in the number of properties listed for sale – with almost an identical rise in the number of sales recorded.

David Marshall, Operations Director with Warners, said: "Although there was an expected dip in sales and listings over the Easter holidays, we are now seeing activity at its highest level since 2008.

"Throughout 2017 and during the first half of 2018 there was a real shortage of properties available for sale in Edinburgh and the Lothians. This put a huge amount of pressure on buyers as there were typically multiple people competing for each property that was available.

"Since the midway point of 2018, supply has improved and there are now more homes for sale than has been the case for some time.

"This has helped ease the pressure on buyers somewhat and, whilst most homes are still achieving prices in excess of their valuation, the average premiums that buyers are now having to pay are lower than they were a year ago."

In the three months from February to April, properties sold

across Edinburgh and the Lothians achieved an average of 3.8% above their Home Report valuation – 2.8% lower than in 2018 – and a median selling time of 19 days.

David added: “For those who are only looking to sell, the market is a little less favourable than was the case a year ago simply because there is more competition from other sellers. In most areas though, properties are still selling quickly and achieving good offers.

“Additionally, most of us tend to sell and buy at the same time. Even if you don’t achieve quite as much for the property that you are selling, when it comes time to buy you will probably face less pressure from other buyers and may be able to secure your new home for less than you had originally thought.

“The improvement in the number of homes for sale in Edinburgh and the Lothians is certainly good news when thinking about the long-term health of the market as it will help to ensure that house price inflation does not persist at levels that are unsustainable levels in the long term.

“At this stage we still expect house prices to rise by between 1 and 2% annually in the local market over the course of 2019.”

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