

## The Rightmove Consumer Confidence Survey

The UK's leading survey of consumers from the UK's leading property website

# Full research document

Released – February 9<sup>th</sup> 2010

## UK property consumers show confidence in the year ahead

- Over 60% of people believe that now is a good time buy
- Just 5% believe it is a good time to sell, but more than half expect things to improve over the next year
- Huge swing in price expectations from last year with 53% believing prices will increase over the next 12 months compared with just 10% in Q1 2009
- Rightmove Consumer Confidence Survey receives over 30,000 responses for the third consecutive quarter to establish itself amongst the largest consumer surveys in the UK

### About this survey

The first Rightmove Consumer Confidence Survey for Q1 2010 provides a valuable insight into the public's confidence in the UK property market and expectations for the year ahead. With Britain recently coming out of recession and a General Election on the horizon, the opinions recorded in this Q1 survey give us an early indication as to how the market looks likely to shape up in the uncertain months ahead.

The Q1 2010 Consumer Confidence Survey received 32,771 responses in total from across the UK. This document presents the statistical data for responses to the core questions of our survey in relation to buying and selling property, broken down by regional and year-on-year trends.

\* The Rightmove Consumer Confidence Survey reports the opinions of 32,771 consumers captured between Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> January and Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

## Buying property

### Do you think it is currently a good time to buy?

Year	Quarter	Good time	Neither good nor bad	Bad time	Don't know
2010	1	62.0%	25.5%	10.9%	1.6%
2009	4	68.1%	21.7%	8.7%	1.4%
	3	71.3%	18.7%	8.6%	1.4%
	2	71.0%	17.9%	9.8%	1.3%
	1	65.5%	17.9%	15.5%	1.1%

- Those feeling that it is currently a good time to buy greatly outnumber the rest, though the percentage has steadily fallen for the last 4 quarters
- Only 1 in 10 people feel it is a bad time to buy, down 5% year-on-year
- The Scots are the most confident about current market conditions with 67% believing it is a good time to buy

### Will it be a better time to buy in one year's time?

Year	Quarter	Better time than now	About the same as now	Worse time than now	Don't know
2010	1	26.0%	49.1%	20.3%	4.6%
2009	4	24.9%	49.3%	22.1%	3.7%
	3	23.8%	52.4%	20.1%	3.7%
	2	27.3%	51.1%	16.6%	5.0%
	1	38.4%	46.7%	10.4%	4.5%

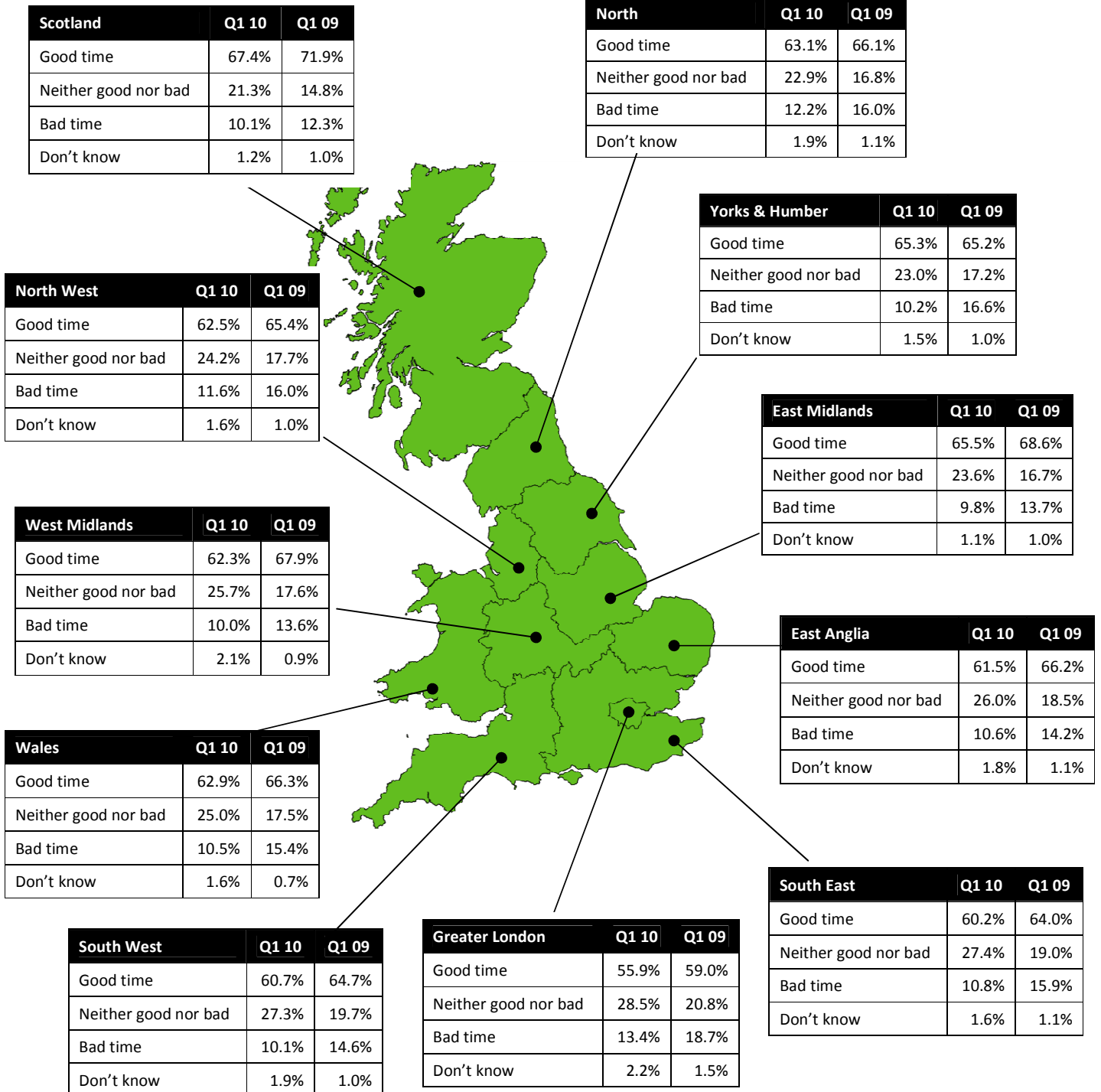
- Proportion of those believing it will be a better time to buy in 12 months has increased marginally over the last three quarters
- Those expecting a worse time to buy doubles year-on-year to 1 in 5, most likely a reflection of anticipated increases in UK property prices rather than poorer market conditions
- Those in London are least optimistic with 29% believing it will be a better time to buy in 12 months

#### Miles Shipside, Commercial Director of Rightmove:

"The fact that 63% believe now is a good time to buy remains very positive news for the UK property market, despite a slight decrease this quarter. Buyers also show some signs of increased caution of how to judge the year ahead, perhaps unsurprising in an election year and given ongoing uncertainty over Britain's recovery from the recession."

## Good time to buy – regional picture

### Do you think it is currently a good time to buy?



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## Do you think it is currently a good time to sell?

Year	Quarter	Neither good			
		Good time	nor bad	Bad time	Don't know
2010	1	5.6%	27.3%	65.2%	1.8%
2009	4	5.1%	25.9%	67.4%	1.6%
	3	2.9%	18.0%	78.0%	1.1%
	2	2.0%	14.6%	82.4%	1.0%
	1	1.5%	9.2%	88.7%	0.6%

- Bottleneck in supply with only 5% believing now is a good time to sell compared with 62% believing it is a good time buy
- Encouraging year-on-year fall of -23% in those stating it is a bad time to sell
- More people in London and the South East believe it is currently a good time to sell, both with 8.6%

## Will it be a better time to sell in one year's time?

Year	Quarter	Better time than			
		now	About the same as now	Worse time than now	Don't know
2010	1	50.4%	36.9%	7.9%	4.8%
2009	4	54.2%	34.9%	7.0%	3.9%
	3	52.5%	36.3%	7.4%	3.8%
	2	45.0%	38.0%	12.1%	4.9%
	1	33.7%	37.4%	24.0%	4.8%

- Over half of people still believe that it will be a better time to sell, a fall of 17% year-on-year
- Figures explain the current stock shortages in the UK market as sellers are holding off bringing their property to market
- 16% drop year-on-year in those predicting a worse year ahead for potential sellers, reflecting moderate improvements in market conditions

**Miles Shippside, Commercial Director of Rightmove:**

"An ongoing shortage of available stock has blighted the property market recently, and our Consumer Confidence Survey perfectly highlights the bottleneck in supply with 65% believing it to be a bad time to sell, yet 62% stating it is a good time to buy. There is hope for the year ahead however, with over half of respondents of the opinion that it will be a better time to sell over the next 12 months. One of the main issues behind the lack of property coming to market is the limitation of available mortgage finance which prevents sellers from moving up the chain. We will need to see a continued easing in available finance for confidence to fully return amongst those looking to sell."

## Good time to sell – regional picture

### Do you think it is currently a good time to sell?

Scotland	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	67.4%	1.3%
Neither good nor bad	21.3%	8.0%
Bad time	10.1%	90.0%
Don't know	1.2%	0.7%

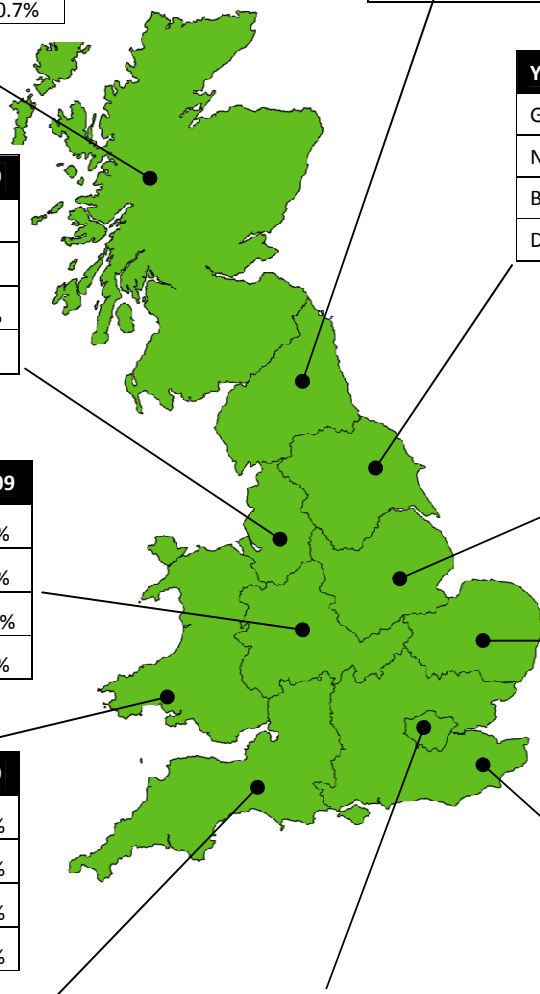
North	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	2.6%	1.7%
Neither good nor bad	21.1%	9.0%
Bad time	74.9%	88.7%
Don't know	1.4%	0.6%

Yorks & Humber	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	3.6%	1.5%
Neither good nor bad	23.3%	7.9%
Bad time	71.8%	90.0%
Don't know	1.4%	0.6%

East Midlands	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	4.7%	1.2%
Neither good nor bad	28.5%	9.4%
Bad time	65.3%	88.6%
Don't know	1.5%	0.8%

East Anglia	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	6.5%	1.4%
Neither good nor bad	30.0%	10.5%
Bad time	61.8%	87.4%
Don't know	1.7%	0.6%

South East	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	8.6%	1.8%
Neither good nor bad	32.4%	10.9%
Bad time	57.1%	86.8%
Don't know	1.9%	0.5%



North West	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	3.4%	1.0%
Neither good nor bad	24.2%	8.2%
Bad time	70.4%	90.1%
Don't know	2.0%	0.7%

West Midlands	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	4.7%	1.1%
Neither good nor bad	27.0%	8.9%
Bad time	66.4%	89.5%
Don't know	1.9%	0.4%

Wales	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	62.9%	2.2%
Neither good nor bad	25.0%	9.2%
Bad time	10.5%	88.1%
Don't know	1.6%	0.5%

South West	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	7.6%	1.3%
Neither good nor bad	32.9%	10.8%
Bad time	57.7%	87.2%
Don't know	1.8%	0.7%

Greater London	Q1 10	Q1 09
Good time	8.6%	1.9%
Neither good nor bad	29.3%	8.4%
Bad time	59.2%	89.0%
Don't know	3.0%	0.7%

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## House prices

### Where do you think house price will be one year from now?

Year	Quarter	Down more than 10%	Down less than 10%	About the same	Up less than 10%	Up more than 10%	Don't know
2010	1	4.3%	8.3%	30.0%	46.8%	6.7%	3.8%
2009	4	3.6%	7.4%	29.1%	48.9%	7.4%	3.7%
	3	5.7%	13.0%	33.6%	39.4%	4.5%	3.8%
	2	13.8%	21.2%	28.4%	28.3%	3.8%	4.6%
	1	36.5%	32.8%	17.7%	8.4%	1.4%	3.3%

- Huge sentiment swing from January 2009 with 53% now believing prices will increase in the next 12 months, from just 10% in Q1 2009
- Only 13% believe prices will fall over the next 12 months compared to 69% a year ago
- Slight dip in confidence regarding prices since Q4 2009

#### **Miles Shipside, Commercial Director of Rightmove:**

“Given the looming election and the talk of pending austerity packages ahead, this consumer survey highlights a surprisingly positive property price outlook. The property market is in a virtuous circle scenario, where consumers are seeing less property up for sale and fresh to the market property selling more quickly. That rightly gives them the impression that we are over the worst of the recent price falls, and that there is likely to be some upward pressure on prices.”

## About this survey

Rightmove began the quarterly Consumer Confidence Survey in early 2009, with the view to uncover the sentiment and attitudes towards a key British obsession – the housing market.

The Rightmove Consumer Confidence Survey provides a UK-wide picture of home-mover confidence by collecting opinions on a range of factors affecting the housing market and perceptions of it. With access to the single largest group of home-movers in the UK, Rightmove aims to supplement the myriad of market-led analysis, by providing a unique consumer viewpoint.

All responses were completed via an online questionnaire which was live on rightmove.co.uk between Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> January and Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010. A total of **32,771** responses were received during this time. As an incentive to completion, respondents were offered the opportunity to opt-in to a prize draw to win one of 25 prizes, each worth up to the value of £100 Marks & Spencer vouchers.

Data is weighted using Census data available from the Office for National Statistics to help ensure the results are representative of the UK and its regions.

## About the respondents to this survey

By region	Total respondents	% of response
North of England	1,189	3.6%
North West	3,516	10.7%
West Midlands	2,424	7.4%
South West	4,011	12.2%
Greater London	3,970	12.1%
South East	7,287	22.2%
East Anglia	2,576	7.9%
East Midlands	2,660	8.1%
Yorkshire & Humberside	2,455	7.5%
Scotland	1,551	4.7%
Northern Ireland	70	0.2%
Wales	1,062	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,771</b>	<b>100%</b>

NB Northern Ireland is excluded from regional tables as response below 100.

Age	Total respondents	% of response
Under 18	32	0.1%
Between 18 and 24	1,675	5.1%
Between 25 and 34	9,039	27.6%
Between 35 and 44	8,573	26.2%
Between 45 and 54	6,896	21.0%
Between 55 and 64	5,106	15.6%
65 or above	1,450	4.4%

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