

# AN INDUSTRY ALIGNED: MOVING TOWARDS CERTAINTY

*Trends Shaping the Property Market in 2026*



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# 1. INTRODUCTION AND CROSS-MARKET ANALYSIS

## 1.1 Executive Summary

The UK home-moving process is mis-sequenced. Too much critical work begins after emotional and financial commitments have already been made. This structural flaw is the common root of the industry's delays, rework, and fall-throughs.

In 2026, the market is aligned on what needs to happen: move legal preparation, risk identification, and data collection to the start – and make those assets verifiable, shareable and interoperable.

Across interviews and independent market research, one insight repeats: certainty is the currency every stakeholder values most. Consumers want predictability; agents want stable pipelines; conveyancers want fewer unnecessary enquiries and smoother case flow; lenders want transparency to reduce operational and balance-sheet risk.

The industry's readiness to act is visible in the rapid adoption of AI, growing enthusiasm for interoperable data, and a marked willingness among consumers to commit earlier when the benefit is explicit.



## 1.2 Why 2026 is a turning point

- When selecting their top three worries during the sale or purchase process, consumers still rank completing on time as their top concern (**29%**). Consequently, they are willing to pay agents and conveyancers upfront to accelerate data sharing and reduce late surprises.
- Estate agents are embracing AI to improve operational efficiency with **79%** having already implemented AI tools. Investing in AI solutions to automate tasks is now the number one business priority (**38%**) when ranking their top three priorities.
- Conveyancers have doubled AI adoption for fee earners to **78%** in the last 12 months, reporting meaningful improvements in risk management (**83%**) and profitability (**75%**).
- When identifying their top three frustrations, lenders now identify transaction length as their top operational hurdle (**40%**). Concurrently, confidence in AI's real impact on customer engagement has risen to **75%**, with **98%** now using property risk data (AVMs/VRM).

**The question for 2026 is no longer whether the process must change, but how quickly the industry can operationalise the principles that produce earlier certainty.**



### 1.3 Introduction: a market at an inflection point

Over more than a decade, the average timeline from instruction to completion drifted out, not in. In 2025, purchase transactions averaged 123 days from instruction to completion, up **18%** compared to 2019 and up **64%** since 2007. The elongation is not simply 'more steps'; it is a structural mis-order of steps, with insufficient early data and late discovery of issues creating rework, uncertainty and fall-throughs.

Across months of interviews with agents, conveyancers, lenders and our own subject matter experts, one message surfaced repeatedly and emphatically: the transaction process is failing because the order of work is wrong. Not inefficient. Not under-resourced. Not resistant to technology. Just fundamentally mis-sequenced.

What is striking about 2026 is not the presence of industry pain (that has been clear for years), but the alignment across every stakeholder on what must be fixed. Our research and interviews show a sector that is no longer debating whether reform is required, but how quickly practical changes can be implemented industry-wide.

When asked what the single biggest blocker is, our stakeholders didn't talk about legislation, technology costs, or resourcing; they talked about certainty.

This report sets out what is changing, what the data says, and how to move from fragmentation to flow. **The solution is not more status dashboards; it is earlier certainty. Start legal work, risk detection, identity, and data curation at listing, then let technology amplify that improved process.**

I hope the insights and data points in this report provide not only a useful barometer of the current state of play across the UK property market, but also inspire you to take some of these findings and catalyse your next steps in the collective effort to make property transactions faster and more certain for everyone.

***The time for change is now.***



*Simon Brown*

Simon Brown | CEO Landmark Information Group

## 2. THE CONSUMER LENS: RISING EXPECTATIONS, SHRINKING PATIENCE

### 2.1 What home movers worry about and why it matters

Home movers are clearer than ever about what they want from the process: transparency, predictability, and control. Their concerns are no longer evenly spread across dozens of anxieties. They cluster tightly around three priorities.

For the second year running, completing on time (**29%**) is tied as the top concern with affordability (**29%**), followed closely by fear of discovering an unexpected property problem post-move (**28%**)\*.

These anxieties are not 'soft factors'; they translate into behaviour: cautious offers, prolonged decision cycles, and pre-emptive fall-backs that stack delays, not remove them. In fact, these echo, almost word for word, the frustrations we heard from conveyancers, estate agents and lenders. **The consumer voice and the professional voice are aligned.**

# 29%

of home movers cite completing on time and affordability as part of their top three biggest worries during the transaction process.

Source: Landmark Home Movers Research



\* When asked to select their top three biggest worries during their last house sale/purchase process.

## 2.2 Expectations vs. reality: the timeline consumers want

Consumers' current ideal is now 6.78 weeks from Sold Subject to Contract (SSTC) to completion (down from 8.47 weeks in 2024). Their five-year ideal compresses to 5.04 weeks, with under-35s expecting 4.87 weeks.

Across all stages of the transaction, from onboarding to contracts, expectations trend shorter year-on-year, especially among younger cohorts accustomed to Amazon-norms of purchase speed and visibility.

There is an appetite for speed and predictability. However, many consumers prefer guaranteed certainty later over uncertain speed sooner – a powerful principle for process reform.



6.78 weeks

Consumers' ideal timeframe from Sold Subject to contract (SSTC) to completion.

Landmark Home Movers Research

The average transaction timeframe from instruction to completion in 2025.

17.6 weeks

Landmark Property Transaction Data



## 2.3 Communication is improving but still the single biggest fix

Consumers rated the property professionals they dealt with at **87%** extremely/quite well for communication (up from **75%** in 2024), yet the top improvements home movers still want are better cross-stakeholder communication (**47%**), better technology to communicate (**42%**), and clearer explanations of legal checks/searches (**36%**).

The system's 'visibility gap' remains. Even where milestone dashboards exist, consumers want plain-English, action-oriented clarity, not status labels. Ultimately, digitising the wrong steps simply embeds inefficiency.

47%

of consumers say better cross-stakeholder communication would have improved their home moving experience.\*



Source: Landmark Home Movers Research

\*When asked to select the three factors that would have made their experience better.

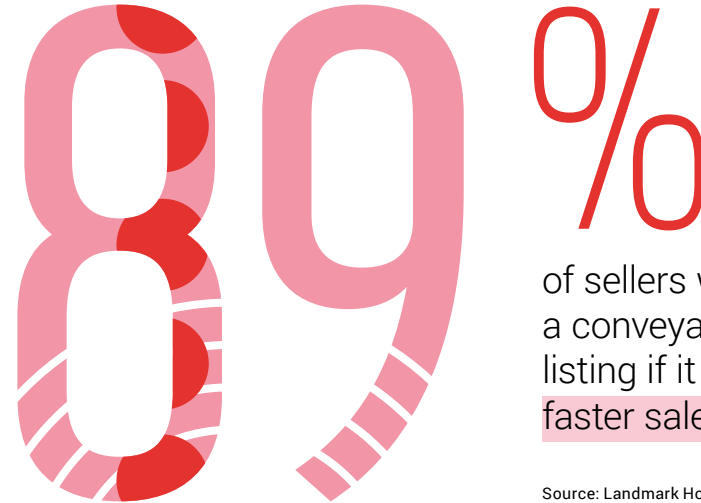
## 2.4 Willingness to pay for speed and certainty

Consumer hunger for certainty is now strong enough that home movers are actively supportive of early instruction and upfront fees when the benefit is explicit:

- **89%** of sellers would instruct a conveyancer before listing for a faster sale
- **75%** would pay their agent upfront for better data-sharing
- **71%** would pay their conveyancer upfront for the same benefit

What some professionals have long believed to be 'client reluctance' – illustrated by the **92%** of conveyancers who see predominantly client-related barriers to early instruction – is no longer supported by consumer data.

The appetite for earlier commitment in exchange for earlier certainty has become a defining consumer trend. There is pricing elasticity when the value proposition is framed as certainty + speed.

A large, stylized graphic of the number '89' followed by a percentage sign. The numbers are filled with a light pink color and have a red, patterned border. The percentage sign is a simple red outline.

of sellers would instruct a conveyancer before listing if it resulted in a faster sale.

Source: Landmark Home Movers Research

# 3. THE ESTATE AGENCY PERSPECTIVE: BEN ROBINSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR, LANDMARK ESTATE AGENCY SERVICES

## 3.1 Estate agents: under pressure, pushing for differentiation

Estate agents continue to operate under significant operational strain. Margins remain tight, pipelines remain volatile, and a disproportionate amount of time is still consumed by chasing updates or attempting to reconcile fragmented information across multiple parties.

Yet beneath these surface-level pressures lies a more fundamental issue: the transaction process begins too late, and in the wrong order.

Estate agents sit at a uniquely influential point in the transaction chain. They are the first professionals a seller encounters, and therefore the first to determine whether a transaction is structured around certainty or exposed to avoidable risk.

When onboarding focuses solely on marketing a property, without initiating legal preparation or collecting critical information, the entire chain enters the process with an information deficit that becomes increasingly costly to correct downstream, and uncertainty baked into the chain.

*“Agents onboard both the property and the seller, which is the first move in the entire chain. They’re in the perfect position to educate home movers about why early action matters.”*

Ben Robinson | Managing Director, Landmark Estate Agency Services

Where agents embed early instruction and collect upfront information at listing, we see a markedly different picture. Pipelines become more stable, fewer transactions fall through, and agents spend less time managing uncertainty.

In many cases, businesses that adopt this model experience significantly higher transactional certainty and stronger revenue performance – all while reducing the operational burden associated with late-stage legal queries and reactive communication.

Crucially, the long-standing assumption that sellers are reluctant to commit early is no longer supported by evidence. When consumers understand that upfront work brings speed, transparency and control, they respond positively.

Early preparation becomes a sign of professionalism rather than an unwelcome cost. For agents, this is increasingly becoming a competitive differentiator, positioning their services as more rigorous, proactive and aligned with the expectations of today's home movers.

52%

of agents reported a difficult financial year in 2025 despite strong turnover.

Source: [Landmark Estate Agency Market Research Report](#)



However, operational habit remains a barrier. The day-to-day demands of agency work create a focus on short-term tasks rather than strategic process improvement. This reactive posture sustains a cycle where agents are heavily involved in firefighting issues that could have been prevented with earlier information and clearer workflow sequencing.

Technology plays an important enabling role, but only when designed to support a better process; not to digitise a flawed one. Solutions must make it easier for agents to gather, verify and share upfront information at the point of listing.

Tools that integrate seamlessly with existing systems, automate administration, and reduce duplication can accelerate adoption of best practice. However, technology alone is not a cure; it must work in service of an improved process model.

*“Many agents worry early preparation will slow down the listing, which can feel counter-cultural when the instinct is to ‘get it on the market quickly’. But getting it ‘on right’ is far more valuable than getting it ‘on fast’.”* – Ben Robinson



There are strong signs that the sector is now ready for this shift. Agents increasingly recognise that their commercial performance is tied not only to how effectively they win instructions, but to how early they begin shaping the transaction.

As consumer expectations rise, regulatory interest intensifies, and cross-market alignment strengthens, the estate agency community is well positioned to lead the evolution towards a more certain, data-led and professionally structured home-moving process.

**Estate agents are not simply participants in this change; they are essential catalysts for it.**

*“There’s now a broad industry realisation that **reform isn’t optional anymore.** Projects like Project 28 demonstrate the sector coming together to drive meaningful change – change that benefits everyone by delivering more certainty, more speed and ultimately more revenue for less effort.”*

Ben Robinson



## 3.2 Key estate agency statistics

Estate agents are operating under intense pressure. However, the biggest gains now come from shifting key activities to the start of the transaction.

### Pressures & performance

- **52%** of agents had a difficult financial year despite strong turnover
- **72%** cite the economic climate as a major concern

### The top 3 factors agents say would improve productivity

- **40%:** Faster transactions
- **37%:** Greater certainty
- **33%:** Better visibility

### Shifting to early data & early instruction

- Firms that move legal and data readiness to the start have seen **20-30%** higher transactional certainty\*. This uplift translates into pipeline predictability, revenue stability, and happier clients

### AI & tech adoption

- **79%** of agents have now implemented AI tools
- **94%** believe the automation of admin tasks will be integral to operations within five years
- **38%** are investing in AI solutions to automate tasks
- Yet **40%** report a lack of PropTech investment in the last 12 months

### Consumer expectations

- **62%** of movers expect the initial admin with the agent to take less than 2 weeks
- **89%** of sellers would instruct a conveyancer before listing to speed up their sale
- **75%** would pay their agent upfront to enable faster data sharing

↓ **Scroll** on for the **conveyancing perspective**

↪ **Jump** to the **lender perspective**

↪ **Jump** to the latest **property transaction data**

→ **Read** our Estate Agency Market Research Report

\*Source: Redbrik's SecureMove™.

## 4. THE CONVEYANCING PERSPECTIVE: ROB GURNEY, MANAGING DIRECTOR, OCHRESOFT

### 4.1 Residential conveyancers: digital momentum meets cultural resistance

Conveyancers have undergone perhaps the most pronounced transformation since last year's interviews. The profession is moving through a period of digital acceleration, marked by a steep rise in AI adoption and stronger confidence in automation. Yet this progress coexists with entrenched cultural habits, creating a tension between new capabilities and old ways of working.

What emerges clearly from interviews is that conveyancers are acutely aware of the structural misalignment in the transaction process. Legal work begins too late, and issues surface only when a transaction is already emotionally and financially committed. This not only invites unnecessary risk, increases enquiry volume, and forces conveyancers into a reactive posture, but is further compounded by the constraints of PI insurance, which often limit pragmatic decision-making and heighten overall risk aversion.

*“An estate agent is best placed to persuade sellers to instruct a lawyer at the right stage. When they drive early instruction, everyone benefits: the agent, the consumer and the lawyer.”*

Rob Gurney | Managing Director, Ochresoft

Our conversations indicate that the most significant gains – for efficiency, customer experience, and risk management – come from moving legal activities to the beginning of the process, where they can create clarity rather than clean up uncertainty. Case studies from firms that have embraced this shift reveal meaningful reductions in enquiries, fewer stalled files, and smoother progression to exchange.

The challenge is no longer awareness but adoption at scale. Conveyancers consistently cite risk, legacy systems, and knowledge gaps as barriers to transformation. Many believe that consumers are unwilling to engage or pay earlier, even though consumer research shows the opposite. This misalignment between perception and reality remains a major obstacle to modernising the process.

Where conveyancers show the strongest momentum is in recognising that AI augments, rather than replaces, professional judgement. Tools that summarise deeds, triage work, or support risk identification free up experienced lawyers to focus on complex matters where their expertise is most valuable.

# 78%

of legal firms now use AI to assist fee earners – **double 2024's figure.**

Source: [Landmark Residential Conveyancers Market Research Report](#)



The profession is also growing increasingly comfortable with data-driven workflows, recognising that structured property information provided upfront materially reduces rework and fall-through. When legal work begins at listing, the entire transaction chain benefits: fewer unnecessary enquiries, fewer surprises, and fewer delays.

The conveyancing sector is therefore at a pivotal moment. The tools exist, the consumer appetite exists, and the cross-market alignment exists. Our interviews point to the need for a cultural shift: a shared willingness to normalise early legal readiness as the foundation of a modern, predictable, and consumer-centred conveyancing service.

*“Speeding up the transaction is the Holy Grail. If transactions were faster, consumers would be happier, lawyers could handle more cases, and everyone would make more money. It’s the root cause of most of the industry’s problems and the solution to all of them.”*

Rob Gurney



## 4.2 Key conveyancing statistics

Digital momentum is real. The biggest gains come when legal work starts at listing and AI and automation amplifies a better process.

### The current reality

- When selecting their top three frustrations, conveyancers say their main bugbear is slow transaction times (**42%**)
- Chasing takes up a large slice of the day (**41%**)
- The factor that would have the biggest impact on productivity and business success is faster transactions (**39%**)

### Digital traction with tangible ROI

- **78%** of legal firms now use AI to assist fee earners (double 2024)
- **86%** report improved customer experience; **83%** improved risk management; **75%** improved profitability
- **38%** see AI as most useful for preparing reports from deeds

### Early instruction resolves the paradox

- **92%** of conveyancers see barriers to early instruction. Foremost is the perception that clients would be reluctant to commit or pay pre-offer

- In fact, consumers are willing to commit earlier: **89%** would instruct before listing if it speeds up the sale
- Furthermore, **71%** would pay their conveyancer upfront to enable faster data sharing

### What to prioritise in 2026

- **60%** of firms have increased IT budgets for the next 12 months
- **46%** are investing in AI solutions to optimise workflows
- Barriers to digital transformation persist:
  - Risk (**73%**)
  - Tech issues (**71%**)
  - Culture (**68%**)

↓ **Scroll** on for the **lender perspective**

↪ **Jump** to the **estate agency perspective**

↪ **Jump** to the **latest property transaction data**

→ **Read** our Residential Conveyancers Market Research Report

## 5. THE LENDER PERSPECTIVE: MIKE HOLDEN, DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR OF GROWTH, LANDMARK

### 5.1 Lenders: from regulatory anxiety to differentiation & AI optimism

Lenders enter 2026 with a markedly different mindset from the years dominated by regulatory pressure and economic turbulence. While the macroeconomic backdrop remains challenging, the prevailing sentiment from our interviews is one of pragmatic optimism and a shift in focus toward structural improvements that can materially improve performance.

The most significant change is a recognition that the length of the transaction – not regulation – is now the dominant operational risk. Protracted timescales create downstream issues that lenders can no longer justify absorbing: unpredictable cashflow, offer expiry, valuation delays, and higher fall-through rates. These operational frictions cascade into the customer journey, affecting service, cost, and competitive differentiation.

*“Speed is best thought of as a North Star. If we get speed right, so many other risks and uncertainties disappear. But really, certainty is the thing people value most. You could tell a home mover, ‘I guarantee you’ll move in May’ and they’d take that over a chance of moving sooner, but a 30% chance they won’t move at all. Certainty beats theoretical speed every time.”*

Mike Holden | Divisional Director of Growth, Landmark

Lenders are increasingly clear that certainty matters more than marginal gains in speed. Faster processing is only valuable insofar as it enables predictable outcomes. This has driven growing interest in high-quality risk data, early property insights, and structured collaboration with upstream stakeholders. The goal is no longer to expedite individual tasks but to ensure every input into the mortgage decision is accurate, reliable and available much earlier in the chain.

AI adoption has accelerated significantly, not as an experiment but as a strategic tool for optimising workflows, reducing human error, and improving decision-quality. Yet lenders consistently emphasise that technology alone cannot repair a fragmented transaction ecosystem. The core opportunity lies in better-integrated data flows: securely shared, consistently structured, and accessible to all authorised parties throughout the chain.

75%

of lenders expect AI to **enhance customer engagement** and experience in the next 5 years.

Source: [Landmark Lenders Market Research Report](#)



Lenders increasingly advocate for standardised digital identity verification, interoperable data repositories, and the early release of property and legal information. They see these not as industry 'nice-to-haves' but as essential preconditions for modern lending. By improving visibility and reducing late-stage surprises, these measures reduce operational drag and risk – a win for the lender, the conveyancer, and ultimately the customer.

Across our interviews, an emerging truth is evident: lenders are no longer positioned at the end of the process reacting to delays; they are becoming active drivers of early certainty. Their appetite for reform, combined with their infrastructure, capital and role in risk governance, makes them a powerful force in shaping a more predictable, data-led, digitally enabled transaction model for 2026 and beyond.

*“A 28-day exchange is entirely feasible. With the right process, collaboration and possibly a legislative push where needed, we can get there. If everyone shifted overnight, the market would be instantly more efficient.”*

Mike Holden



## 5.2 Key lender statistics

Lenders are shifting from end-point verification to early-stage certainty; using data, AI and interoperable flows to de-risk timelines.

### What's driving the shift?

- The number one frustration for lenders, when selecting their top 3, is transaction length (**40%**) – replacing regulation
- Differentiation and cybersecurity are top concerns (both at **85%**); cashflow concern has risen to **78%**
- Lenders still spend a considerable chunk of their day chasing or being chased by stakeholders for updates (**45%**)

### Data-led decisioning

- **98%** use property risk data (AVMs/VRM) to a great/some extent
- **98%** believe a secure, interoperable repository would improve efficiency
- **63%** cite legacy technology or limited IT capacity as the main barriers to making digital data accessible to all parties

### AI confidence crosses the chasm

- **75%** expect AI to enhance customer engagement in the next 5 years (up from **46%**)
- **68%** expect AI to improve decision-making; only **3%** foresee minimal impact (down from **43%**)

### What will move the needle in 2026

Top three productivity levers:

- AI automation (**45%**)
- Digitised workflows (**43%**)
- Better technology (**35%**)

- ↓ **Scroll** on for the **Scottish perspective**
- ↪ **Jump** to the **estate agency perspective**
- ↪ **Jump** to the **conveyancing perspective**
- ↪ **Jump** to the **latest property transaction data**
- **Read** our Lenders Market Research Report

## 6. SCOTLAND OFFERS A WORKING PROOF OF EARLY CERTAINTY: RICHARD HEPBURN, DIRECTOR OF SCOTLAND, LANDMARK.

Scotland continues to provide a compelling evidence base for what happens when early information and legal preparation are embedded as standard practice. The Scottish system demonstrates, in practical terms, the benefits of front-loading data and ensuring legal certainty at the point a property is brought to market.

Home Reports, which require sellers to commission surveys and provide comprehensive information upfront, create a foundation of transparency that significantly reduces the noise and ambiguity common in the English and Welsh systems. Buyers enter the process better informed, speculative viewings are reduced, and agents and conveyancers are equipped to progress transactions more efficiently.

*“In Scotland, upfront information – paid for by the seller – creates commitment. It stops speculative listings and makes the whole process more serious from the outset. Buyers, sellers and professionals all experience far less stress because everything is transparent earlier.”*

Richard Hepburn | Director of Scotland, Landmark

Scotland represents a functioning model of the very principles that England and Wales are now seeking to adopt. Namely, early commitment, upfront disclosure, and structured, standardised information.

The impact is clear in practice: fewer late surprises, more accurate pricing, and smoother negotiation and offer processes. Crucially, sellers and buyers operate within a framework where expectations are aligned from the outset.

However, Scotland is not immune to challenges. Digital data sharing remains underdeveloped, and interoperability between systems is limited compared to the best-in-class innovations seen elsewhere.

Yet, while the technological infrastructure has room to evolve, the process architecture is fundamentally sound. The Home Report brings transparency early in Scotland, avoiding many queries later in the transaction and any digital enhancements introduced will only amplify that stability.



All of this makes Scotland an important reference point. It demonstrates that early certainty is not hypothetical – it is achievable at scale. It also reinforces the principle that the earliest touchpoints in the transaction have the greatest influence on its speed, cost, and reliability.

While digital interoperability can be expanded, Scotland’s process architecture is robust and directly validates the key principles for reform. Work is now underway to develop a dedicated Project 28 Charter tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the Scottish market, ensuring a tailored approach that reflects the country’s distinctive property landscape.

*“Solicitors are involved from the start in Scotland, and this early involvement has proven to work. Rigour in making and accepting offers avoids gazumping, bringing less frustration for buyers and professionals involved in the transaction.”*

– Richard Hepburn



# 7. CROSS-MARKET THEMES AND CONVERGENCE

## **Time as the universal villain**

Agents, conveyancers and lenders all rank transaction time as their #1 operational frustration. Consumers place 'completing on time' as a top worry year after year. The root cause is information gathered too late and mis-ordered steps – not a lack of dashboards.

## **AI everywhere but value depends on process first**

AI success correlates with process clarity and data readiness. Digitisation without re-engineering merely embeds problems. This underlines the importance of fixing the order, then automating.

## **Certainty is the currency**

The most powerful insight from our cross-market research is not that stakeholders face similar problems (we have known that for years), but that they now recognise a shared solution:

- Start legal work earlier
- Surface and share data earlier
- Identify risks earlier
- Establish timelines earlier
- Remove duplication earlier
- Build trust earlier

When the front of the process becomes stronger, the back of the process becomes quieter and smoother. AI, automation, risk data, customer portals; all of these are accelerators. However, our interviewees were consistent: technology amplifies good process, it does not replace it.

The real shift in 2026 is the emergence of a cross-market consensus that the process is correctable, and the ingredients for doing so already exist. Consumers will trade faster 'maybe' for slower 'definitely'. Consequently, lenders, agents and conveyancers all stand to gain when exchange certainty arrives earlier.

## 8. TRANSACTION MILESTONE DATA: THE CASE FOR CHANGE

### 8.1 Purchase timescales lengthen

Our latest milestone data shows a renewed lengthening of purchase transaction timelines, with both instruction to completion and instruction to exchange extending by three days to 123 days and 112 days respectively. This shift returns the market to the elevated levels last seen in 2023 and reinforces a wider structural challenge affecting the pace and reliability of home-moving in England and Wales.

Despite transaction volumes remaining well below the post-COVID peak, capacity pressures across the industry are intensifying. The system is now struggling to process even moderate levels of activity, calling into question its ability to support any future uplift in market demand. The impact is being felt throughout the chain: more fall-throughs, increased client stress, and rising levels of unrewarded work for agents and conveyancers.



123 days

the average time from instruction to completion for purchases in 2025.

Source: Landmark Property Transactions Data

## 8.2 Stable timelines, stalled progress

One metric, however, has remained stable: the time from instruction to mortgage offer (58 days in 2025). Over the last three years it has held consistently around the same mark. This stability provides important clarity – lending is not the cause of the systemic delays that continue to shape the market. Instead, the root challenge lies in the limited quality and timing of property information available at the start of the journey.

Elsewhere in the journey, progress has stalled. The time taken to manage legal enquiries has plateaued at more than double the levels recorded in 2007 (52 days vs 26 days). With this figure unchanged from 2024, the process has now stabilised at a point that reflects the limitations of current workflows. With fewer conveyancers in the market and an ever-expanding scope of mandatory checks, this stage of the transaction remains highly vulnerable to capacity pressure.



52 days

the average time from enquiries raised to enquiries received in 2025 – **double the time it took in 2007.**

Source: Landmark Property Transactions Data

### 8.3 External shocks and process breakthroughs

One underlying factor may be the sharp acceleration of transactions ahead of the Stamp Duty Land Tax deadline. This influx brought forward thousands of completions, leaving the post-deadline pipeline unusually immature. With fewer cases reaching the final stages for several months, the broader annual averages were pulled upward – demonstrating once again how sensitive the system remains to short-term external shocks.

Yet, within this challenge, there are areas of demonstrable improvement. Search turnaround times have reached their fastest level on record, entering single-digit averages (8 days from search requested to search received) for the first time since our records began. This milestone confirms that modernised search provision – both through more responsive local authorities and digitised personal search operations – is not a systemic barrier.



8 days

The average time from search requested to search received in 2025 – the first time it has reached single digits.

Source: Landmark Property Transactions Data

## 8.4 Sales timelines hide deeper issues

On the sales side, timelines have shortened for the first time since 2016 (157 days from instruction to completion and 148 days from instruction to exchange). While positive at first glance, this improvement appears to coincide with slower purchase progression, suggesting that vendor-side legal work is not being commissioned early enough. Reduced preparation on the seller's side leads directly to greater friction once a buyer is found.

The closing gap between sale and purchase timelines therefore signals not improved efficiency necessarily, but reduced upfront quality – limiting the speed and certainty expected further down the chain. It could also indicate fewer fall-throughs with sales journeys inevitably taking longer than purchases, as every aborted attempt restarts the full timeline for the seller.

These micro-fluctuations do little to alter the broader picture: the end-to-end process remains too slow, too inconsistent and too exposed to avoidable failure.



157 days

the average time from instruction to completion for sales in 2025.

Source: Landmark Property Transactions Data

# 9. CONCLUSION: 2026 FROM FRAGMENTATION TO FLOW

Across all stakeholder groups, our extensive research reveals a market that has moved beyond fragmentation. Estate agents, lenders and conveyancers now express the same priorities and identify the same structural solution.

**The core insight is simple but powerful:** when key information, legal preparation and data sharing move to the start of the process, the entire chain becomes faster, more predictable and more resilient.

This is the essence of the **Project 28 Charter\***. It is not an abstract ambition but a practical, widely supported blueprint; a practical path from fragmentation to flow, from status updates to stable outcomes, and from sale agreed to instruction within 28 days, where feasible, rather than the current 112 days. For the first time, the sector appears politically, commercially and culturally ready to implement it.

**As such, 2026 presents a unique opportunity.** The market is aligned. The evidence is conclusive. The appetite for reform is real. Now is the time to execute; to move past talking shops into standardised early data, legal work at listing, interoperable repositories, and AI-boosted workflows that reduce human chasing to true exceptions.

*This is our opportunity to build the backbone, shift the culture, and deliver certainty so home movers can experience a process that feels efficient, transparent and within their control.*



\*The industry-led Charter for faster, more certain property transactions.

# 10. APPENDIX

## 10.1 Methodology & sources

This report draws on four Landmark market research assets:

- **Estate Agents:** We interviewed 100 senior level employees in estate agents in England, Scotland and Wales to inform our [Estate Agency Market Research Report 2025](#), Estate agency under pressure: risk, challenges and opportunity (November 2025).
- **Residential Conveyancers:** We interviewed 100 residential property solicitors and conveyancers in England, Scotland and Wales to produce our [Residential Conveyancers Market Research Report](#), Paving the way for smarter residential conveyancing in 2026 (December 2025).
- **Lenders:** We interviewed 40 senior level operations professionals in residential property lending in Great Britain to develop our [Residential Mortgage Lenders Market Research](#), Challenges and opportunities for 2026 (January 2026).
- **Home Movers:** We interviewed 500 people who have sold and/or bought a property in the UK in the last 18 months for our Home Movers Market Research (published within this report, January 2026).

*We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our interviewees for sharing their time and insights.*

## 10.2 Landmark contributors



### **Ben Robinson**

**Managing Director | Landmark Estate Agency Services**

Since joining Landmark in 2016, following the acquisition of ETSOS where he managed the estate agency arm of the business, Ben has integrated Landmark's estate agency portfolio of services to develop a value-added proposition for estate agents. The division includes the Landmark Agent, Metropix and Compliance in a Box brands.



### **Rob Gurney**

**Managing Director | Ochresoft**

Rob was appointed managing director in March 2020 and is responsible for delivering Ochresoft's business strategy. Rob is a qualified property lawyer and was previously head of legal at Premier Property Lawyers. His track record is in streamlining legal processes and using data to provide high quality and consistent services.



### **Mike Holden**

**Divisional Director of Growth | Landmark**

Mike joined Landmark Information Group in 2012 as head of client relationships at Landmark Valuation Services, before becoming Managing Director in 2019. In March 2023, he moved to become Divisional Director at Landmark Information Group, with oversight for businesses such as Landmark Valuation Services and Optimus.



### **Richard Hepburn**

**Managing Director of Scotland | Landmark**

One of Richard's core roles is to leverage Landmark Information Group assets and best practice, supporting Millar and Bryce as it drives forward a digital agenda to add value to customers in Scotland. Richard's career has been in business development and general management roles of increasing seniority within B2B service businesses.

*Many thanks to all our subject matter experts for their contributions to this report.*

# 11. DATA APPENDIX

## 11.1 Cross-market commonalities across stakeholders

Q. Thinking about the transactional process, what is your biggest frustration in your role?

*Respondents selected a top 3, shown in order*

ESTATE AGENTS	CONVEYANCERS	LENDERS
36% Market challenges	42% Transaction timescales	40% Transaction timescales
32% Transaction timescales	35% Volume of workload	38% Market challenges
26% Regulations & admin	28% Market challenges	28% Chasing & being chased

Q. What would make the biggest positive impact to your productivity and business success?

*Respondents selected a top 3, shown in order*

ESTATE AGENTS	CONVEYANCERS	LENDERS
40% Faster transactions	39% Faster transactions	45% Effective use of AI tools
37% Greater certainty of a transaction	34% Effective use of AI tools	43% Digitising workflows
33% Greater visibility of progress	33% Better workload prioritisation	35% Improved technology

Q. Which areas of your business are you prioritising the most to improve efficiency / reduce costs?

*Respondents selected a top 3, shown in order*

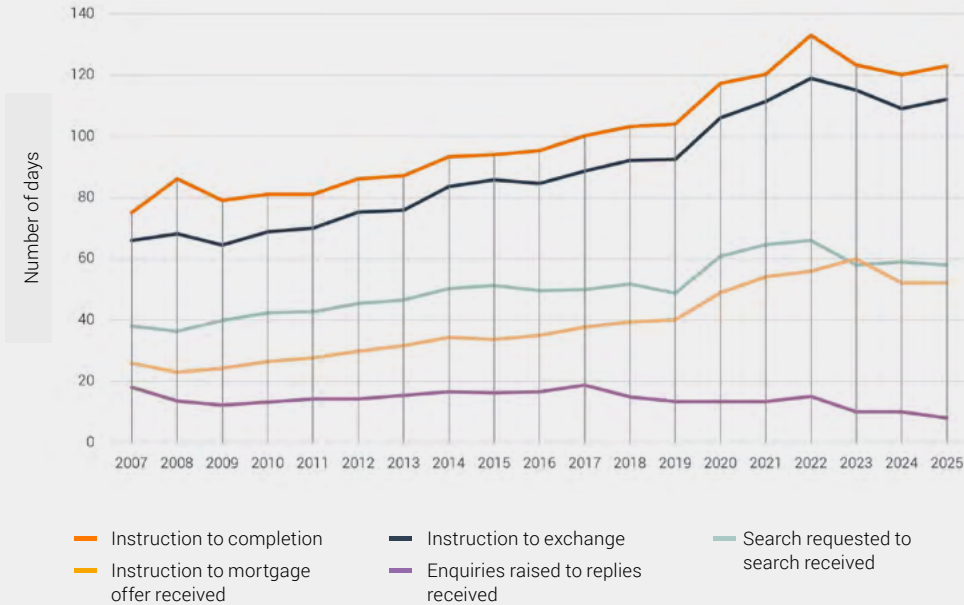
ESTATE AGENTS	CONVEYANCERS	LENDERS
38% Investing in AI solutions	46% Investing in AI solutions	48% Investing in AI solutions
34% Workload assigned more effectively	39% Digitising more processes	43% Better training programmes
28% Digitising more processes	36% Workload assigned more effectively	38% Digitising more processes

Q. What do you think needs to be improved in order to attract and retain more talent in the sector?

*Respondents selected a top 3, shown in order*

ESTATE AGENTS	CONVEYANCERS	LENDERS
37% Better technology to reduce workloads	47% More flexibility to adapt	43% Better technology to reduce workloads
37% More flexibility to adapt	32% More opportunities for progression	40% Stronger brand / sector perception
37% More opportunities for progression	31% Less admin	33% Better enviro action / awareness

## 11.2 England and Wales property transaction data, 2007-2025: Purchases



### Key data points

#### Instruction to completion

- The average time from instruction to completion in 2007 was **75 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2019 was **104 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2024 was **120 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2025 was **123 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents an increase of **2.5%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **18%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **64%**

## Instruction to exchange

- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2007 was **66 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2019 was **92 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2024 was **109 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2025 was **112 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents an increase of **3%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **22%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **70%**

## Search requested to search received

- The average time from search requested to search received in 2007 was **18 days**
- The average time from search requested to search received in 2019 was **13 days**
- The average time from search requested to search received in 2024 was **10 days**
- The average time from search requested to search received in 2025 was **8 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents a decrease of **20%**
- The turnaround for searches ordered is **56%** faster than in 2007, likely due to process efficiencies in the searches market

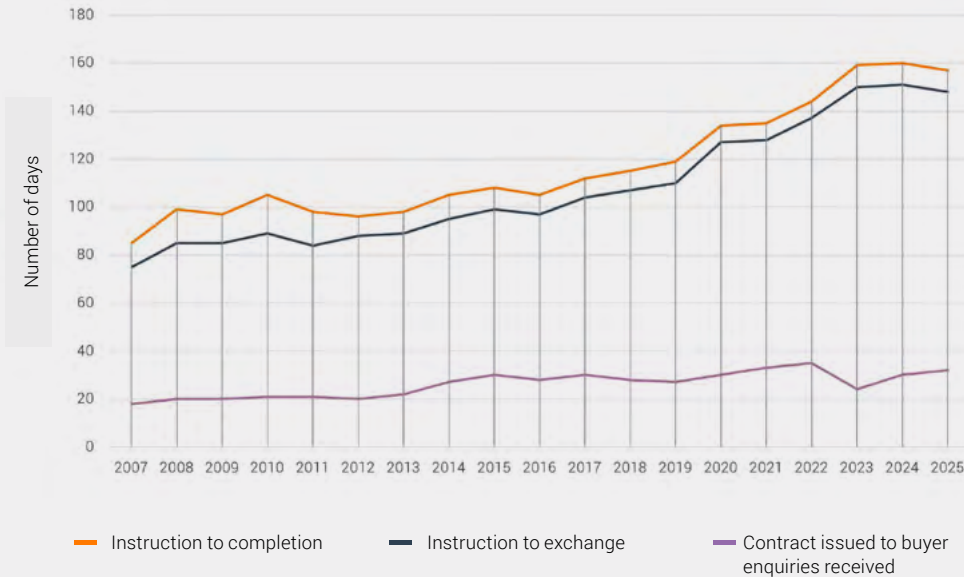
### Instruction to mortgage offer received

- The average time from instruction to mortgage offer received in 2007 was **38 days**
- The average time from instruction to mortgage offer received in 2019 was **48 days**
- The average time from instruction to mortgage offer received in 2024 was **59 days**
- The average time from instruction to mortgage offer received in 2025 was **58 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents a decrease of **1.7%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **21%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **53%**

### Enquiries raised to replies received

- The average time from enquiries raised to enquiries received in 2007 was **26 days**
- The average time from enquiries raised to enquiries received in 2019 was **40 days**
- The average time from enquiries raised to enquiries received in 2024 was **52 days**
- The average time from enquiries raised to enquiries received in 2025 was **52 days**
- There was no change between 2024 and 2025
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **30%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **100%**

## 11.3 England and Wales property transaction data, 2007-2025: Sales



### Key data points

#### Instruction to completion

- The average time from instruction to completion in 2007 was **85 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2019 was **119 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2024 was **160 days**
- The average time from instruction to completion in 2025 was **157 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents a decrease of **1.9%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **32%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **85%**

## Instruction to exchange

- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2007 was **75 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2019 was **110 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2024 was **151 days**
- The average time from instruction to exchange in 2025 was **148 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents a decrease of **2%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **35%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **97%**

## Contract issued to buyer enquiries received

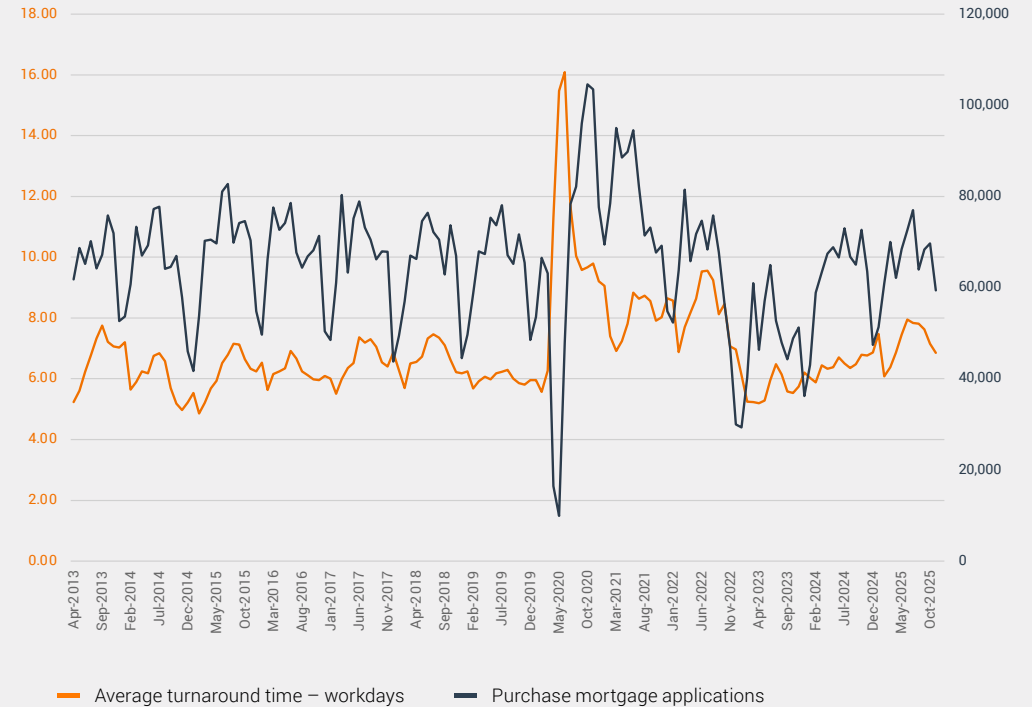
- The average time from contract issued to buyer enquiries received in 2007 was **18 days**
- The average time from contract issued to buyer enquiries received in 2019 was **27 days**
- The average time from contract issued to buyer enquiries received in 2024 was **30 days**
- The average time from contract issued to buyer enquiries received in 2025 was **32 days**
- Comparing 2024 to 2025, this represents an increase of **7%**
- Comparing 2019 to 2025, this represents an increase of **19%**
- Comparing 2007 to 2025, this represents an increase of **78%**

## 11.4 England and Wales property transaction data, 2014-2025: Valuation turnaround times

### Key data points

#### Mortgage activity and turnaround times rise in 2025

The chart shows approvals for purchase mortgages by month between 2014 and December 2025. We saw an increase in the volume of mortgage activity in the first 11 months of 2025, amounting to a **10%** increase on the same period in 2024. This also resulted in a slight increase in turnaround times, equating to a **13%** increase on average across the year. Added to this, within the year there were peaks of valuation activity which would have short-term impact on turnaround times. For example, the lead up to the stamp duty window closing at the end of March 2025. Plus, in the summer we witnessed a surge in remortgage activity, which saw valuation volumes up over **15%** year-on-year.



# 12. FURTHER READING

Stay informed with the most up-to-date insight shaping the UK property market. Our latest market research reports provide up-to-the-minute insights from industry peers across the value chain.

## Estate Agency Market Research Report 2025

Operational pressures, shifting consumer expectations and the commercial impact of early data readiness.

## Residential Conveyancers Market Research Report 2025

Digital momentum, AI adoption and the growing case for early legal preparation.

## Lenders Market Research Report 2026

Risk, certainty, AI investment trends and the operational realities facing UK mortgage lenders.



### Thank you for reading this report

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### About Landmark Information Group

As the UK's largest property and land data business, Landmark Information Group supports the entire value chain of the property industry. With unrivalled datasets, a comprehensive team of in-house experts, an extensive partner network, and advanced technology innovations and system capabilities, our mission is to make every property transaction feel effortless; making it both simpler and faster while reducing risks for all stakeholders.

With more than 30 years' experience, we power confident property and land decisions for architects, surveyors, estate agents, environmental consultants, mortgage lenders, real estate professionals, land developers, property lawyers and search providers across all these markets.

Landmark Information Group is a UK national business and is a subsidiary of Daily Mail and General Trust plc (DMGT).

### Further enquiries

Any enquiries regarding this report should be sent to:  
[propertytrends@landmark.co.uk](mailto:propertytrends@landmark.co.uk)

**Project 28: A Charter for faster, more certain property transactions is a bold commitment to drive lasting change in a property market that is slow and inefficient.**

Our mission is to bring certainty to how we buy and sell homes by setting a new industry target of 28 days from sale agreed to exchange.

The Charter is the result of unprecedented industry collaboration, discussion and debate – with practitioners from all sides of the industry joining forces to reduce transaction times.

**Join the property industry leaders committed to a better way forward**

