

29th June 2020

DATA: HMRC report residential transactions increased in May but were still 50% below last year's level

The latest month's data is based on partial returns and so, given the market reopened nearly two weeks into the month, we may see substantial revisions in next month's release.

DATA: Bank of England reports just 9,273 mortgage approvals for house purchase in May

Mortgage approvals for house purchase were 86% below the level seen in May 2019. This suggests most of the transactions during May were either using mortgages approved prior to the lockdown or were cash only transactions.

DATA: Zoopla report UK house prices rose 2.4% in May and their UK city index rose 2.1%

House prices are rising slightly slower than in March but still much faster than seen in 2019. Zoopla also report sales agreed have rebounded above pre-lockdown levels.

POLICY: MHCLG announces "new plans to get Britain building"

These include extending planning permission deadlines to 1st April 2021 for sites with expiry dates falling from the start of lockdown to the end of the year. It also includes allowing flexible working hours and changes to speed up the planning appeal process.

NEWS: IFS report on living standards suggests "COVID-19 crisis hit at a time when income growth had already been extremely disappointing for some years"

Their report suggests "Median household income was essentially the same in 2018–19 as in 2015–16" while the "Trends among low-income households had been worse still – they had experienced five years of real income stagnation between 2013–14 and 2018–19".

NEWS: HM Land Registry set to share their INSPIRE spatial polygon data

HM Land Registry and Registers of Scotland have announced their spatial data set will be available from the 1st of July. However, the usefulness of the data will be constrained without lookups between INSPIRE polygons, title numbers, and UPRNs (Unique Property Reference Number).

NEWS: Geoff Meen and Christine Whitehead blog on why there are no simple solutions to complex problems

Ahead of their new book "Understanding Affordability", they suggest that "both the demand and supply sides of housing markets have to be addressed together, compared with the concentration on supply in recent years".

Chart of the Week

There's been a lot of commentary and speculation suggesting more people are looking to move out of London since the lockdown. This is nothing new as data from the ONS last week reinforces: London has seen a net domestic migration outflow (comparing the number of people arriving from the rest of the UK to those leaving) every year since 1975, and probably since 1946. This is likely to continue though possibly in greater numbers. London's continued growth will rely on international migration and natural change.

London Domestic Net Migration Trend

Source: ONS

