

Q1 2026

Market Report

A review of auction performance, bidder activity
and market momentum across January to March 2026.



Executive Summary

First for Auctions has made a strong start to 2026, with Q1 delivering robust sale volumes, healthy bidder engagement and more than £20 million raised across the first three monthly auctions. The quarter reflects both the wider strength of the UK auction market and the increasing appeal of auction as a strategic route to market for agents and sellers.



Q1 by the numbers

93

Lots sold

£20.1m

Capital value raised

78%

Success rate

15.75%

Average Uplift

1,434

Registered bidders

2,703

Bids placed

- January opened the year strongly, raising £7.5 million across 37 sold lots.
- February and March each delivered a 78% success rate, supported by intense competitive bidding.
- Several lots sold more than 25% above guide, with standout examples reaching nearly 60% above guide.
- Partner agent referrals became an increasingly important feature of the quarter, particularly in March.
- National market data from Essential Information Group suggests 2026 has opened on the back of a record-breaking year for UK auctions.

Foreword



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The UK auction market entered 2026 with strong momentum. Industry data reported by Property Industry Eye, drawing on Essential Information Group analysis, showed that 2025 was a record-breaking year for the sector, with more than 41,000 lots brought to market, nearly 29,000 sold and total funds raised reaching £5.9 billion.

That wider backdrop mirrors what we have seen firsthand at First for Auctions. Buyers remain motivated, competition is strong and auction continues to prove itself as an effective route to market for a broad range of properties. In a market where sellers and agents increasingly value speed, transparency and certainty, auctions are no longer viewed as a last resort. They are a proactive, strategic choice.

Our performance in the first quarter of 2026 has reinforced that point. Across our January, February and March auctions, we have seen strong levels of bidder engagement, consistent success rates and excellent sale prices achieved through competitive bidding. We have also seen growing confidence from partner agents, who are increasingly using auction as a way to create momentum, unlock value and deliver strong results for their clients.

Monthly Performance Summary

| Auction | Lots Sold | Success Rate | Raised | Avg uplift | Notable Activity |
|----------|-----------|--------------|---------|------------|---|
| January | 37 | 79% | £7.5m | 16.1% | 635 registered bidders, 165 active bidders and 1,091 bids placed. |
| February | 25 | 78% | £6.251m | 15.5% | 366 registered bidders, 116 active bidders and 663 bids placed. |
| March | 31 | 78% | £6.334m | 15.64% | 433 registered bidders, 153 active bidders and 949 bids placed. |

Together, these figures show a business that has entered the year with scale, consistency and growing market confidence.

January 2026: a strong start

First for Auctions opened 2026 with an impressive January sale that immediately set a confident tone for the year ahead.

- ✓ **37 lots sold**
- ✓ **£7.5 million raised**
- ✓ **Multiple properties sold well above reserve**
- ✓ **635 registered bidders**
- ✓ **165 active bidders**
- ✓ **1,091 bids placed**
- ✓ **Competitive bidding and strong investor engagement across the catalogue**

Standout lots

Land at Hurst Farm, Jacobs Well, Surrey - sold for £343,000 from a guide of £210,000 after 76 bids from four active bidders - 63% above guide.

Flat 177 Sinclair House, Thanet Street, London - sold for £341,000 from a guide of £215,000 after 67 bids from four active bidders - 59% above guide.

February 2026: Momentum builds

The momentum from January carried straight into February, with another highly competitive sale demonstrating continued buyer confidence in the auction market.

- ✔ 25 lots sold
- ✔ 78% success rate
- ✔ £6,251,000 total raised
- ✔ 15.5% average above reserve
- ✔ 366 registered bidders, 116 active bidders and 663 bids placed

Standout lots

35 Crawley Drive, Hemel Hempstead - sold for £321,000 against a guide of £240,000 after 48 bids from five bidders - 34% above guide.

110 Basingstoke Road, Reading - sold for £397,000 from a guide of £320,000 after 57 bids - 24% above guide.

91 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner - attracted five bidders and 42 bids before selling for £350,000 from a guide of £300,000.



March 2026: collaboration drives results

March delivered another successful sale and showed how effectively partner agent referrals can combine with auction expertise to achieve strong outcomes.

- ✔ **31 lots sold**
- ✔ **78% success rate**
- ✔ **£6,333,500 raised**
- ✔ **15.64% average uplift on guide prices**
- ✔ **433 registered bidders, 153 active bidders and 949 bids placed**

Featured success stories from partner agents

[35 Orme Road, Kingston](#) - referred by Curchods Estate Agents, attracted 68 bids and sold for £702,000 from a guide of £440,000 - 59.5% above guide.

[44 Elmshott Lane, Slough](#) - introduced by Staples & King, received 64 bids and sold for £530,000 from a guide of £420,000 - 26.2% above guide.



Q1 Market Themes

Sustained buyer demand

Strong levels of registration, active bidding and total bids placed indicate that the right stock continues to attract serious competition from private buyers, investors and developers.

Competitive tension driving value

Average uplifts of more than 15% in Q1 demonstrate the power of transparent bidding to maximise prices and exceed seller expectations.

Auctions as a strategic route to market

The quarter supports the growing view that auction is not a fallback option but a proactive method for achieving speed, certainty and market exposure.

Growing partner agent collaboration

March in particular highlighted the strength of partner agent referrals, with notable sales in Kingston and Slough showing how collaboration can unlock exceptional results.

National market context

Essential Information Group data, reported by Property Industry Eye in January 2026, showed that the UK auction market ended 2025 on a strong footing and established a supportive backdrop for the year ahead.

| Measure | Q4 / Dec 2025 Result | Annual 2025 total | Direction of travel |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lots offered | Up 14.2% year on year in December | 41,628 | Record supply |
| Lots Sold | Up 15.1% year on year in December | 28,975 | Record sales volume |
| Total Raised | Up 24.3% year on year in December | £5.896bn | Strong value growth |
| Regional Leaders | London, South East, South West | - | Momentum concentrated in core markets |

For First for Auctions, this national momentum matters because it reinforces the current appetite for the auction model, particularly in regions where buyer activity and funds raised ended 2025 particularly strongly.

Looking ahead

With a positive first quarter now complete, First for Auctions is well placed to build on current momentum through the remainder of the year.

- ✓ Upcoming auction dates: 30 April 2026, 28 May 2026 and 30 June 2026.
- ✓ Key expectations for Q2 include continued buyer engagement, further partner agent collaboration and sustained competitive pricing for well-positioned stock.

Q1 suggests that auction will remain an increasingly relevant and effective route to market in 2026 for sellers seeking speed, certainty and value.

Partner with **First for Auctions**

Join a growing network of forward-thinking agents using auction as a strategic route to market.

Together, we can help you maximise value, deliver certainty, and achieve stronger results for your clients.

To discuss your next instruction or partnership opportunities, contact:

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