



JANUARY 2026

RESEARCH

Winter 2026 UK Residential Investor Sentiment Survey

COMMISSIONED BY THE IPF RESEARCH PROGRAMME

UK Residential Investor Sentiment Survey

This research was funded and commissioned through an extension to the IPF Research Programme 2022-2025.

This Programme supports the IPF's wider goals of enhancing the understanding and efficiency of property as an investment. The initiative provides the UK property investment market with the ability to deliver substantial, objective and high-quality analysis on a structured basis. It encourages the whole industry to engage with other financial markets, the wider business community and government on a range of complementary issues.

The Programme is funded by a cross-section of businesses, representing key market participants. The IPF gratefully acknowledges the support of these contributing organisations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Residential Investor Sentiment Survey covers two main segments of the UK residential market, build-to-rent (BtR) multifamily apartment blocks and build-to-rent single family housing. The Winter publication is based on data received from 20 organisations, whose views were generated between the end of October and mid-January.

Key points

Performance Expectations: rental value growth

- For new **BtR multifamily** lettings, views on achievable rental value growth are similar to the previous two surveys. Almost 60% of contributors predict growth of 3-5%. Of the remaining contributors, a little over a third forecast growth of 1-3% and 5% expect rents to stagnate (-1% to 1%). No contributor expects significant falls in rental value growth.
- For rent reviews and lease renewals, nearly 70% of respondents expect rental value growth to be of a similar level to those achieved on new lettings, compared to just under 50% in the last quarter. Underperformance is anticipated by approximately 20% of contributors, down from 35% in the previous survey.
- At a regional level, over 40% of respondents predict that London will underperform the other regions. The outlook for Southern continues to weaken; it was previously viewed most positively. In this quarter, Midlands/Wales attains the highest ranking, marginally ahead of Northern and Scotland. Approximately, a third of contributors anticipate that these three regions will outperform the national average.
- For **BtR single family**, nearly 50% of contributors anticipate rental growth on new lettings of 3-5% over the next year while 35% expect 1-3% growth; this compares to 55% and 40% respectively in the previous quarter. Of the remaining contributors, 12% anticipate rents of over 5%, while, for the first time in the survey's history, one contributor foresee stagnating rents (-1% to 1%).
- Just over 70% of respondents expect rental value growth achievable on rent reviews and lease renewals to be in line with the growth achieved on new lettings. A further 18% predict outperformance and 12% forecast underperformance compared to new lettings.
- Regionally, Southern is viewed most positively with 53% of contributors predicting outperformance compared to the national average; this is a weakening of views compared to the last quarter. As with BtR multifamily, London has the weakest outlook with 35% of respondents predicting underperformance. Views on the remaining three regions have strengthened, since the last quarter, with Scotland achieving a positive outlook for the first time since the survey was launched.

Performance Expectations: capital value growth

- There has been a shift in consensus regarding capital value growth expectations over the next 12 months for **BtR multifamily**, compared to the previous survey. Over 60% of respondents now expect 1-3% growth compared to 39% in the last quarter. Consequently, there has been a significant drop in the number of contributors supporting the view that capital values will stagnate (-1% to 1%) or grow by 3% to 5%. For the first time, one contributor forecasts notable capital value decline of between 3% and 5%.
- In this quarter, no region stands out in terms of strong out or underperformance. For the first time, Southern is not the most favoured region; only 22% predict it will outperform the national average compared to 41% in the last quarter. London is considered most positively with nearly 40% of respondents predicting outperform, although nearly 30% expect underperformance. Overall, Midlands/Wales is anticipated to be the weakest region while expectations for the Scottish market continue to improve with contributors predicting outperformance outnumbering those with negative views for the first time.
- Over half of all contributors expect **BtR single family** capital values to grow by 1-3% over the next 12 months, comparable with the previous survey. Just under a quarter forecast growth of 3-5%, while 12% anticipate a robust outlook with growth of over 5%. A further 12% anticipates a capital value decline of 1-3%.
- At a regional level, 53% of respondents predicts Southern to outperform the national average, while just 12% expects the region to underperform. As with BtR multifamily, for the first time the number of contributors expecting Scotland to outperform is greater than those predicting underperformance, while the overall view on London is neutral.

Occupancy

- There is little change in the occupancy outlook compared to the last quarter. The majority of contributors continue to anticipate that the current occupancy conditions of both existing BtR multifamily and single family assets will remain similar to those of the previous quarter.
- The most positive outlook is for Scotland BtR multifamily; approximately a quarter of contributors expect occupancy levels to improve.

Investment

- Over 50% of respondents expect their allocation to **BtR multifamily** in London to increase over the next 12 months, while 35% of contributors anticipate investing in the Southern region. Relatively minor selling of assets is expected in Midlands/Wales, Scotland and Northern, although this will be offset by new investment in all three regions. A small number of contributors do not have a mandate to invest in BtR multifamily, the most impacted region being Scotland.
- A more substantial proportion of contributors do not have a mandate to invest in **BtR single family**. Of those that have the ability to invest, the majority expect their exposure to remain unchanged over next 12 months, with the exception of Southern where 55% of contributors expect to augment their exposure. Minor disinvestment is expecting in Scotland over the coming year although this should be offset by further investment into the region.
- The current sought after investment locations for **BtR multifamily** are Bristol, Cambridge, Birmingham, London: Outer and Manchester, while Aberdeen and Belfast are the least desirable by some margin. Compared with the Winter 2025 survey, the greatest positive movers over the last year are Glasgow (up from 19th to 12th) and Edinburgh (up from 15th to 9th), while Cardiff has fallen to the greatest extent (down from 13th to 19th).
- For **BtR single family** investment, the most popular markets are the South East, South West and West Midlands. Wales and Scotland are the least attractive. There has been little change in these rankings over the last year.

Survey contributors: For the first sentiment survey of 2026, 20 organisations provided their views for some or most of the market indicators covered by this research. Opinions were provided ahead of the survey deadline of 14 January. Named contributors appear on the final page of this report.

Sector definitions: The following definitions have been used:

- **BTR multifamily:** a block of apartments purpose built for the rental market
- **BTR single family:** individual houses (detached/semi-detached/terraced) designed for single occupancy, purpose built for the rental market

Regional definitions: For simplicity, some results are presented for broad regions.

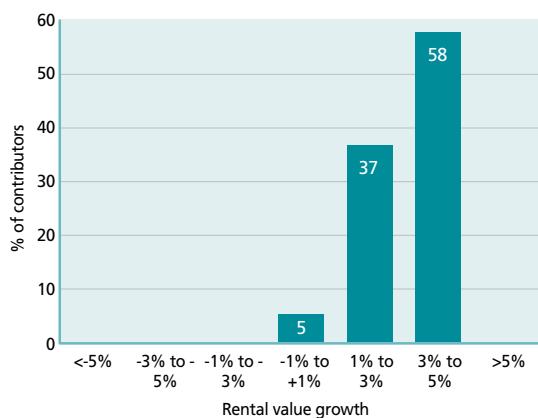
These are defined as follows:

- **Southern:** South East, East of England, South West
- **Midlands/Wales:** East Midlands, West Midlands, Wales
- **Northern:** North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, North East

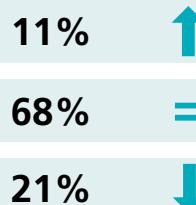
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS: RENTAL VALUE GROWTH

BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

Expected rental growth on new lettings in next 12 months



Expected rental growth on rent reviews/lease renewals compared to new lettings

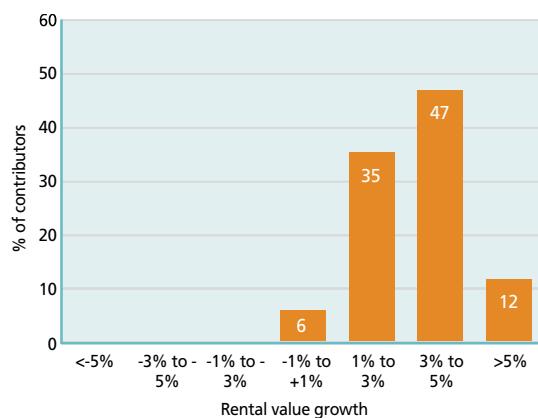


Rental growth expectations compared with national average



BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

Expected rental growth on new lettings in next 12 months



Expected rental growth on rent reviews/lease renewals compared to new lettings



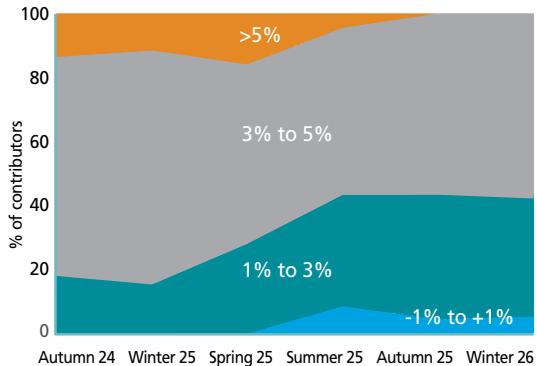
Rental growth expectations compared with national average



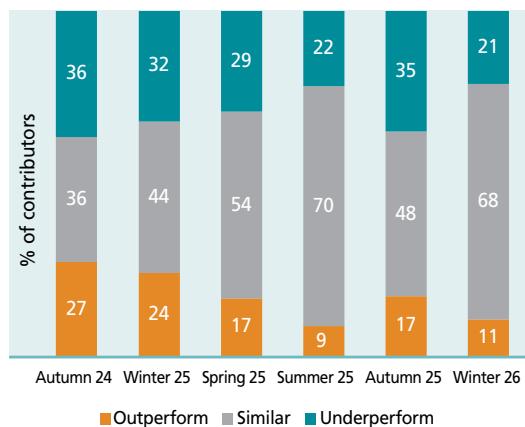
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS: EVOLUTION OF RENTAL VALUE GROWTH

BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

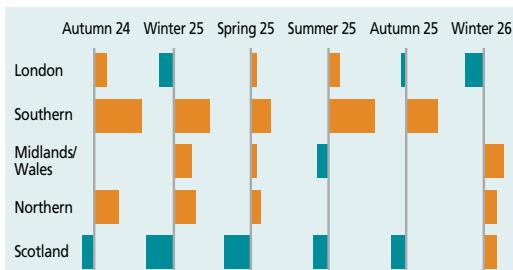
Evolution of expected rental growth on new lettings in next 12 months



Evolution of expected rental growth on rent reviews/lease renewals compared to new lettings

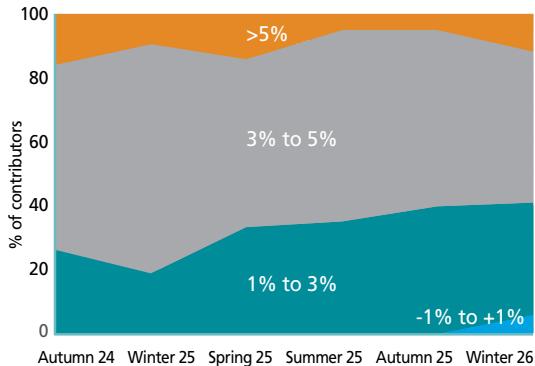


Composite rental growth outperformance/underperformance of regions compared with national average¹

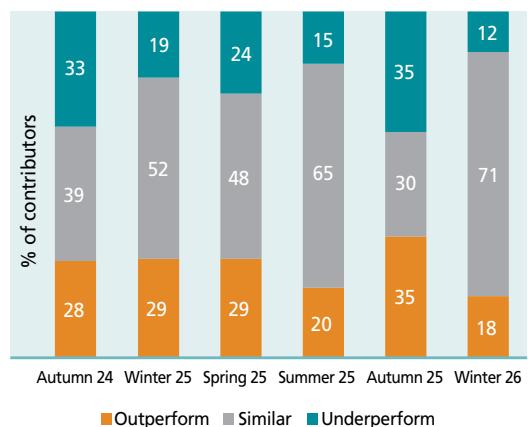


BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

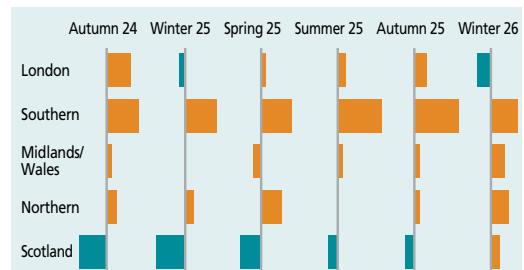
Evolution of expected rental growth on new lettings in next 12 months



Evolution of expected rental growth on rent reviews/lease renewals compared to new lettings



Composite rental growth outperformance/underperformance of regions compared with national average¹

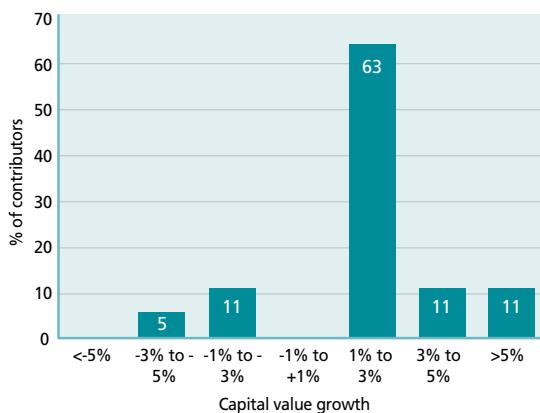


¹ Orange denotes outperformance; teal denotes underperformance

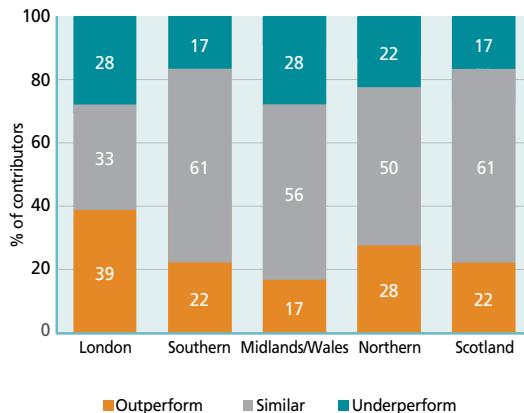
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS: CAPITAL VALUE GROWTH

BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

Expected capital growth in next 12 months

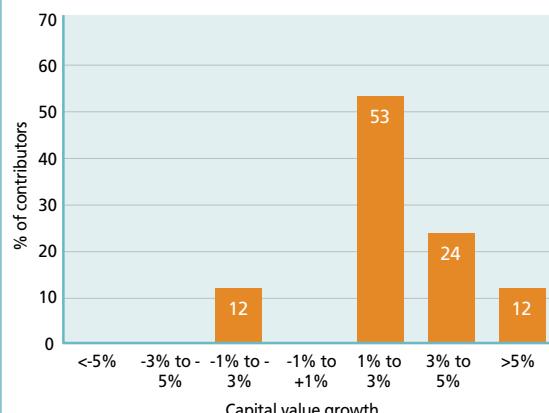


Capital growth expectations compared with national average

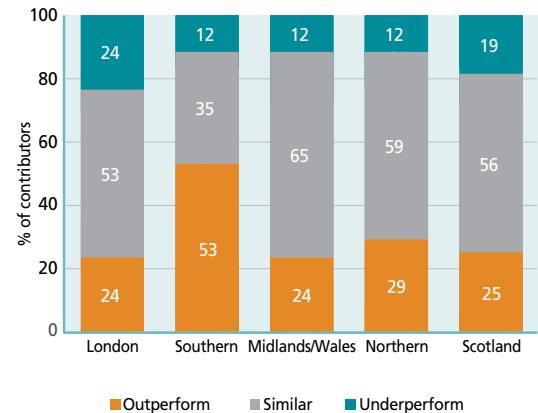


BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

Expected capital growth in next 12 months



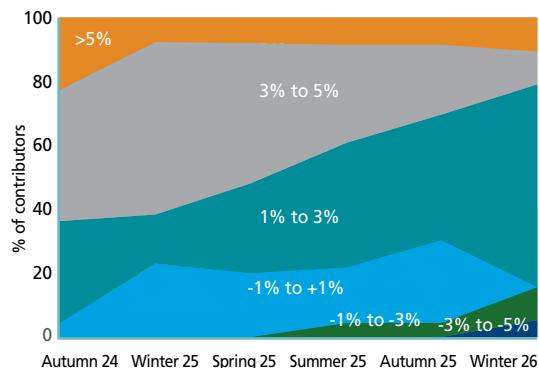
Capital growth expectations compared with national average



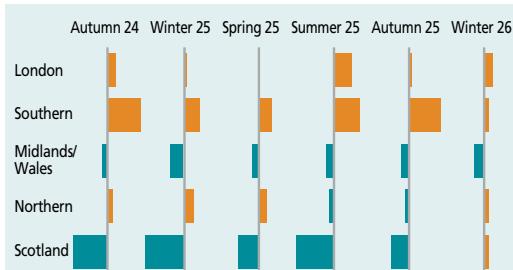
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS: EVOLUTION OF CAPITAL VALUE GROWTH

BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

Evolution of expected capital growth on new lettings in next 12 months by quarter

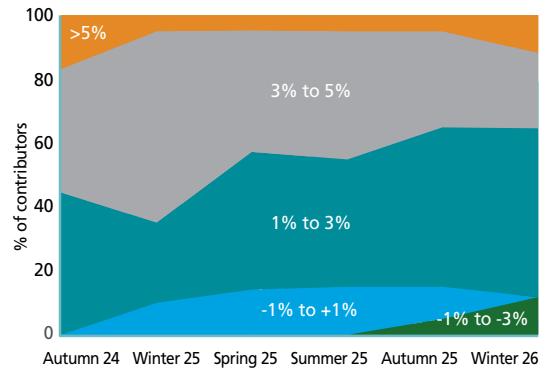


Composite capital growth outperformance/underperformance of regions compared with national average²

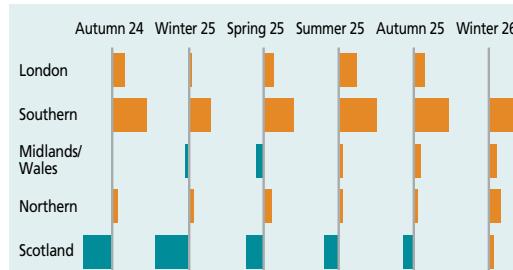


BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

Evolution of expected capital growth on new lettings in next 12 months by quarter



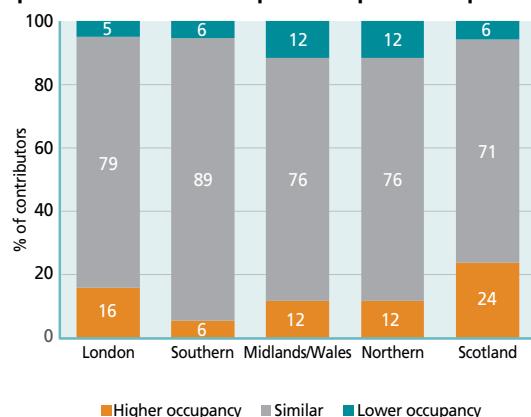
Composite capital growth outperformance/underperformance of regions compared with national average²



OCCUPANCY

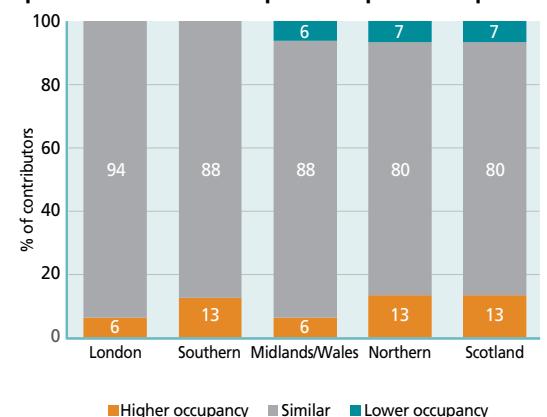
BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

Current occupancy conditions of existing operational assets compared to previous quarter



BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

Current occupancy conditions of existing operational assets compared to previous quarter

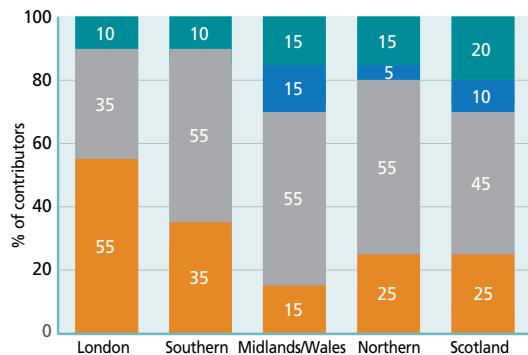


² Orange denotes outperformance; teal denotes underperformance

INVESTMENT INTENTIONS

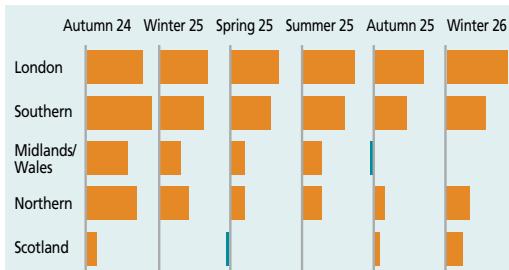
BUILD-TO-RENT MULTIFAMILY

Investment intentions over the next 12 months by region



■Invest more ■No change ■Disinvest ■Not applicable ■Don't know

Evolution of investment intentions over next 12 months by region³



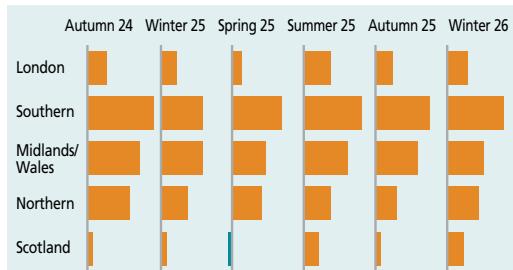
BUILD-TO-RENT SINGLE FAMILY

Investment intentions over the next 12 months by region



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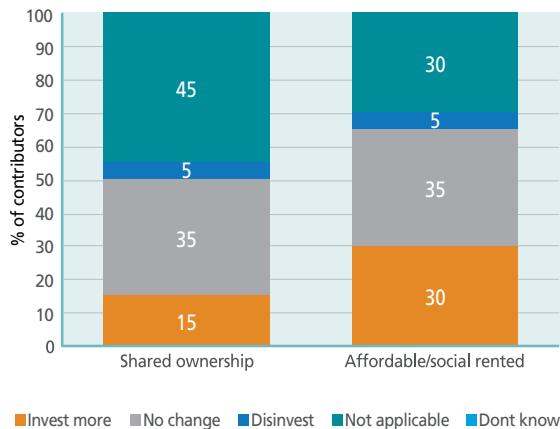
Evolution of investment intentions over next 12 months by region³



³ Orange denotes outperformance; teal denotes underperformance

INVESTMENT: AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBMARKETS

Investment intentions for affordable housing submarkets over the next 12 months (if funding available)



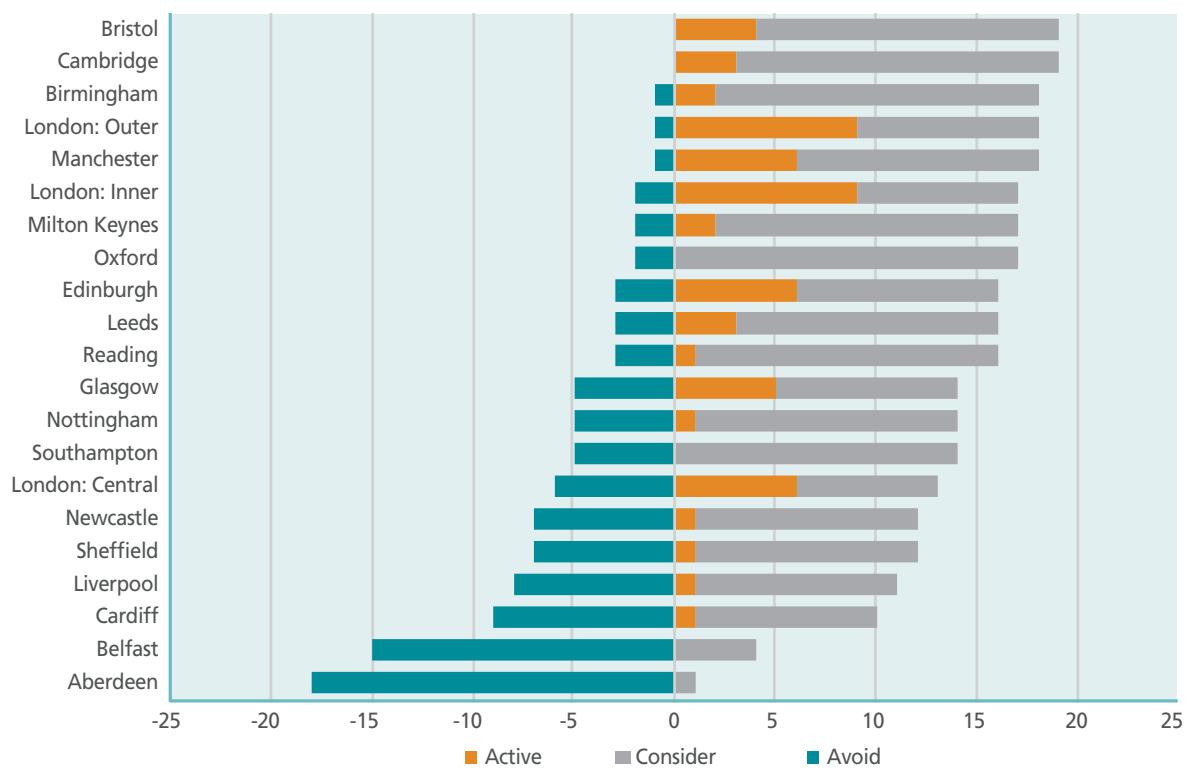
In terms of **Shared Ownership**, just under half of the contributors do not have a mandate to invest. Of the remaining contributors, 15% expect to increase their investment, compared to 20% in the previous quarter.

For **Affordable/social rented**, 30% of contributors do not have a mandate to invest, while a further 30% are planning to increase their exposure (down from 40% in the last survey).

For the first time in the survey's history, one contributor expects to disinvest from both submarkets.

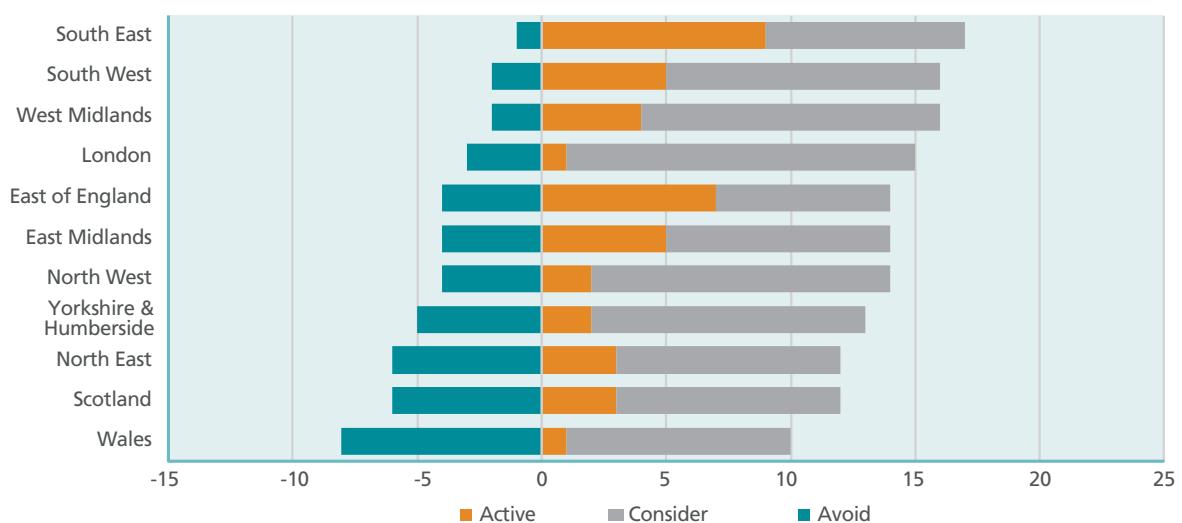
INVESTMENT INTENTIONS

BtR multifamily: Investment intentions in next 12 months (if funding available)



Note: Scale denotes number of contributors. 'Active' and 'Consider' responses are shown as positive numbers. 'Avoid' responses are counted as negative numbers.

BTR single family: Investment intentions in next 12 months (if funding available)



Note: Scale denotes number of contributors. 'Active' and 'Consider' responses are shown as positive numbers. 'Avoid' responses are counted as negative numbers.

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Note

This sentiment survey furthers the objective of the IPF to enhance the efficiency of the real estate investment market by encouraging transparency. The IPF is extremely grateful for the support of contributors, some of whom are noted above. This publication is only possible thanks to the provision of these individual views.

If your organisation wishes to contribute to future surveys, please contact IPF CEO, Sue Forster at sforster@ipf.org.uk.

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