

Demand is outstripping supply across the UK housing market, with estate agents registering four house hunters to every available property according to the NAEA.

The monthly market survey of the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) found that the average branch had 299 house hunters on its books in May – up from 265 the previous month and 247 in May 2008. The average branch had 69 properties on its books.

For the second month running estate agents also reported a successful selling period. The average branch sold 10 properties, a 30% increase on the same time last year and double that sold on average in August 2008.

Gary Smith, president of the NAEA, said: “This is really good news for the housing market and the UK economy in general.

“NAEA members are showing that there are buyers a-plenty out there. More often than not these are also potential sellers who are at the beginning of the process – so there is bound to be a lag which creates a shortage of properties in the short term.

“With mortgage interest rates at historically low levels and prices now far more realistic than in previous years, home ownership in the UK seems to be set to lead the way out of the recession.”