

December 2023

State of Dorset Housing



Decent homes can result in a better quality of life. Good housing can improve health and financial well-being, helping residents feel safe and secure. It helps to support thriving communities and access to a safe and suitable home provides children with the best start in life.

Housing plays a key role in economic growth and employment opportunities for individuals and businesses.

Big Numbers Box

70.4%

of Dorset homes are owner-occupied.

£357,874 Average house price

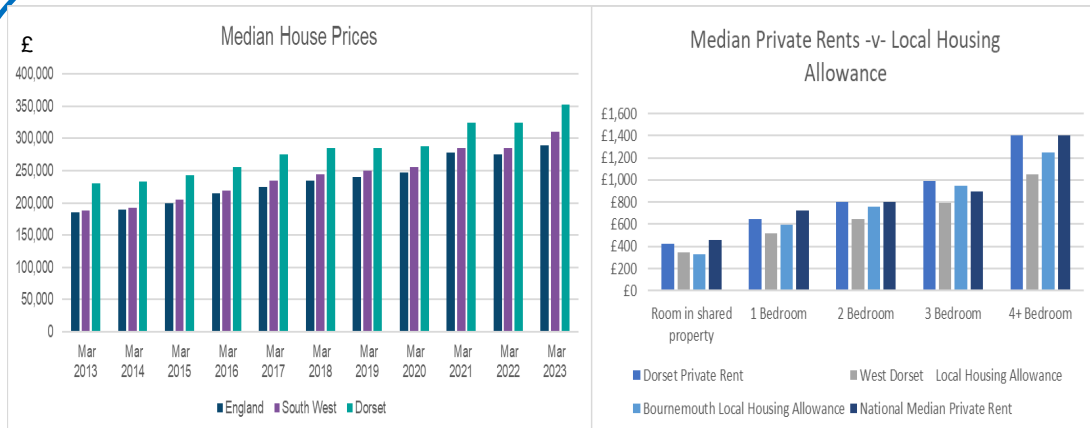
16.3% Private rent

Shared Ownership 1%

23,414 Units of social housing

12.3% Social Housing

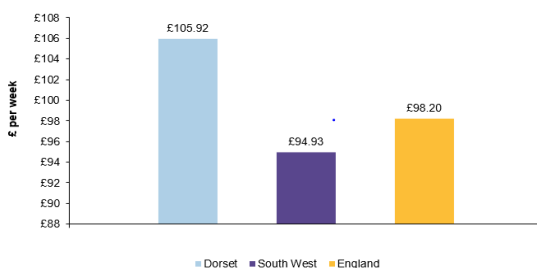
Box 1: Housing Costs



In the last ten years, median house prices have risen by £122,000 in Dorset and are higher than both the national and regional prices. Whilst median private rental costs are on par with the national rents, the gap between local housing allowance and rents has widened. Local Housing Allowance is used to calculate the maximum amount people renting from a private landlord can claim in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Local Housing Allowance was capped in 2016 but is due to increase in 2024.

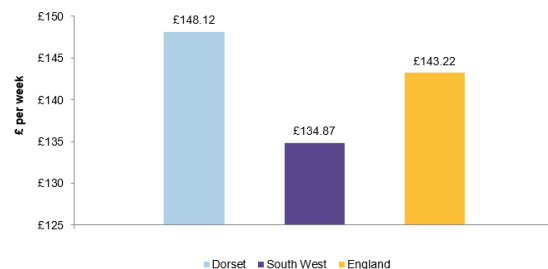
General needs (social rent)

Average weekly net rent (£ per week) for Dorset, South West and England - LARPs & Large PRPs



Affordable Rent General Needs

Average weekly gross rent (£ per week) for Dorset, South West and England - LARPs & all PRPs



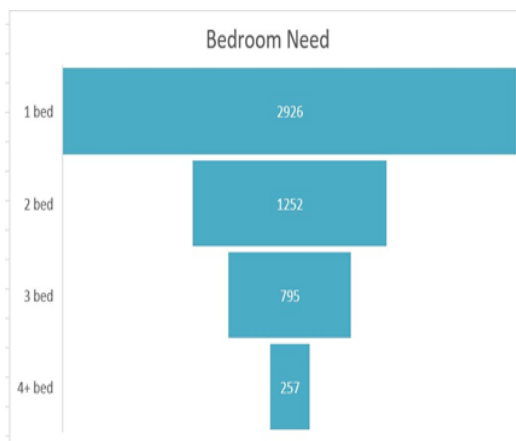
The figures above show the average cost to rent a housing association property at either a social rent or an affordable rent. Affordable rents are calculated based on 80% of the market rent in our area. As market rent increases, so does the affordable rent cost.

Box 2: Housing Needs

Housing Register	31 Oct 2023
Band A Emergency Need	306
Band B High Need	818
Band C Medium Need	1,263
Band D Low Need	2,844

As at 31st October 2023 5,321 households were registered for housing through Homechoice Dorset, the register for those people seeking a move to social housing.

Bedroom Needs data



Across Dorset, 77.9% of homes are under-occupied by one or more bedrooms. With 64.2% of Dorset homes having 3 or more bedrooms.

The census says that 3,496 households with dependant children live in overcrowded conditions. 970 of these have applied to join the waiting list for social housing.

Whilst the biggest need is for smaller properties, families needing larger homes often wait longer to move. This is because larger homes rarely become available. During the 12 months to March 2023, 20 properties with 4 or more bedrooms were let through Homechoice Dorset.

The top heavy shape of the housing need for those who have applied to the housing register is reflected in the homeless approaches made to the Council.

Half of emergency homeless households have a one bedroom need.

A quarter are waiting for a two bedroom property.

Box 3: Homelessness Demand

There was a 17.5% increase in homeless approaches in the year to March 2023. Some monthly increases were more than 30% compared to the year before.

The service receives:

- Average 670 calls per month. Each call lasting up to 30 minutes.
- Average of 2,100 emails each month
- More than 4,000 contacts from the online portal
- Initial enquiries resulted in 1,702 homeless assessments

Main reasons given for homelessness

Evicted by family
End of private rented accommodation
Relationship breakdown
Victim of domestic abuse
Friends no longer willing to accommodate
Loss of social housing
Home no longer suitable

Sources

The following datasets have been used throughout the bulletin:
Regulator of Social Housing—RP Social Housing by Local Authority Area 2022-2023
Huume Housing Register Data
Office for National Statistics Housing Data