

December 2025

# 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.

**£340,000** Average house price

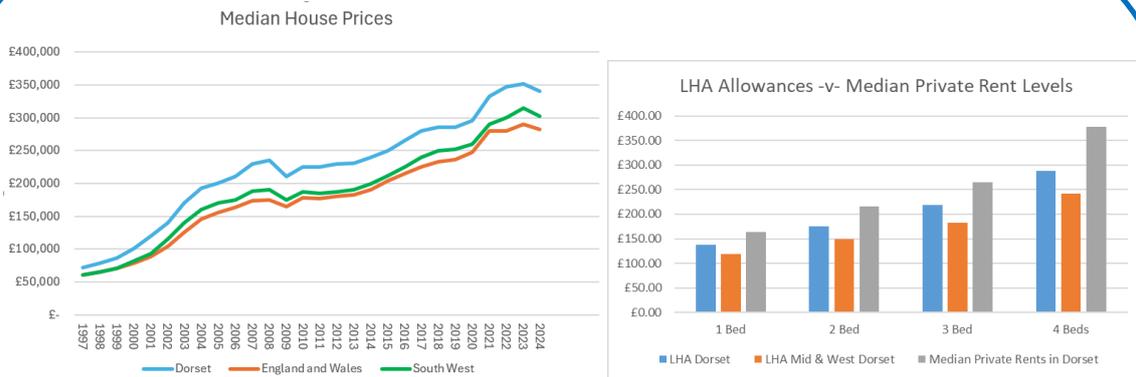
**16.3%** Private rent

Shared Ownership: 1%

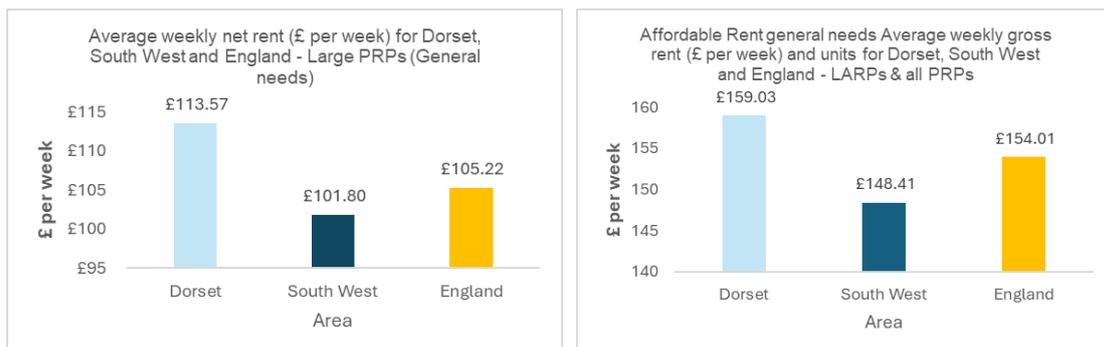
**23,414** Units of social housing

**12.3%** Social Housing

## Box 1: Housing Costs



In the last twenty years, annual house prices have, in general, been on the rise, apart from a significant drop during the economic crash of 2008 and recent economic uncertainty. Dorset prices 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 that people renting from a private landlord can claim in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.



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	2025
Band A Emergency Need	201
Band B High Need	1,057
Band C Medium Need	1,587
Band D Low Need	3,854

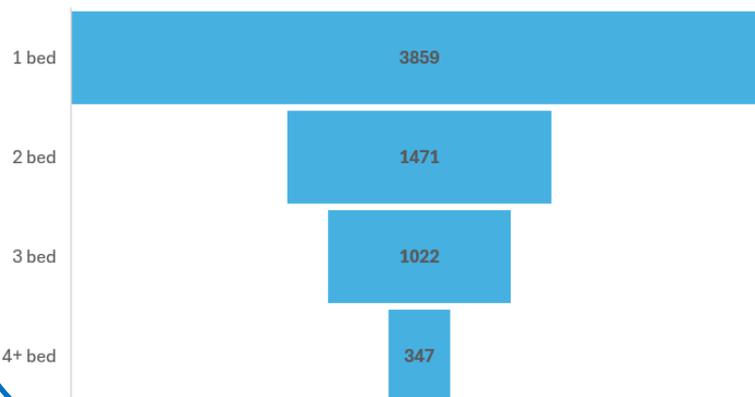
As at 26 October 2025 6,699 households were registered for housing through Homechoice Dorset, the register for those people seeking a move to social housing.

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 dependent children live in overcrowded conditions. 970 of these have applied to join the waiting list for social housing.

Although the greatest demand is for smaller homes, families needing larger properties often face longer waits because these rarely become available. In the 12 months to September 2025, only 14 homes with four or more bedrooms were let through Homechoice Dorset.

Top-heavy demand for smaller properties:



The housing register shows a top-heavy need for smaller properties, which is mirrored in homeless approaches to the Council. Over half of emergency homeless households require a one-bedroom home, while around a quarter need two bedrooms.

## Box 3: Homelessness Demand

**There was a very similar number of homeless approaches in the year to March 2023.**

**The service receives<sup>1</sup>:**

- Average 588 calls per month. Each call lasting up to 30 minutes.
- Average of 2,410 emails each month
- More than 4,190 contacts from the online portal
- Initial enquiries resulted in 2,911 homeless assessments

**Main reasons given for Homelessness:**

- End of private rented accommodation
- Family no longer willing or able to accommodate
- Victim of domestic abuse
- Relationship breakdown
- Departure from institutional custody
- End of social rented tenancy
- Domestic abuse perpetrator evicted

### Sources

The following datasets have been used throughout the bulletin:  
 Regulator of Social Housing—RP Social Housing by Local Authority Area 2023-2024  
 Huume Housing Register Data  
 Office for National Statistics Housing Data  
<sup>1</sup> November 2025