

Local Housing Needs in Area North

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to give Councillors an update on housing need in Area North.

Public Interest

The report gives an overview of numbers on the Housing Register (Homefinder Somerset) in Somerset and the demand for housing in Area North.

Recommendations

1. Members discuss matters of interest to the local area arising from the report and presentation;
2. Members identify further or future information to be considered by the Area North Committee or other forum.

Background

Homefinder Somerset (HFS) was launched in December 2008 in partnership with the other four Somerset Authorities. Since the introduction of HFS housing needs data is more readily available and the scheme is made the allocation of social housing transparent.

Increased provision of affordable, good quality, homes in South Somerset remains a high priority. This has been evidenced by the countywide Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2026, and by South Somerset District Council's "Our Plan- Your Future" 2012-2015.

Housing Need across Somerset

Information from the Somerset Housing Register

Table 1, on the next page, sets out the numbers of applicants on the Homefinder Somerset register as at 1st September 2014 within each Local Authority area by band.

Table 1

Local Authority	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
Mendip District Council	5	211	626	721	1563
Sedgemoor District Council	2	335	1078	2194	3610
South Somerset District Council	2	320	738	1391	2452
Taunton Deane Borough Council	2	385	662	1949	2998
West Somerset Council		101	231	550	882
Grand Total	11	1352	3335	6805	11505

Over the last year numbers of active applications on the housing register have decreased across the County. The decrease is largely due to each Local Authority carrying out the rolling reviews of applications on a regular basis. The review involves applicants confirming they still wish to remain on the register and updating their details.

Housing Need in Area North

Table 2 below summarises the figures for households on the Homefinder Somerset Register expressing their first choice of location for Area North as at 1st September 2014

Parish First Choice	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Grand Total
Ash	1	1	1	3
Barrington			2	2
Chilthorne Domer	1		1	2
Compton Dundon	3		1	4
Curry Mallet	1		1	2
Curry Rivel	11	6	2	19
Fivehead	1		1	2
High Ham			1	1
Huish Episcopi	5	2		7
Ilton	6			6
Kingsbury Episcopi	3	2		5
Langport	32	17	6	55
Long Sutton	2	1		3
Martock	34	13	5	52
Montacute	4		1	5
Muchelney	1			1
Norton-Sub-Hamdon	11	4	4	19
Pitney		1		1
Puckington	1			1

Seavington St Mary	1			1
Shepton Beauchamp	2	2	2	6
Somerton	43	23	3	69
South Petherton	26	13	3	42
Stoke-Sub-Hamdon	20	7	4	31
Grand Total	209	92	38	339

Table 3 below shows the number of households and their bedroom requirements by band in Area North as at 1st September 2014. Members should note that this may include applicants not currently resident in Area North.

Bedroom size	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Grand Total
1	130	35	12	177
2	60	35	22	117
3	15	16	3	34
4	4	5	1	10
5		1		1
Grand Total	209	92	38	339

Demand for one and two bedroom properties remains high and a large number of social housing tenants are still in the process of trying to downsize due to the “bedroom tax”.

Affordable Housing In Area North

Table 4 below summaries the expected HCA and SSDC Programme for 2013/14

Location	Housing Association	Scheme Name	Social Rent	Affordable Rent	Shared ownership	Total	Anticipated completion
Langport and Huish	Hastoe	Fern Green, Langport (Huish Episcopi)	0	14	4	18	Nov-14
South Petherton	Aster	St Michael's Gardens	7	4	6	17	Nov-14
Somerton	Knightstone	St Cleers Orchard	0	0	1	1	May-14
Norton-Sub-Hamdon	Yarlington	Minchington Close	0	8	2	10	Sept-14
Curry Rivel	Yarlington	Westfield	0	0	4	4	Dec-14

Financial Implications

None

Council Plan Implications

Focus Three: Homes

Minimise impact to our residents of the major changes to housing and council tax benefits proposed by Government

Minimise homelessness by providing advice, support and housing options

With Partners, enable additional new homes to meet the needs of the district, including mixed housing schemes to buy or rent that are affordable.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None from this report

Equality and Diversity Implications

None from this report.

Background Papers: *District Executive Report Oct 2013 - Revised Homefinder Somerset Policy*
