

Local Housing Needs in Area South

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Purpose of the Report

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

Public Interest

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

Recommendation(s)

That:

1. Members discuss matters of interest to the local area arising from the reports and presentation
2. Members identify further or future information to be considered by the Area South 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 sets out the numbers of applicants on the Homefinder Somerset register as at 14th October 2014 within each Local Authority area by band.

Table 1

Local Authority	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
Mendip District Council	7	223	600	670	1500
Sedgemoor District Council	1	335	1079	2219	3635
South Somerset District Council	1	314	758	1315	2389
Taunton Deane Borough Council	4	355	638	1770	2767
West Somerset Council		101	230	526	857
Grand Total	13	1328	3305	6500	11146

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 South

Table 2 summarises the figures for households on the Homefinder Somerset Register expressing their first choice of location for Area South as at 14th October 2014. If a parish does not appear in the list below it is because no-one has selected it as a first area of choice.

Parish Choice	First	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
Barwick			6	4	5	15
Brympton					2	2
East Coker			3	3	5	11
Hardington Manderville					1	1
Odcombe			2		2	4
West Coker				7	9	16
Yeovil East			38	60	76	174
Yeovil North and Central	1		40	113	151	305
Yeovil Preston			23	36	53	112
Yeovil South			20	49	70	139
Yeovil West			24	39	86	149
Yeovil Without			21	55	73	149
Grand Total		1	177	366	533	1077

Table 3 below shows the number of households and their bedroom requirements by band in Area South as at 14th October 2014. Members should note that this may include applicants not currently resident in Area South.

Max Bed Size Override	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
1	1	113	137	295	546
2		50	173	175	398
3		11	32	54	97
4		2	22	9	33
5		1	1		2
7			1		1
Grand Total	1	177	366	533	1077

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 South

Appendix B shows the affordable housing for 2014/15

Financial Implications

None

Corporate Priority 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.

Background Papers:

Affordable Housing Development Programme 03/09/14
DX Report Revised Homefinder Somerset Policy 03/10/2013
