

Appendix A

South Somerset Housing Needs Survey (2008)

The Taunton and South Somerset Housing Market Partnership have completed the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the Taunton and South Somerset housing market areas.

A SHMA forms an important part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework evidence. It is a study of the way the housing market works in a particular area and includes an assessment of what interventions may be needed to more effectively plan for future housing provision.

Further information can be found on the [Taunton and South Somerset Housing Market Partnership](#) website where the full SHMA report and a number of housing related studies can also be viewed and downloaded.

The production of the SHMA included a householder survey within South Somerset. A full copy of the report can be viewed on the SSDC website <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=28740>

Key findings (Source: Executive Summary of the South Somerset Housing Needs Survey)

- The survey was conducted by postal questionnaire, with 1,818 households taking part. Information from this survey, together with the use of previously published information was used to make estimates about future housing requirements in the district.
- In total, almost two thirds of all households live in detached or semi-detached houses or bungalows. Some 11% live in flats, significantly lower than the national average of 17%. Households living in the social rented and private rented sectors are more likely to live in flats whilst those in owner-occupation (non-mortgage) are more likely to live in houses than other tenures. Around 30% of all households are 'pensioner-only' (higher than the national average) and a quarter include children.
- Survey data suggests that 4,051 households (5.7%) in the District are currently living in unsuitable housing - the main reasons being health and/or mobility problems because of the condition of the home, followed by overcrowding.
- Overall, it was estimated that 2,435 of the 4,051 households would need to move home to find a solution to the unsuitability of their housing. Of these households, an estimated 1,231 could not afford a suitable solution in the housing market without some form of subsidy and were therefore considered to be in housing need. Households in the social and private rented sectors were most likely to be in need.
- The data suggests that the main group with a demand for market housing are childless couples (30.3% of the total), then households with children making up around a quarter of the total demand.
- In the affordable sector the data suggests that the majority of the requirement is for smaller units.

- There are an estimated 13,717 households in South Somerset with one or more members in an identified support needs group, this represents 19.4% of all households. These households were most likely to state a requirement for help maintaining their home.
- Nearly 30% of households (29.6%) contain only older people. These are almost all comprised of one or two persons, however a significant proportion resides in accommodation with three or more bedrooms. Within the social rented sector there are over 400 older person households living in properties with at least three bedrooms indicating an opportunity to reduce under-occupation.
- 16,826 households containing families with children in South Somerset. Lone parent families are more likely to be living in private and social rented accommodation and are less likely to be under-occupying their property.
- Recent first-time buyers have an average income of £38,064 (36.1% higher than the average for the District) and are headed by someone with an average age of 31.
- 64.1% of households are classified as rural (non-urban). Rural households have higher average levels of income and savings than urban households.

(source: Executive Summary of the 'Analysis of household survey data for South Somerset', Fordham Research, 2008)