

Local Housing Needs in Area West

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Purpose of the Report

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

Public Interest

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

Recommendation(s)

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 West 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 has 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 22nd September 2014 within each Local Authority area by band. (Appendix A shows the categories for each band)

Table 1

Local Authority	Emergency	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
Mendip District Council	6	211	611	680	1508
Sedgemoor District Council	1	334	1076	2200	3611
South Somerset District Council	1	319	756	1374	2450
Taunton Deane Borough Council	3	331	611	1738	2683
West Somerset Council		98	218	536	852
Grand Total	11	1293	3272	6528	11104

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 West

Table 2 summarises the figures for households on the Homefinder Somerset Register expressing their first choice of location for Area West as at 22nd September 2014. Some parishes may not appear in the list, this is because no-one on the Housing Register has selected the parish as a first choice.

Parish First Choice	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
Ashill			2	2
Broadway	1	1	5	7
Buckland St Mary		1	3	4
Chard Avishayes	4	18	31	53
Chard Combe	5	3	16	24
Chard Crimchard	2	14	16	32
Chard Holyrood	7	28	56	91
Chard Jocelyn	12	29	34	75
Chiselborough		1	1	2
Combe St Nicholas		5	5	10
Crewkerne	9	39	63	111
Cricket St Thomas			1	1
Donyatt		1	1	2
East Chinnock	1			1
Haselbury Plucknett		1	2	3
Ilminster	14	30	58	102
Kingstone			2	2

Merriott	2	5	16	23
Misterton			3	3
North Perrott			1	1
Tatworth & Forton		4	10	14
Wambrook			1	1
Winsham	1	3	5	9
Grand Total	58	183	332	573

Table 3 below shows the number of households and their bedroom requirements by band in Area West as at 22nd September 2014. Members should note that this may include applicants not currently resident in Area West.

Bedroom Size	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Grand Total
1	35	71	196	302
2	17	68	102	187
3	3	31	25	59
4	3	13	9	25
Grand Total	58	183	332	573

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 West

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

Combined HCA & SSDC Programme 2013/14									
	Housing Association	Scheme Name	Social Rent	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership/ Intermediate	New Gain New Homes	Total Home for NI 155 purposes	Planning Obligation	Anticipated completion
Chard	Raglan	Great Western Road	0	32	14	46	46		Jun-13
	Yarlington	Mitchell Gardens*	0	0	4	4	4	✓	
	Totals		0	32	18	50	50	24	

Further details are included in the Affordable Housing Development Programme report at Agenda Item 10.

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.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Background Papers: DX Report Revised Homefinder Somerset Policy
03/10/2013
