

Statistical bulletin

Private rental market summary statistics in England: April 2019 to March 2020

Median monthly rental prices for the private rental market in England, calculated using data from the Valuation Office Agency.

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1 . Main points

- The median monthly rent was £700 for England, recorded between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020; it has not been higher.
- London had the highest median monthly rent at £1,425; this is more than double the median monthly rent for England.
- The North East had the lowest median monthly rent at £495.
- The difference in monthly rental price between the most and least expensive local authorities was nearly £2,100.

2 . England analysis

Figure 1: Median monthly private rental prices increased with number of bedrooms

Median and interquartile range of monthly rents by bedroom categories, England, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

[Download the data](#)

Private rental prices increased with property size

The median monthly rent in England was £700. The highest monthly rent was for properties with four or more bedrooms (£1,300), compared with the lowest monthly rent at £400, which was for single rooms.

There was a large difference in median monthly rents between studios (£550) and single rooms (£400), which could have been driven by high volumes of data in the sample of studios located in London and the South East (representing just under half of the sample size).

The interquartile range increased with property size. The spread of rents was greatest for the “four or more bedrooms” category because of the inclusion of very large properties. The correspondingly higher rents of these large properties drove the sharp increase in both median rent and spread of rents in this category compared with three-bedroom properties.

3 . Regional analysis

Figure 2: Median monthly private rental price was greatest in London

Median and interquartile range of monthly rents for all bedroom categories, by region, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

[Download the data](#)

Private rental prices were higher in London than any other region

Rental prices and spread of rents tended to be higher in the East and the southern regions of England than in the Midlands and northern regions.

The median monthly rent was highest in London at £1,425, which is £525 higher than the next largest median monthly rent, which was £900 in the South East. The median monthly rent for the North East was £495; this is the lowest of all regions.

Rent prices in Inner London tended to be higher than for Outer London. The median monthly rent for Inner London was £1,700, compared with £1,295 for Outer London.

Most regions had a similar spread of rents, but London rents had the greatest range of prices of all regions. This reflects the large range of property types and sizes in London and the range in associated rental price.

4 . Local authority analysis

Figure 3: The difference in monthly rental price between the most and least expensive local authorities was nearly £2,100

Median monthly private rental price in England, by local authorities and bedroom category, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

[Download the data](#)

There was a varied distribution in the prices that tenants paid for private housing across local authorities.

Warning: Users should note that samples at local authority level, even for the “all” bedroom category, can be small; therefore, the average monthly rents may be less reliable because of the sample size (for more information, see the Sampling subsection of [Section 8](#)).

Most expensive local authority: Westminster

Rents in England were highest in London, and they were generally higher in Inner London than Outer London. The median monthly rent was £1,700 in Inner London and £1,295 in Outer London.

For Inner London, the highest median monthly rent was in Westminster (£2,492) and the lowest median monthly rent was in Lewisham (£1,300). For Outer London, the highest median monthly rent was in Richmond upon Thames (£1,550) and the lowest median monthly rent was shared by Bexley, Croydon and Sutton (£1,100).

Least expensive local authority: Kingston upon Hull

The lowest median monthly rent in England was £420 in Kingston upon Hull (Yorkshire and The Humber). The highest median monthly rent in Yorkshire and The Humber was shared by York and Harrogate (£750).

For comparison, the region with the lowest median monthly rent in England was the North East, where the median monthly rent was £495. The local authority with the highest median monthly rent in the North East was in Newcastle upon Tyne (£650). The lowest median monthly rent was shared by County Durham, Darlington and Hartlepool (£450).

5 . Private rental market data

[Private rental market summary statistics in England](#)

Dataset | Released 17 June 2020

Median monthly rental prices for the private rental market in England by bedroom category, region and administrative area, calculated using data from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

6 . Glossary

Bedroom category

There are six main bedroom categories:

- room – this is a non-self-contained single room with shared facilities, including bedsits, single rooms in a house or flat shared with other tenants, and single rooms rented from a resident landlord
- studio – this is a self-contained single-roomed property with own kitchen and bath, shower or WC facilities
- one to four or more bedrooms – these are self-contained properties with one to four or more bedrooms, including houses, bungalows, flats and maisonettes

Interquartile range

The interquartile range is the difference between the lower and upper quartile, representing the middle 50% of values.

Local authorities

Shires, metropolitan districts, the Council of the Isles of Scilly, unitary authorities, London boroughs and the City of London are local authorities.

Lower and upper quartile

When a series of numbers are arranged by size, the lower quartile (or 25th percentile) is the value that splits the lowest 25% of the data from the highest 75%. The upper quartile (or 75th percentile) is the value that splits the highest 25% of the data from the lowest 75%.

Region

A region is a geographic unit formerly referred to as Government Office Region (GOR). From 1 April 2011, the term GOR was dropped in favour of region.

7 . Measuring the data

Methodology

These statistics are based on a sample of 502,780 private rental data in the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) lettings information database, collected by Rent Officers from landlords and letting agents. Data were extracted for the 12 months to the end of March 2020. Only cases with sufficient evidence of a transaction taking place were included in the sample. A small proportion of data that was unconfirmed or had limited evidence was not included.

The data were broken down by administrative area and by bedroom or room category, and statistics were calculated on the total monthly rents (which may include some service charges such as fuel and water). For Local Housing Allowance purposes, service charges were not included as they were ineligible for the calculation of housing benefit.

The rental value ranges displayed in Figure 3 are produced using “Jenks natural breaks”; this is a method that separates values into groups that are naturally present in the data. Similar values are gathered together in such a way that the differences between groups are maximised.

Upcoming changes

Following the [Digital Economy Act 2017](#), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) gained access to the VOA private rental microdata. Consequently, the ONS is now responsible for publication of [private rental market summary statistics \(PRMS\)](#), [published by the VOA prior to October 2019](#), and aims to re-develop the Index of Private Housing Rental Prices (IPHRP) and PRMS to produce mix-adjusted average rental prices that are comparable over time and geography down to lower geographic levels, to better meet user needs.

More information and a timetable for these developments is available in the [Private rental prices development plan: June 2020](#). If you have any queries or feedback on these developments, please email hpi@ons.gov.uk.

Voluntary provision of data

Thank you to the landlords and estate agents who voluntarily provide the data that makes this release possible.

8 . Strengths and limitations

Data interpretation and comparability

Under the current methodology, we do not publish a time series and users are advised not to infer trends in the rental market over time by comparing prices year-on-year.

We now have access to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) private rental market microdata and aim to re-develop rental statistics to produce mix-adjusted average rental prices that are comparable over time and geography down to lower geographic levels.

More information and a timetable for these developments is available in [Private rental prices development plan: June 2020](#). If you have any queries or feedback on these developments, please email hpi@ons.gov.uk.

These statistics are for information only and should be distinguished from Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates published on [DirectGov](#) (used to calculate Housing Benefit for privately renting tenants). Unlike the LHA rates, these statistics report on the total monthly rent paid (ignoring any adjustment for services not eligible for Housing Benefit), and in most cases the Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) does not match the geography of the local authority area.

A Local Reference Rent (LRR) is the mid-point between the (Rent Officer-stipulated) highest and lowest non-exceptional rents in a given BRMA. A BRMA is an area within which a person (for LHA purposes) or tenant of the dwelling (for LRR purposes) could reasonably be expected to live, taking account of the existence of and distance of travel to and from facilities and services.

Data capture was encompassed by Rent Officers' statutory responsibilities to administer functions related to Housing Benefit (LHA and LRR schemes) and Universal Credit on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Rent Officers are statutory officers responsible for ensuring that collected lettings information is representative of the full range of market rents for similar properties on which a rent determination is made and for recording the information that they have collected on the lettings information database.

The VOA provides [more information on Rent Officers](#).

Sampling

The 2011 Census provides a benchmark for the population of privately rented properties, and Rent Officers endeavour to collect a proportionate spread of data by property type and geographic spread. However, the sample of properties is not randomly selected. Results are not adjusted to produce statistics that are representative of the private rental property market in England. Housing Benefit claimants are excluded, so not all privately rented properties are represented in this sample.

Table 1: Regional variation in sample size for all bedroom categories, England, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Region	Sample size
ENGLAND	502,780
NORTH EAST	24,770
NORTH WEST	69,020
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	49,040
EAST MIDLANDS	43,900
WEST MIDLANDS	44,950
EAST	55,700
LONDON	44,610
Inner London	19,360
Outer London	25,250
SOUTH EAST	96,910
SOUTH WEST	73,880

Source: Valuation Office Agency and Office for National Statistics

The most sampled region was the South East; the least sampled region was the North East. The sample size varies across successive releases and among regions within a release. In this release, the largest regional samples are nearly four times the size of the smallest sample.

These statistics are based on a sample of 502,780 rents recorded between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. As the dataset used has not been drawn from a statistically designed sample, these statistics should be considered as indicative only of the private rental market.

Landlords and letting agents provide Rent Officers with data about the properties they let on the open market. This information is captured electronically in the lettings information database. Checks are carried out at the point of entry to ensure that any Housing Benefit-funded tenancies are excluded from this database.

To avoid disclosure of personal information, statistics derived from samples containing fewer than five records have been suppressed. We have removed 190 cases (0.04%) from the dataset as there was insufficient information to assign them to a suitable bedroom or room category. All rental values have been rounded to the nearest pound.

9 . Related links

[Index of Private Housing Rental Prices \(IPHRP\)](#)

Article | Released 17 June 2020

An experimental price index tracking the prices paid for renting property from private landlords in the UK.

[Consumer price inflation, UK: May 2020](#)

Article | Released 17 June 2020

Price indices, percentage changes and weights for the different measures of consumer price inflation.

[Private sector rent statistics, Scotland: 2010 to 2019](#)

Article | Released 19 November 2019

Private sector rent statistics in Scotland over the years 2010 to 2019.

[Private sector rents, Wales: 2019](#)

Article | Released 21 May 2020

Private sector rent statistics in Wales for the year 2019.

[Private rental growth measures, a UK comparison: October to December 2019](#)

Article | Released 15 January 2020

Comparing the methodological differences between the IPHRP and private rental market summary statistics (PRMS) measures of private rental growth.

[Administrative geography: England](#)

Article | Released 15 January 2016

Detailed information on the administrative structure within England.

[Private rental prices development plan: June 2020](#)

Article | Released 15 June 2020

The priorities, aims and methodology under development for private rental prices statistics, including a broad timeline of the planned work.