

Statistical bulletin

Private rental market summary statistics in England: October 2019 to September 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 £725 for England, recorded between October 2019 and September 2020; this is the highest ever recorded.
- London had the highest median monthly rent at £1,435; this is nearly 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 £2,000.

2 . Rent prices in England

Figure 1: Median monthly private rental price increases with number of bedrooms

Median and interquartile range of monthly rents by bedroom categories, England, 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020

[Download the data](#)

Private rental prices increased with property size

The median monthly rent in England was £725. The property size with the highest monthly rent was for properties with four or more bedrooms (£1,300). Single rooms had the lowest monthly rent of all property sizes, at £403.

The difference in median monthly rents between studios (£550) and single rooms (£403) 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 . Rent prices by region

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

Median and interquartile range of monthly rents for all bedrooms categories, by region, 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020

[Download the data](#)

Private rental prices were higher in London than any other region

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

The median monthly rent was highest in London at £1,435, which is £540 higher than the next largest median rent, which was £895 in the South East. The median monthly rent for the North East was £495; this is the lowest of all regions.

London rents had the greatest range of prices of all regions. This is because rent prices in Inner London tend to be higher than for Outer London. The median monthly rent for Inner London was £1,690 compared with £1,300 for Outer London.

4 . Local authority analysis

Figure 3: Difference in rental price of most and least expensive local authorities was nearly £2,000

Median monthly private rental price in England, by local authorities and bedroom category, 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020

[Download the data](#)

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

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 £1,690 in Inner London and £1,300 in Outer London.

For Inner London, the highest median monthly rent was in Westminster (£2,395) and the lowest median monthly rent was in Lewisham (£1,300). For Outer London, the highest median monthly rent was in Richmond upon Thames (£1,620) and the lowest median monthly rent was shared by Bexley and Sutton (£1,100).

Least expensive local authority: Kingston upon Hull

The lowest median monthly rent in England was £412 in Kingston upon Hull (within Yorkshire and The Humber). The highest median monthly rent in Yorkshire and The Humber was in York (£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, Hartlepool and South Tyneside (£450).

5 . Private rental market, England data

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

Dataset | Released 11 December 2020

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

6 . Glossary

Bedroom category

There are six 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 436,810 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 September 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 grouped 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 the publication of [private rental market 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](#). This plan will be updated on 19 January 2021. 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 make 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.

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).

Sampling

These statistics are based on a sample of 436,810 rents recorded between 1 October 2019 and 30 September 2020. Rent Officers collect these letting information data for functions related to Housing Benefit and Universal Credit on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). They are responsible for ensuring collected lettings information are representative of the full range of market rents. The Valuation Office Agency provides [more information on Rent Officers](#).

The 2011 Census provides a benchmark for the population of privately rented properties. Rent Officers endeavour to collect a proportionate spread of data by property type and geographic spread. The data have not been drawn from a statistically designed sample, so these statistics should be considered as only indicative of the private rental market.

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. The regional variation in sample size is published in Table 1.7 of the [Private rental market summary statistics dataset](#).

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. All rental values have been rounded to the nearest pound.

9 . Related links

[Index of Private Housing Rental Prices](#)

Article | Released 18 November 2020

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

[Consumer price inflation, UK](#)

Article | Released 18 November 2020

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

[Private sector rent statistics, Scotland: 2010 - 2020](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2020

Private sector rent statistics in Scotland over the years 2010 to 2020.

[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](#)

Article | Released 15 January 2020

Comparing the methodological differences between the Index of Private Housing Rental Prices (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.

