

Statistical bulletin

# Private rental market summary statistics in England: October 2018 to September 2019

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

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# 1 . Main points

- The median monthly rent was £700 for England, recorded between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2019; it has not been higher.
- London had the highest median monthly rent at £1,450, more than double the median rent for England.
- The region with the largest variation in rental values between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2019 was London, followed by the South East.
- The median monthly rent was lowest in the North East at £495.
- This release was previously published by the Valuation Office Agency.

## 2 . England analysis

An interactive map of median monthly private rental price by local authorities and bedroom category is available in [Section 4](#).

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

Median and interquartile range of monthly rents by bedroom categories, England, 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

Source: Valuation Office Agency – Lettings Information Database, Office for National Statistics

[Download data](#)

### Private rental prices increase with property size

The median monthly rent in England was £700. The highest rent was for four or more-bedroom properties (£1,320), compared with the lowest rent at £396, which was for a single room.

There was a large difference in median rents between studios (£550) and single rooms (£396), which could have been driven by a high proportion of data in the sample of studios located in London and the South East (representing just under half of the sample size).

### Variation in private rental prices increases with property size

The interquartile range increased with property size. The difference between the lower and upper quartile was £105 for single rooms, compared with around £350 for studios, one-, two- and three-bedroom properties, and £939 for those with four or more bedrooms.

Inclusion of very large properties in the “four or more bedrooms” category resulted in a greater range of property size in this category compared with all other categories. 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, England, 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

Source: Valuation Office Agency – Lettings Information Database, Office for National Statistics

[Download data](#)

### Private rental prices higher for London than any other region

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

The median monthly rent was highest in London at £1,450, which was £555 higher than the next largest median rent, £895 in the South East. The median rent for the North East was £495; the lowest of all regions.

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

### Variation in private rental prices higher in the south of England than the north

Most regions had a similar spread of rents, but London rents had the greatest range of prices of all regions. The interquartile range for London was £658 (£1,192 to £1,850), £233 higher than the next largest interquartile range, £425 in the South East.

The interquartile range for Inner London was higher than for Outer London. The interquartile range of Inner London rents was £903, compared with £500 for Outer London.

The smallest interquartile range was in the North East at £175 (£420 to £595), just over a quarter of London's. The next smallest interquartile range was in the East Midlands at £215, £40 higher than for the North East.

### Figure 3: Median monthly private rental price increased with number of bedrooms across all regions

Median monthly rents, by region and bedroom category, England, 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

Source: Valuation Office Agency – Lettings Information Database, Office for National Statistics

[Download data](#)

All regions showed a similar pattern: rents increased as property size increased.

For each bedroom category, London rents were consistently highest of all regions in England, and North East rents were consistently lowest of all regions.

The greatest increase in price was between three-bedroom and four or more-bedroom properties, for all regions. This is influenced by the inclusion of very large properties with high rents in the latter category.

## 4 . Local authority analysis

### Figure 4: Median monthly private rental price by local authorities and bedroom category

England, by local authorities and bedroom category, 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

Source: Valuation Office Agency – Lettings Information Database, Office for National Statistics

[Download data](#)

There was a varied distribution in the prices that tenants paid for private housing across regions. There was a difference of just under £2,000 in median monthly rents between the most and least expensive local authorities.

Users should note that samples at borough and district level, even for the “all” bedroom category can be small, therefore the average monthly rents may be less reliable because of the sample size (see section: Sampling).

### Most expensive local authorities: Westminster, and Kensington and Chelsea

Rents in England were highest in London, and 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.

The highest median rent in England was in Inner London, shared by Westminster, and Kensington and Chelsea (£2,383). The lowest median rent in Inner London was in Lewisham (£1,250).

The median rent in Outer London was £1,295. The highest median rent in Outer London was in Richmond upon Thames (£1,575). The lowest median rent in Outer London 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 rent in Yorkshire and The Humber was £775 in York.

For comparison, the region with the lowest median rent in England was the North East, at £495. The local authority with the highest median rent in the North East was Newcastle upon Tyne (£600). The lowest median rent was shared by County Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough (£450).

## 5 . Private rental market, England data

[Private rental market summary statistics in England: October 2018 to September 2019: All tables](#)

Dataset | Released 13 December 2019

Rental market prices paid for private properties in England, bi-annual tables and charts.

## 6 . Glossary

### Bedroom category

- Room – non self-contained single room with shared facilities; includes bedsits, single rooms in a house or flat shared with other tenants, and single rooms rented from a resident landlord.
- Studio – self-contained single-roomed property with own kitchen and bath or shower and WC facilities.
- One to four or more bedrooms – self-contained properties with one to four or more bedrooms, including houses, bungalows, flats and maisonettes.

### Interquartile range

Difference between lower quartile 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%.

### Median

When a series of numbers are arranged by size, the median represents the middle value.

### Region

A geographical 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 513,900 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 2019. Only cases with sufficient evidence of a transaction taking place were included in the sample. A small proportion of data that were unconfirmed or had limited evidence was not included.

The data were broken down by administrative area and by bedroom 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 4 are produced using “Jenks natural breaks”; 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 Valuation Office Agency (VOA) private rental microdata. Consequently, the ONS is now responsible for publication of [Private rental market statistics](#) (PRMS), [published by VOA prior to October 2019](#), and aims to re-develop the [Index of Private Housing Rental Prices](#) 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 will be released in due course. If you have any queries or feedback on these developments, contact [hpi@ons.gov.uk](mailto: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.

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.

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 Valuation Office Agency provides [more information on rent officers](#).

## Sampling

The Census 2011 provides a benchmark for the population of privately rented properties and rent officers endeavor 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 October 2018 to 30 September 2019

Region	Sample size
<b>ENGLAND</b>	<b>513,900</b>
NORTH EAST	25,770
NORTH WEST	71,530
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	47,070
EAST MIDLANDS	47,630
WEST MIDLANDS	47,210
EAST	61,070
LONDON	52,150
Inner London	25,190
Outer London	26,970
SOUTH EAST	87,910
SOUTH WEST	73,560

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 as well as among regions within a release. In this release, the largest regional samples are over three times the size of the smallest sample.

These statistics are based on a sample of 513,900 rents recorded between 1 October 2018 and 30 September 2019. 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 185 cases (0.04%) from the dataset as there was insufficient information to assign them to a suitable bedroom category. All rental values have been rounded to the nearest pound.

## 9 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released 13 November 2019

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

### [Consumer price inflation, UK: October 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 13 November 2019

Price indices, percentage changes and weights for the different measures of consumer price inflation, including owner occupiers' housing costs.

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

Article | Released 19 November 2019

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

### [Private sector rents, Wales: 2018](#)

Article | Released 22 May 2019

Private sector rent statistics in Wales for the year 2018.

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

Article | Released 16 October 2019

Comparing the methodological differences between private rental market statistics (PRMS) and Index of Private Housing Rental Prices (IPHRP) measures of private rental growth.

### [Administrative geography: England](#)

Article | Released 16 October 2019

Information on the administrative structure within England, including area codes.