



Valuation Office
Agency

Update from VOA Rent Officers

Welcome to our sixth VOA Rent Officers eUpdate, which covers the latest official private rental market statistics from the Office for National Statistics; building local relationships; the importance of private landlord rents; returning to face-to-face PRS events; and a round-up of other statistics and publications. We hope you find something of interest and would love to hear your comments and feedback.

We thank the thousands of letting agents and landlords that share rental information with us for your continued support, it makes a real difference.



VOA Rent Officers e-Update

Issue 6 / Aug 2022

In this update

Latest ONS official rental statistics release – using VOA Rent Officer data

Building local relationships

The importance of private landlord rents

Face-to-face events make a return

Other statistics & publications

How to contact us



Latest ONS official rental statistics release – using VOA Rent Officer data

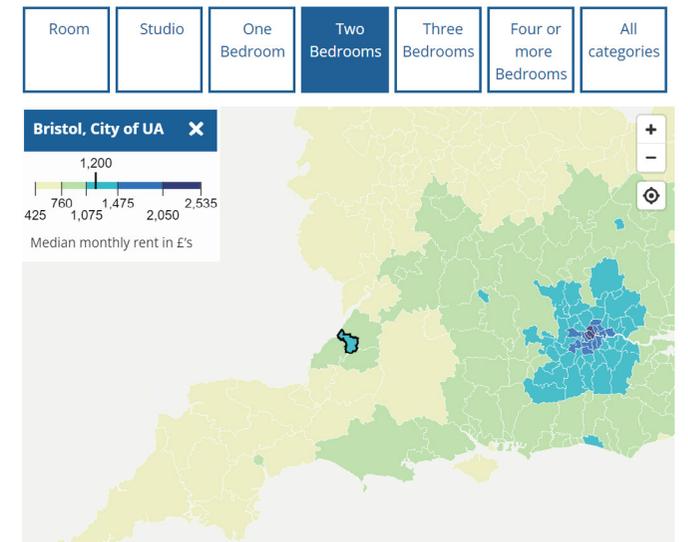
The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published their latest official [Private rental market summary statistics in England](#) on Wednesday 22 June 2022. Using achieved rental data shared with VOA Rent Officers by so many different private landlords, agents, and management companies across England they provide a unique view of rent levels for both new lettings and renewals (the stock and flow of the market).

This statistical bulletin shows combined sample data on median, lower quartile and upper quartile monthly rental prices for the private residential rented market. The statistics are available at national, regional and local authority level, enabling comparisons to be made between areas; although not currently over time.

The summary statistics include an interactive map (see example on right) displaying the median data by local authority and bedroom category, enabling better visualisation of the statistics, and helping bring them to life.

Key highlights from this release include:

- The statistics are based on a sample of 475,201 items of confirmed private rents (including both new, renewal and periodic tenancies) from our Rent Officer lettings information (LI) database, over 12 months to the end of March 2022.
- The median monthly rent was £795 for England, recorded between April 2021 and March 2022; this is the highest ever recorded.
- London had the highest median monthly rent at £1,450; this is nearly double the median monthly rent for England.
- The North East had the lowest median monthly rent at £505.
- The difference in monthly rental price between the most (Kensington and Chelsea) and least expensive



(Kingston upon Hull, Middlesbrough, and Burnley) local authorities was nearly £1,800.

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

Chris Jenkins (Assistant Deputy Director for Prices Division at the ONS) thanked letting agents and landlords personally for the data they share with VOA Rent Officers in his [Blog – unlocking the power of data to better understand private rents](#)

“We are indebted to the Rent Officers and to the thousands of letting agents and landlords who share these data with us. Not only do these data underpin some of the key economic statistics we publish, such as the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupier housing costs but these data will now allow us to develop our statistics to provide a better understanding of the private rental sector.”

Rent Officers are visiting letting agents again but are happy to look at other methods of collecting information to make it as easy as possible for you. We are extremely grateful for your continued support.

Set against an ever-changing PRS landscape and further regulation and policy changes, such as those in the Government’s recent [White Paper ‘A Fairer Private Rented Sector’](#), our greatest challenge moving forward is to maintain an ongoing representative sample of rental data across every local authority and Broad Rental Market Area in England.

We cannot stress enough the importance of every piece of rental data, which contributes to our sample, and is provided on a purely goodwill basis. If you would like to contribute your rental data to our sample and help support crucial benefits and official rental statistics please follow this link to our [LI proformas](#), or simply send an email to our central mailbox ROLI@voa.gov.uk

The ONS are undertaking a transformation of their private rental prices’ statistics and have recently published an overview of their plans, including a timeline for development. You can read more here: [ONS private rental prices development plan \(updated February 2022\)](#)

If you would like any further information on this ONS release, please contact hpi@ons.gov.uk

Building local relationships

- At the start of this year, we improved our management coverage at a local level to deliver a more consistent customer experience. Our 10 new Hub Managers have more time to spend helping build connections with you and strengthen relationships across each area.
- The table on the right shows each of our new managers, the areas they cover and their contact details. Your local Rent Officer may not have changed, but there are some handovers happening.
- In future issues we will be sharing a bit more detail about our new managers and their teams

NAME	AREA	EMAIL
Mark Wood	South West	mark.wood@voa.gov.uk
Michael Botting	East	michael.botting@voa.gov.uk
Joanne Macknight	Yorkshire	joanne.macknight@voa.gov.uk
Des Appleton	North West	desmond.j.appleton@voa.gov.uk
Andy Daniels	Outer London	andy.daniels@voa.gov.uk
Sarah Maddox	South East	sarah.e.maddox@voa.gov.uk
Nazneen Ahmed	Inner London	nazneen.t.ahmed@voa.gov.uk
Andrea Best	North East	andrea.best@voa.gov.uk
Helen Emmett	East Midlands	helen.l.emmett@voa.gov.uk
Joseph Oliva	West Midlands	joseph.oliva@voa.gov.uk

The importance of private landlord rents

Private landlords are an extremely important part of the private rented sector (PRS). In terms of numbers alone research indicates that around half of all PRS lettings are self-let and managed by private landlords. Little known perhaps is that the impact they have extends beyond providing rental homes for families and individuals. Every individual landlord can have an influence on Local Housing Allowance benefit levels, official statistics, and even macro-economics. It's easy; and you can make a real difference.

By sharing your experiences and expertise of the PRS from a private landlord perspective it helps Rent Officers better understand and interpret local market activity and rental levels. And it means your voice is heard! Your portfolios, motivations, and behaviours vary tremendously, so it's crucial that we understand what is important to you, what affects your decisions, and what you want from statistics; to help build a complete picture of the PRS.

By sharing information on rent levels you achieve across your portfolio this transactional data feeds into benefits, statistics and inflationary measures which all have an impact on your businesses and your tenants. The database of rents we maintain is at property level, made up of individual lettings. Whether you share one or fifty with us, it contributes to maintaining a representative sample, both in terms of numbers and quality. To be representative it needs to reflect the whole market; geographically across all areas of England, property types and sizes, and from a mix of sources. The importance of your rental information to our sample should not be under-estimated, it really does make a difference.

VOA Rent Officers are statutory officers, independent of local government and policy making. But, by working together with landlords and local authorities we can bring about benefits for us all and the wider PRS. We would be happy to come and talk to you at meetings, forums and events about aspects of our work that are of interest to you; provide additional information and reassurance; or talk to you individually.

Your feedback helps us to continually improve, so please get in touch with your local Hub Manager and continue the conversation. We believe there is a great PRS collaboration story to be told.

To find out more you can also visit our website: [gov.uk/guidance/valuation-office-agency-rent-officers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/valuation-office-agency-rent-officers) or, to download a simple form to share information directly please go to: [gov.uk/voa/provide-lettings-information](https://www.gov.uk/voa/provide-lettings-information)



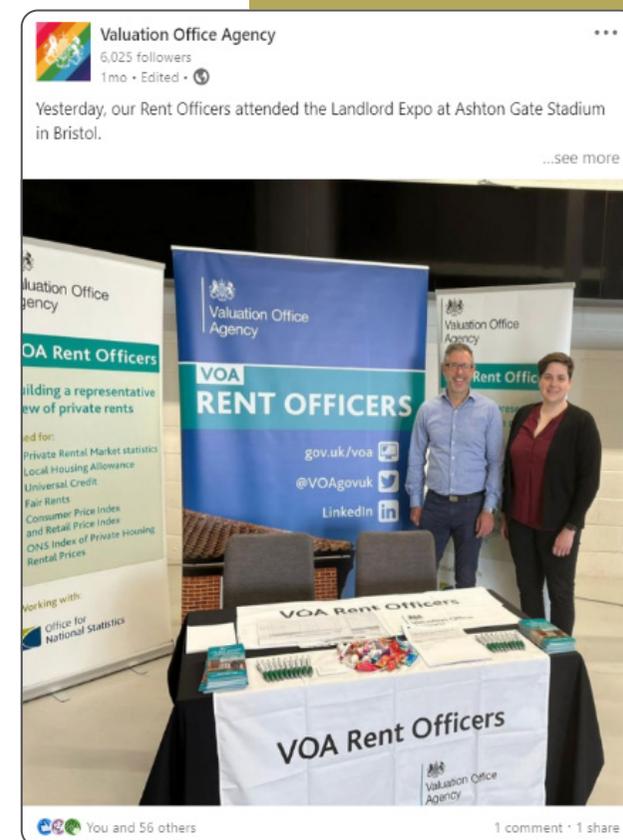
Face-to-face events make a return

After several years of cancelled, postponed and re-scheduled events we've got much better at doing nearly everything via Teams, Zoom or a Webinar. While these enable us to get together virtually and have taught us all how to get the best value from them, they can't replace that face-to-face conversation, the chat over a coffee, or across the office.

PRS events have begun to make a welcome return this year and Rent Officers have been getting back out talking to you personally by attending local events:

- In March Rent Officers attended the Croydon Landlord Forum in Braithwaite Hall, Croydon. The event was well attended and split into three sessions with representation from National Residential Landlords Association, the Department for Work & Pensions and Croydon Council.

- In May we joined the Eastern Landlord Association conference / EXPO 2022 held at the Wensum Valley Hotel NR8 6HP – a slightly smaller event than the previous pre-COVID one, but nevertheless well attended, with around 25 exhibitors. It was a good opportunity to renew acquaintances and speak to some new landlords and agents. There were conversations around the removal of section 21, EPCs, and ONS rental statistics. Overall a worthwhile local event to attend.



- In May we attended the West of England Landlord Expo (organised by four local authorities: Bristol City Council, Bath & North East Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset) at the Ashton Gate Stadium in Bristol. The Expo returned after a three-year absence and included 47 exhibitors and 17 seminars running throughout the day. 400 delegates visited the Expo, which was a great opportunity to keep private landlords and agents updated and shows the value of returning to face-to-face events again.

We have a number of planned events in the calendar already, although some only have provisional dates at this stage. If you are hosting a local event that isn't on the list, please do get in touch with your local Hub Manager and we'll do our best to attend.

Event Name and Provisional Date

National Landlord Investment shows:

- London 5th July 2022
- Manchester 11th October 2022
- London 2nd November 2022

Resi360 Conference, London – September 2022

East Midlands Property and Business Investments Expo, Nottingham – November 2022

Negotiator Conference, London – Date TBC

ARLA conference, London – Dec 2022 TBC

NRLA conference, Coventry Building Society Arena – 15th Nov 2022

The Guild Conference – Location and Date TBC

RICs event – Location and Date TBC

London PropTech Show, London – February 2023

East Midlands Expo, Lincoln – March 2023 TBC

Other statistics & publications

Rental statistics published by ONS and based on our Rent Officer lettings information for England help to demonstrate the value in sharing data with us.

- The latest monthly **Index of Private Housing Rental Prices (IPHRP)** based on VOA rental data for England, is released by ONS around the middle of each month, along with the national inflation indices. Private rental prices paid by tenants in the UK rose by 3.0% in the 12 months to June 2022, up from 2.8% in the 12 months to May 2022. The East Midlands saw the highest annual growth in private rental prices (4.3%), while London saw the lowest (1.7%).

- On 17 June 2022 the Government published its **White Paper, 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector'** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-fairer-private-rented-sector>, alongside the government's response to the 2019 consultation 'A New Deal for Renting' <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-deal-for-renting-resetting-the-balance-of-rights-and-responsibilities-between-landlords-and-tenants>.

The White Paper includes a 12-point plan and provides more detail on the four key measures announced in the Queen's speech:

- abolishing section 21 and strengthening grounds for possession;
- applying the Decent Homes Standard to the sector,
- introducing a PRS Ombudsman covering all landlords, and
- the introduction of a Property Portal.

- In October 2021 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) released findings from the third and final wave of the Household Resilience Study, which is a follow up to the 2019-20 English Housing Survey. Some of the main findings reveal that during April – May 2021:
 - private rental arrears remained higher than they were pre-pandemic;
 - 22% of households had recently used their savings to pay their rent or mortgage;
 - The proportion of renters who expect to buy their own home has declined further;
 - Overcrowding remains higher than it was pre-pandemic, particularly in the private rented sector
- DLUHC also commissioned secondary analysis of the English Housing Survey 2019-20 to support the development of policies and legislation with three main aims:
 - To segment the PRS in England into distinct groups or classes. Specifically, different types of private renters will be identified based on objective economic and family circumstances which serve as potential barriers to accessing high-quality housing.
 - To understand the demographic characteristics (age, family circumstances, education, occupation, ethnicity) of the different PRS groups identified and their potential vulnerabilities.
 - To compare the housing experiences, attitudes and aspirations of the different PRS groups.

You can read more detail here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/household-resilience-study-wave-3>

The analysis can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-housing-survey-a-segmentation-analysis-of-private-renters>

How to contact us

The best way to get in touch with VOA Rent Officers is through our online Contact Form <https://www.gov.uk/contact-voa>, which also has links to useful self-help guidance. Using this channel will help ensure your query is managed by the appropriate team as quickly as possible.

To support customers, our telephone service also operates from 9:00am – 4:30pm from Monday to Friday.

Please make use of our self-serve and online channels, and wherever you can, please use our electronic communication tools to contact us.

If you have any comments or feedback about this publication, please contact roli@voa.gov.uk



Sharing your rental data
makes a difference

