

Homelessness prevention strategy 2012 - 2017 (review 2016): Annex

1. Demographics and Household Projections for the Forest of Dean

- 1.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government released household projections for local authority areas in February 2015. They are based on DCLG2012-based household projections and project trends up to 2039.
- 1.2 Forest of Dean District Council analysis of these household and population projections suggests that the total number of households in the district is set to rise from 35,000 in 2014 to 42,000 by 2039. This is a rise of 20%. Single households will account for about 14% of this projected rise. By 2039, single households are projected to account for 26% of all households in the district, slightly decreasing from their current proportion of 28.5%.

Forest of Dean	Households in 2014	Households in 2039	Projected change 2014-39	Projected % change 2014-39
One person	9,632	11,469	1837	19%
Couple and no other adult	11,923	15,482	3559	30%
Couple and one or more other adult	2,926	3,094	168	6%
Households with dependent children	8,962	9,473	511	6%
Other	1,803	2,045	242	13%
Total	35,246	41,563	6317	18%

Source: Department of Communities and Local Government, Live tables on household projections 2008 to 2033

- 1.3 In common with much of the country, there is a trend towards an ageing population. It is expected that by 2039, almost 50% of the district's population will be aged 65 or above compared to 37% in 2014.
- 1.4 In contrast to the upward trend towards an ageing population, during the same period the younger population up to the age of 25 is anticipated to remain static at an estimated 1000 household's. It is forecast that the adult population up to the age of 64, is anticipated to decline from 65% of the population to 50%.

- 1.5 The decline reflects younger adults and families leaving the area to find employment and housing, whilst a large element of the remaining adults will become 65+ during this period.

2. The Local Housing Market

- 2.1 Housing markets are not static. They are dynamic, changeable, and thus, complex. Housing markets are driven by very large numbers of choices, changes and interactions between and even within households. An understanding of the local housing market is therefore essential over time. A comprehensive Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Gloucestershire and the six District Councils was published in March 2014 and updates on the SHMA published in January 2009 and the 2010 Housing Needs Assessment.
- 2.2 Analysis of the 2011 Census of households in the district indicates that 75% (including shared ownership) are owner-occupiers, 12% live in the affordable housing rented sector and 13% in the private rented sector. Almost half of households live in detached properties with a further 32.2% living in semi-detached dwellings.
- 2.3 In addition as at 2nd September 2016 there are currently 515 empty homes in the District, which have been vacant for more than 6 months.
- 2.4 The affordability of the housing market is one of the key issues facing the area. Whilst house prices fell moderately for several years following the financial crash of 2008, house prices over the past couple of years have steadily increased. The average house price for the Forest of Dean in the fourth quarter of 2015 was £223,032.¹ Gross weekly mean earnings in the district for 2015 were only £25,683² (Source: ASHE). Comparison of the average house price at the end of 2015 to the average earnings in the district for 2015 indicates that on average house prices are 8.7 times the average earnings.
- 2.5 As more people in the district are priced out of buying a home, inevitably the number of private renters is increasing. Analysis of the 2011 Census indicates that the Forest of Dean saw the private rented sector increase between 2001-11 by approximately 1400 homes. Private rented accommodation is also expensive. For the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 the average rent for a 3 bedroom property was £8,232 per annum, whilst a 2 bedroom home cost £6,504 annually³.

3. Understanding local housing need

- 3.1 We have several key sources of Housing Needs data which includes the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the 2010 Housing Needs Assessment and the

¹ Land Registry Sales data 2015

² ONS - Table 8.7a Annual pay - Gross (£) - For full-time employee jobs: United Kingdom, 2015

³ Valuation Office Agency (VOA) Private Rental Market Statistic Private sector rents 2015/16

2009 Strategic Housing Market Assessment In addition to these; we use our housing waiting list, Homeseeker Plus, to give us information on local need.

- 3.2 Analysis of data returns indicate that along with the rise in house prices experienced since the turn of the century, the Council has also experienced an increase in the need for rented affordable housing. In 2000, there were 1,245 households on the housing register compared to 1,928 households in as at 1st April 2016⁴.
- 3.3 The housing needs data overwhelmingly indicates that rented affordable housing is the predominant affordable housing tenure required by households seeking affordable housing. The 2014 SHMA indicates the following house types are required over the next 18 years

Size of new accommodation required in Forest of Dean over the next 18 years				
Tenure	1 Bed	2Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Market Housing	9.6%	32.3%	44.7%	13.3%
Shared Ownership	17.5%	45.5%	23.1%	13.8%
Rented Affordable Housing	28.6%	31.1%	28.4%	12.0%

⁴ Local Authority Housing Statistics return 2016