

Current information on Housing Associations appertaining to the NP area. January 2016

In addition to *Magna*, other HA's who operate in this area are *Stonewater* (was Raglan) and *Hanover* who deal specifically with sheltered housing. *Spectrum* are now part of *Magna*.

1) How many properties do you (eg. in connection with the *Magna Housing Association*) currently have in the NP Area ?

The Magna stock currently is.....

1 bed house = 19 general needs (GN)

2 Bed house = 135 GN

3 Bed house = 223 GN

4 Bed house = 16 GN

1 Bed Bungalow = 7 GN & 5 Sheltered (SH)

2 bed Bungalow = 10 GN & 1 SH

3 Bed Bungalow = 3 GN

1 Bed flat = 75 GN & 81 SH

2 Bed Flat = 209 GN & 5 SH

3 Bed Flat = 2 GN & 2 SH

2) What type (size) of properties do we need, to establish the stock in Bridport and the relevant Plan Area villages ?

There are three qualifying areas when applying for houses/flats

Currently, demand is.....

161 requiring 1 bedroom properties

71 requiring two bedroom properties

47 requiring three bedroom properties

4 requiring four bedroom properties

3) Are there enough currently to satisfy the need ? In the future ?

No and no !

The current Housing Bill will reduce the availability of houses and rentals. There will be an emphasis on shared ownership housing rather than rented accommodation. The Bill also contains the provision of *right to buy* for Housing Association tenants. There are no remaining council houses in the WDDC area, they were transferred to Housing Associations on 20th March 2000.

4) If no, what is the shortfall ?

There are 1061 applicants on the West Dorset housing register as at 21st January 2016

BBC *Spotlight* (on 21/1/2016) have broadcast the following figures.....

Total South West 65,907

Devon 32,546

Cornwall 27,729

Somerset 3,656

Dorset (total) 1,976

5) Please explain Gold, Silver, and bronze qualifying criteria ?

There is an even higher qualifying level that is *Emergency*. (see page 29 in following link)

As per link..... <http://www.homechoice.dorsetforyou.com/DorsetHomeChoice/uploads/DorsetCommonPolicyFinalPolicyv3.4.5.pdf>

6) Gold I understand is the highest, what qualifies for silver and bronze, is there a link to nos. applying, is there a tier promotion process ?

A typical prerequisite exemplified, is a person in hospital deemed to be *bed blocking*. This can give rise to an increase in status (*Emergency*) and accordingly, accommodation.

7) How are these categorised and subsequently applied ?

See 5) above.

The application is initially assessed by the Business Support team. However there is an appeal process, whereby the resident can object to the allocation of a particular banding. The application is then re-assessed by the Lettings Team Leader.

8) What are the bottlenecks in the system ?

One bedroom in *General Needs* category is the most common bottleneck in certain areas. A wait of 4 years has been experienced for such a property.

Waiting Times (West Dorset District Council) as on 21st January 2016

Type / Size	No. of Lets	Shortest wait	Longest wait	Average wait
Sheltered accomm.	394	3 days	12 years	12 months
Studio general needs	17	4 weeks	16 months	4 months
1-bed general needs	296	5 days	9 years	8 months
2-bed flat or maisonette	372	6 days	10 years	7 months
2-bed house	210	2 days	10 years	12 months
3-bed flat or maisonette	5	8 weeks	34 months	14 months
3-bed house	231	6 days	10 years	13 months
4-bed	10	10 weeks	5 years	21 months

9) How many of potential tenants were locals / locally connected (jobs) or how many are (economic) migrants?

Newly arrived economic migrants are not accommodated on the housing waiting list as the following criteria have to be adhered to...

Residency of at least 2 years in the WDDC area.

In employment for 6 months, and in a permanent position involving 16h+ per week.

In connection to close family members (parents, siblings or non-dependent children) residing in the area for a minimum of 5 years. An *open register* did exist but was cancelled in December 2014.

10) When "you made yourself homeless !" occurs how is this overcome based *perhaps* based on an unaffordable rent increase ?

Typically, notice to a tenant of 2 months is required by a landlord to evict. For a tenant to declare themselves homeless on a whim, results in no support to rehouse. Obviously extenuating circumstances eg a sudden, significant rent rise would be investigated by the Housing Advisors

11) Housing benefit, how does this work ? How is the entitlement arrived at ? (Means tested <£12k in savings, *we understand* ?)

The key thing is how much you can have in relation to your income?

What sum derives this calculation ?

This information can be found in the links.....

Local Housing Allowance calculator:-

<https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/housing-benefit/what-youll-get>

12) How many more homes do you plan to provide over the lifetime of the NP ?

This figure is unknown. It is dependent on the attraction of building low-cost housing by contractors at a future point in time.

13) Different systems....*we understand that*.....

Social rented housing qualifies for **Housing Benefit**.

Private rented housing qualifies for **Local Housing Allowance** (based on quantity of bedrooms)

A tenant moving from a property for which he was in receipt of Housing Benefit would now be re-assessed for Local Housing Allowance which is the replacement benefit.

Re the introduction of LHA;-

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Housing_Allowance

3.4 Banding

The following section provides details of the four bands. The band in which an applicant is placed will be determined by their housing need as set out in the paragraphs below. A summary of the banding scheme is provided here for information only. Each case will be assessed on its own merits in order to assess the appropriate banding.

Emergency Band	Gold Band	Silver Band	Bronze Band
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional housing need that takes priority over other applicants; • There is an urgent need to move the applicant for financial or operational reasons; • Escape violence, threat of violence, harassment or traumatic event; • Emergency disrepair issues; • Urgent health/wellbeing issue; • Witness protection scheme applicants; • Operational need to move applicant quickly (subject to certain provisions) • Applicants accepted as homeless by North Dorset District Council after 3 months; 6 months in Purbeck and in West Dorset District Council when they have been in temporary accommodation for 6 months and for Weymouth & Portland BC, and Borough of Poole when they have been in temporary accommodation for 12 months * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowded by two or more bedrooms; • Under occupation; • Severe and/or persistent harassment; • Applicants in supported housing/care leavers ready for move on (except Weymouth & Portland applicants); • High medical/welfare needs; • High disrepair needs; • Combined medical/welfare and disrepair needs; • Cumulative needs (4 or more silver band needs); • Decant applicants • Tenancy succession (subject to certain criteria) • Efficient management of housing stock • Fostering/Adoption (Subject to quota arrangements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless/threatened with homelessness; • Weymouth & Portland Borough Council applicants in supported housing ready for move on; • Medium medical/welfare needs; • Medium disrepair needs; • Overcrowded by one bedroom; • Split families; • Need to move for support (this does not apply to Purbeck District Council applicants) • Need to move for work (this does not apply to applicants to North Dorset District Council, Borough of Poole, and Purbeck District Council) • Service personnel • Community Contribution (North Dorset District Council only) • Affordability (North Dorset only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate worsening of circumstances • Applicants with other housing related debts • Low Medical/Welfare/Disrepair needs • Accepting an offer that doesn't meet housing needs • Sustainable rural housing • Sheltered housing Applicants • Shared/Low Cost ownership applicants • Unacceptable behaviour