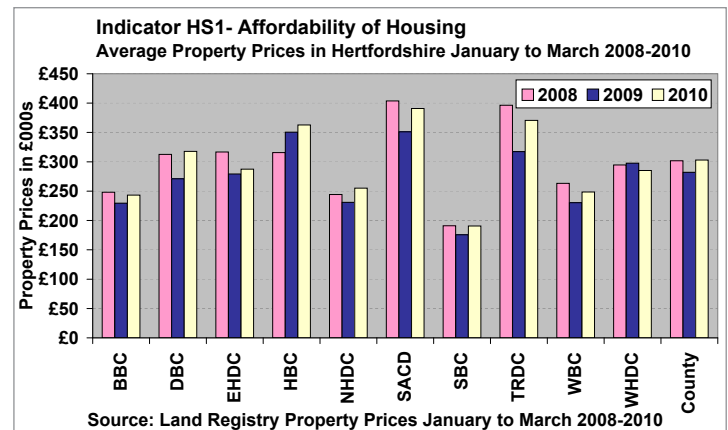


## House prices remain stable and the gap between county and the rest of England and Wales widens

In the past year Hertfordshire has seen a slight increase in house prices. This means that homeownership continues to be difficult for many households and first time buyers.

## House prices recover and volume of sales increases

There was a marginal rise in house prices taking the average price back up to just over £300,000 following a dip during 2008/09 when prices dropped to around £282,000 during the recession.



	Detached	Semi-Detached	Terraced	Flat/M'nette	Overall
BBC	£468,646	£254,663	£220,086	£134,511	£243,134
DBC	£614,803	£296,583	£230,608	£171,823	£317,810
EHDC	£450,560	£282,966	£238,027	£181,661	£287,479
HBC	£690,101	£332,007	£273,198	£240,577	£362,745
NHDC	£420,835	£254,171	£197,212	£143,438	£255,180
SACD	£643,325	£376,968	£313,463	£214,408	£390,840
SBC	£315,387	£216,736	£165,778	£137,366	£190,574
TRDC	£638,248	£315,053	£249,501	£233,473	£370,629
WBC	£510,034	£299,211	£224,005	£180,195	£248,537
WHBC	£521,860	£289,397	£209,164	£180,293	£285,130
County	£545,579	£300,217	£234,960	£182,281	£302,946

Source: UK Land Registry 2009

The most marked increases were in Three Rivers and Dacorum, whilst the only district where average house prices dropped was Welwyn Hatfield. The county has relatively high property prices so the uplift in prices means homeownership continues to be out of reach for many households, particularly first time buyers who are also affected by limited access to mortgages.

In England and Wales the average property price for all types of property was £234,000 compared with £302,000 for Hertfordshire in the same quarter. Overall, average house prices in Hertfordshire were still 29% higher than the rest of England and Wales. Prices have not fallen as much as elsewhere which actually widens the difference between the county and the rest of England and Wales by 3% when compared to the previous year's data.

## Dwellings in Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire's population is estimated to have grown by 42,900 (4.1%) between 2001 and 2008 to a total of 1.08 million people. Natural change (births minus deaths) accounts for 64.6% of this growth with net in-migration (and other changes) accounting for the remaining 35.4%.

As at 1 April 2010, Hertfordshire's growing population was accommodated within a stock of 462,168 dwellings. Over 80% of these were in the private sector, either owner occupied or privately rented. The proportion held by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) rose from 9% in 2007 to 11% in 2009. The table below shows a breakdown by districts of dwelling stock over a ten year period.

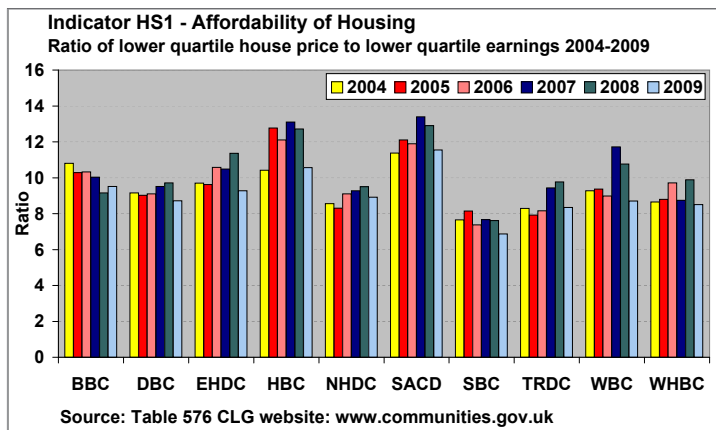
District	2001 Census (Table UV55)	Annual Net Completions			Dwelling Stock 2010
	2001	2002-2008	2009	2010	Total
BBC	35,904	2,496	179	317	38,896
DBC	56,999	2,652	414	236	60,301
EHDC	53,316	3,474	553	470	57,813
HBC	38,714	1,707	233	281	40,935
NHDC	49,870	4,148	463	334	54,815
SACD	53,748	2,504	398	272	56,922
SBC	33,226	1,324	368	233	35,151
TRDC	34,152	1,595	331	48	36,126
WBC	33,203	1,943	327	516	35,989
WHBC	40,678	4,154	327	61	45,220
County	429,810	25,997	3,593	2,768	462,168

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001 Census. HCC Development Commitments Survey 2002-2010

## Indicator HS1 - Affordability of Housing

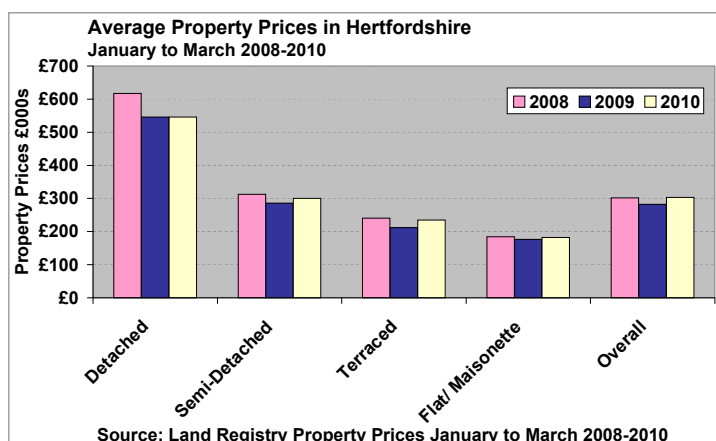
The ratio of house price to income reflects the affordability of housing. The figure for Hertfordshire remains high (9) and exceeds both the regional (7) and national (6) figures. Under the umbrella of the Government led initiative HomeBuy<sup>1</sup>, several schemes exist to increase the availability of affordable homes. HomeBuy offers shared ownership and equity loans to help lower income households to enter the housing market.

The first graph for Indicator HS1 shows the ratios of the lower quartile (lowest 25%) of house prices to the lower quartile of earnings for the 6 years to 2009 for each district in Hertfordshire. This is derived from the Land Registry's house prices data and the income data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.



In terms of dwelling type, prices for detached houses remained stable whilst semi-detached houses, terraced houses and flats/maisonettes all rose in price by between 3% and 11%.

The graph below shows the changes in prices on different types of properties.



## The private rented sector in Hertfordshire

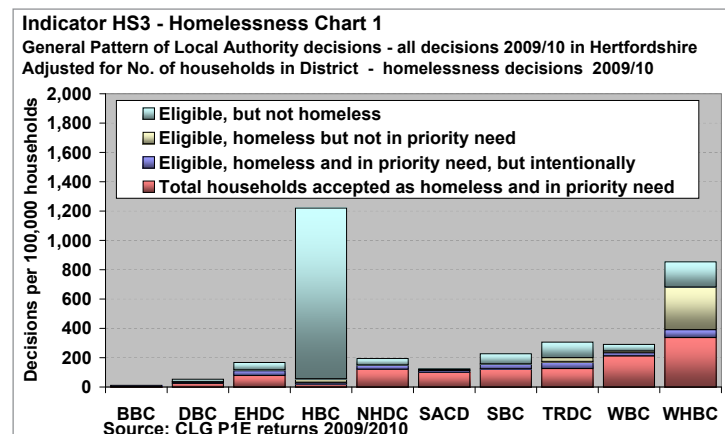
The private rented sector provides an important option for many people who cannot afford to buy a property or qualify for social rented housing. Prices in the sector are relatively high as demonstrated in the following table.

Average monthly private sector rents across Hertfordshire as at March 2010			
Local Authority	1 Bed Properties	2 Bed Properties	3 Bed Properties
BBC	£624	£749	£992
DBC	£589	£719	£988
EHDC	£572	£723	£871
HBC	£693	£849	£1,291
NHDC	£507	£650	£823
SACD	£693	£897	£1,248
SBC	£546	£671	£793
TRDC	£684	£871	£1,248
WBC	£650	£823	£949
WHBC	£619	£793	£897

Source: Hometrack

## Indicator HS3 - Homelessness

Local authorities continue to invest in homeless prevention services to reduce new cases of homelessness. During 2009/10 waiting lists increased for all districts except for Hertsmere, which saw an approximate 3% decrease.

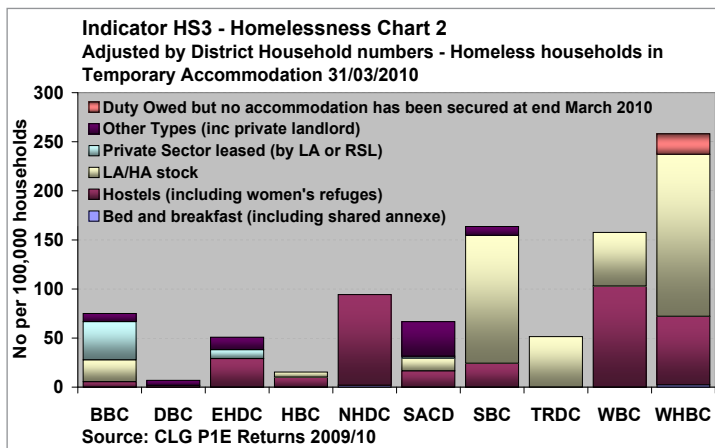


The chart above shows the numbers and reasons for homelessness acceptances by district for 2009/10, adjusted to the number per 100,000 households (based on 2004 mid-year estimates). The highest adjusted number of households homeless and in priority need continues to be in Welwyn Hatfield with over 350 households, whilst Broxbourne was the lowest.

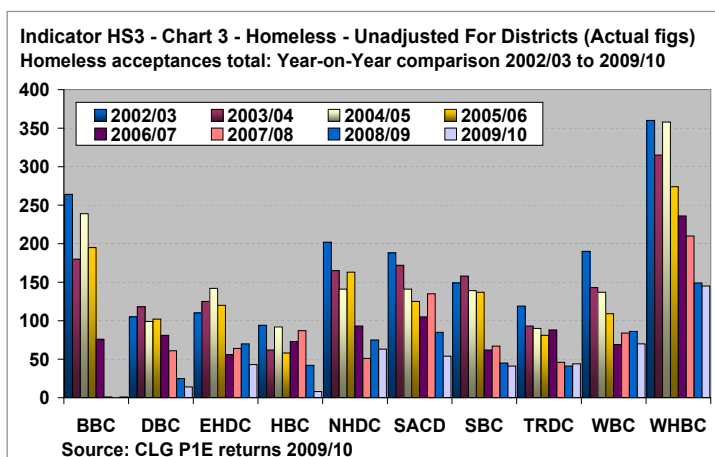
# housing



In order to meet their statutory duties with regard to homelessness, all Hertfordshire districts use temporary accommodation which generally ranges from private sector, through to local authority/RSL properties and hostels. The following graph shows Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield have the highest adjusted figure for homeless households in temporary accommodation whilst Dacorum has the lowest figure.



The final graph shows a continuing trend downwards in homelessness acceptances cases across the county, attributed to the development of housing options services and early interventions in case work. This work can prevent households becoming statutorily homeless through the provision of alternative housing opportunities.



## Waiting lists

Local authority waiting lists are open to anyone to join and therefore do not necessarily accurately portray actual housing need or households in unsuitable housing within an individual district. However, they can be viewed as a barometer of households' desire to live in a social housing property at any one time.

The following table shows that in 9 out of 10 local authorities waiting lists have lengthened between 2009 and 2010.

Housing Waiting Lists 2009 - 2010				
	Waiting list as at 31/03/09	Waiting list as at 31/03/10	Change +/-	Change %
BBC	1,784	2,372	588	33%
DBC	5,374	5,863	489	9%
EHDC	2,502	2,699	197	8%
HBC	1,803	1,750	-53	-3%
NHDC	1,939	2,378	439	23%
SADC	1,596	1,803	207	13%
SBC	3,807	4,689	882	23%
TRDC	2,318	2,768	450	19%
WBC	3,456	3,776	320	9%
WHBC	3,001	3,139	138	5%

Source: HSSA 2010 (full information held by CLG)



**'Outlook Place'** a new social housing development in Watford, Hertfordshire

<sup>1</sup>For more details on HomeBuy see: [www.homebuy.co.uk](http://www.homebuy.co.uk)