East Dorset District Council

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Private Sector House Condition Survey 2008

September 2008

FINAL REPORT

East Dorset District Council

Working in partnership with

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Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

Private sector House Condition Surveys (HCS) are conducted on a regular basis by local authorities as a means of maintaining a detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector. Such a picture forms a useful evidence base on which to build strategies, inform investment decisions and feed into statistical returns and other internal reports. The information is also useful to contribute to and comply with the potential obligations on the authority in relation to current housing legislation:

- Section 3 Housing Act 2004
- Regulatory Reform Order (RRO)

This House Condition Survey was a sample survey covering all private sector tenures and registered social landlord (RSL) properties in order to gain a representative picture across the district. The survey was based on a stratified random sample of addresses in East Dorset. A sample of 1,600 was drawn with 814 surveys being undertaken in total.

Comparisons to the position for all England are drawn from, in some instances, the 2004 English House Condition Surveys (EHCS) but more specifically from the 2005 EHCS and, where possible, from the headline results of the EHCS 2006, all of which are published by Communities and Local Government (CLG) and available as a download document from their website.

This report details the results of the survey and includes a comprehensive description of East Dorset's general housing stock profile and its residents. It then details how the housing stock compares to each element of the Decent Homes Standard. The report concludes by considering the relationships that exists between residents and dwelling conditions and finally the policy implications of the reports findings.

Profile of the Private Sector Housing Stock

The tenure profile of the housing stock is shown below.

Tenure	East Dorset 2008		EHCS 2005
Owner occupied	33,000	85%	71%
Housing association (RSL)	2,800	7%	8%
Private rented	2,900	8%	11%
Local Authority*	0	0%	10%
Total	38,700	100%	100%

Source: East Dorset Private Sector House Condition Survey 2008

** Local authority figures are shown here for comparative purposes. Figures given generally throughout the report are in relation to the private sector only.*

The tenure profile in East Dorset differs from the national average in that there is a much higher proportion of owner occupied dwellings (85% as opposed to 71% for England). The proportion of privately rented stock at 7% is appreciably lower than the national average of 11%. RSL properties have similar proportions at 7% compared to 8% nationally.

The following list gives some additional key features of East Dorset's housing stock and population.

- A Greater proportion of the housing stock was built after 1965.
- The stock is dominated by bungalows, detached and semi-detached houses.
- More older residents, 60 and over (55.8%).
- Average incomes are slightly higher than those reported in the EHCS 2005 but if the EHCS figures are adjusted to take account of inflation they are slightly lower, with 36% below £15,000.
- Benefit receipt at 27% is above the 17% average (mainly single parent, lone older and lone adult households).

Decent Homes Standard

It is Government policy that everyone should have the opportunity of living in a "decent home". The Decent Homes Standard contains four broad criteria that a property should:

A - be above the legal minimum standard for housing (the property should be free from category 1 hazards as assessed by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), and

B - be in a reasonable state of repair, and

C - have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and services, and

D - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

If a dwelling fails any one of these criteria it is considered to be "non decent". The following characteristics were identified in relation to non decency in East Dorset:

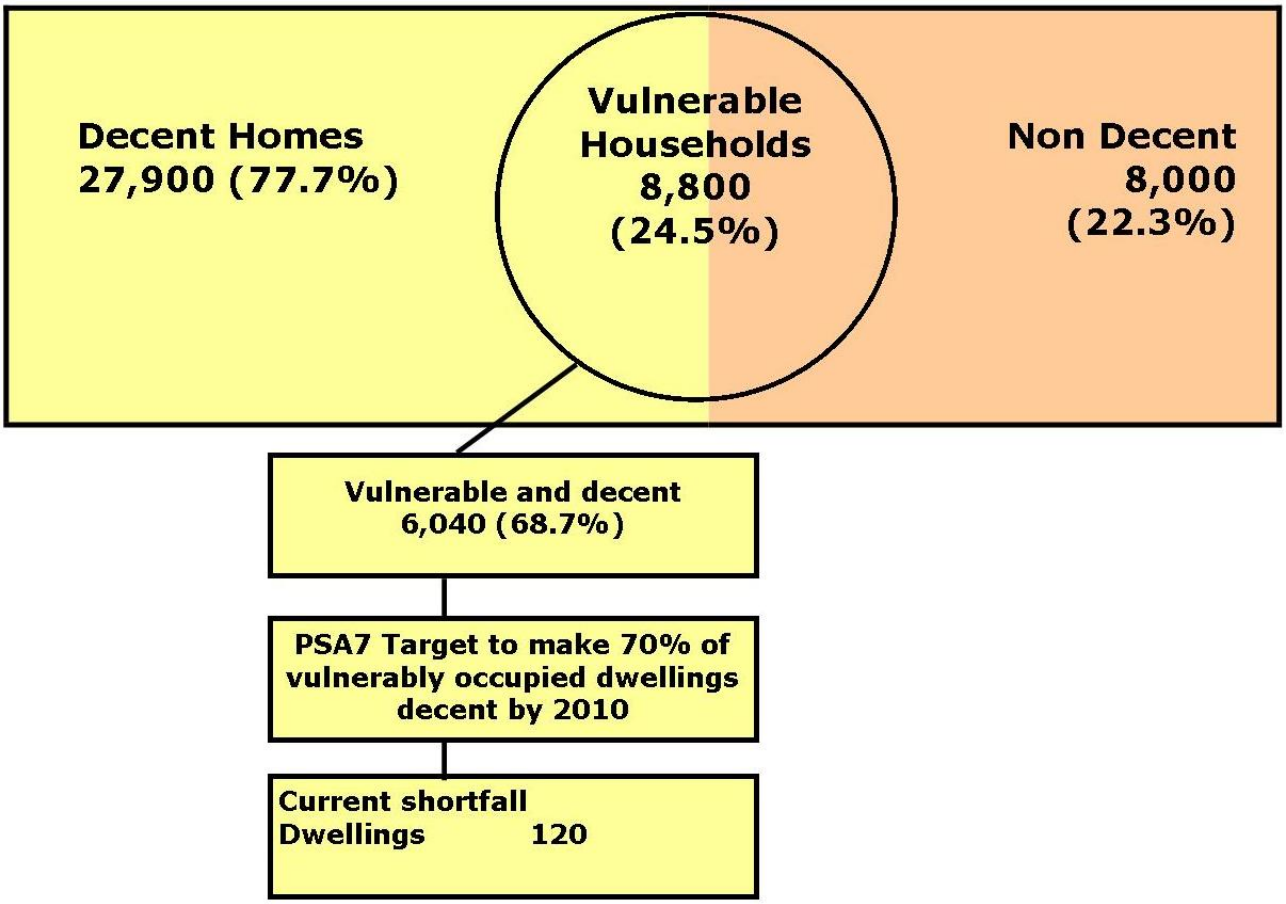
	Private Sector and RSL Non Decent	% Private Sector and RSL Non Decent	England % Non decent
East Dorset	**8,700**	**22.4%**	**36.7%**

- Non decency, at 22.4%, is substantially lower than the national average (EHCS 2006 = 36.7%)
- The failure rate of the Decent Homes Standard is largely driven by properties failure to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (Criterion D) and Category 1 hazards for 'Excess Cold' identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Criteria A).

The following diagram illustrates the position in relation to the government's former Public Service Agreement 7 (PSA7). This agreement is aimed at ensuring vulnerable occupiers in private sector housing (excluding RSL dwellings) have the opportunity of living in a decent home. It requires that 70% of vulnerable occupiers be able to live in a decent home by the year 2010 and 75% by 2020.

Decent Homes Standard and Vulnerable Occupiers

Private Sector Dwelling Stock 35,900



The diagram illustrates that there is currently a 120 dwelling shortfall against the 2010 decent homes target. 68.7% of vulnerable households, in the private sector, are living in decent homes, a figure that needs to be raised to 70% by 2010.

As has been detailed above, the Decent Homes Standard contains 4 criteria. The table below gives a breakdown of the reasons for failure in East Dorset.

Reasons for failure of dwellings as a decent home

Reason	Dwellings	Percent (of non decent)	Percent (of stock)	Percent (EHCS 2006)
Unfit dwellings	1,600	18.4%	4.1%	N/a
Category 1 hazard dwellings	3,800	43.8%	9.8%	22.4%
In need of repair	1,900	21.9%	4.8%	7.9%
Lacking modern facilities	400	4.6%	1.1%	2.2%
Poor degree of thermal comfort	5,700	65.7%	14.7%	18.3%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2006 EHCS

The percentages of reasons for failure, by non decent dwellings, do not total 100%. This reflects the fact that the categories are not mutually exclusive; although any dwelling can fail on just one criterion, it may fail on two or more.

In East Dorset, the hierarchy of reasons for failure differs slightly to that of the national profile with thermal comfort failure and Category 1 hazards being reversed hierarchically.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System: Category 1 hazards

One of the most significant changes under the Housing Act 2004 was a change in the minimum standard for housing. The fitness standard was removed and replaced by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a prescribed method of assessing individual hazards, rather than a general standard to give a judgment of fit or unfit. The HHSRS is evidence based – national statistics on the health impacts of hazards encountered in the home are used as a basis for assessing individual hazards.

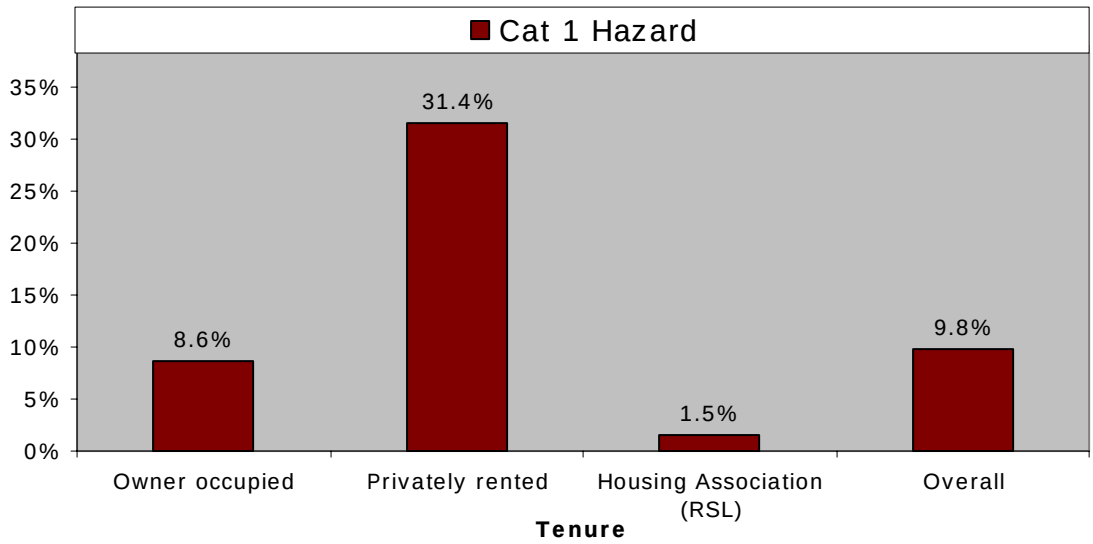
The HHSRS system deals with a much broader range of issues than the previous fitness standard. It covers a total of 29 hazards in four main groups:

- *Physiological Requirements* (e.g. damp & mould growth, excess cold, asbestos, carbon monoxide, radon, etc)
- *Psychological Requirements* (crowding and space, entry by intruders, lighting, noise)
- *Protection Against Infection* (domestic hygiene, food safety, personal hygiene, water supply)
- *Protection Against Accidents* (e.g. falls on the level, on stairs and steps and between levels, electrical hazards, fire, collision, etc).

The following indicates some of the key points in relation to hazards affecting properties in East Dorset:

- Primary hazard failures in East Dorset are Excessive Cold, Falls on Stairs and Falls on the Level.
- Category 1 hazards are strongly associated with older dwellings occupied by those over 65, those on lower incomes and benefit receipt and those with a disability,
- Category 1 hazards are strongly associated with privately rented dwellings.

The distribution of Category 1 hazards by tenure is given below.

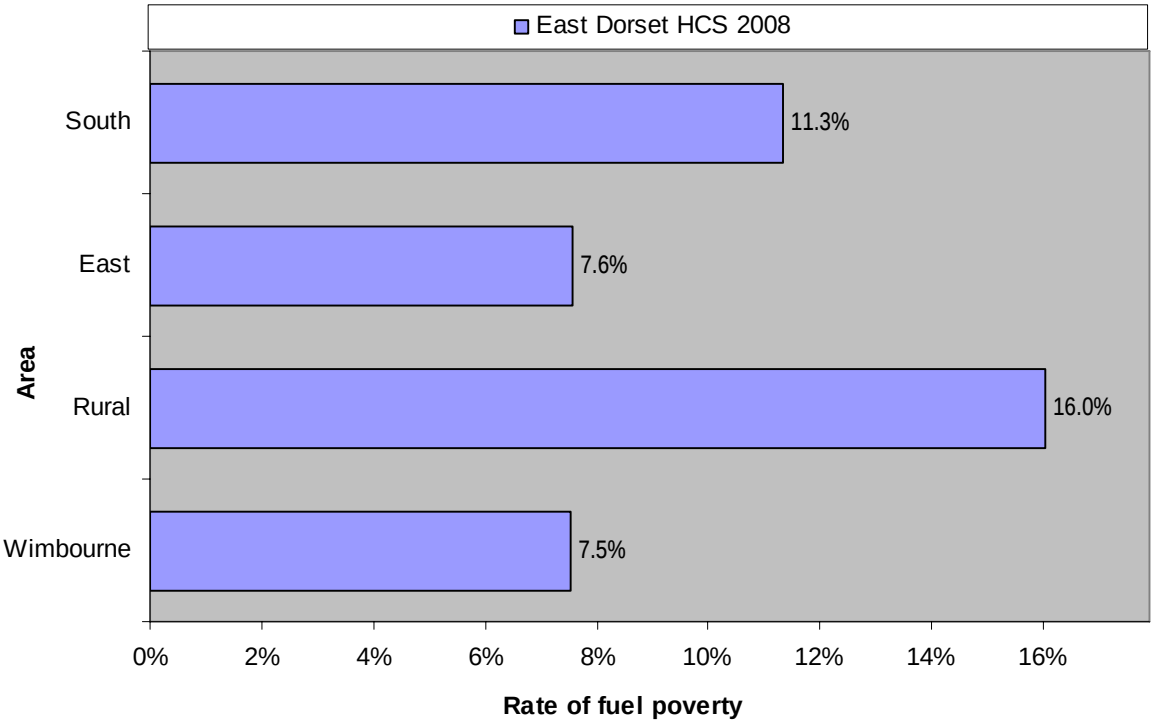


Thermal Comfort and Energy Efficiency

Thermal Comfort and energy efficiency is a key consideration in the Decent Homes Standard and private sector housing generally and the following illustrates some of the issues in East Dorset:

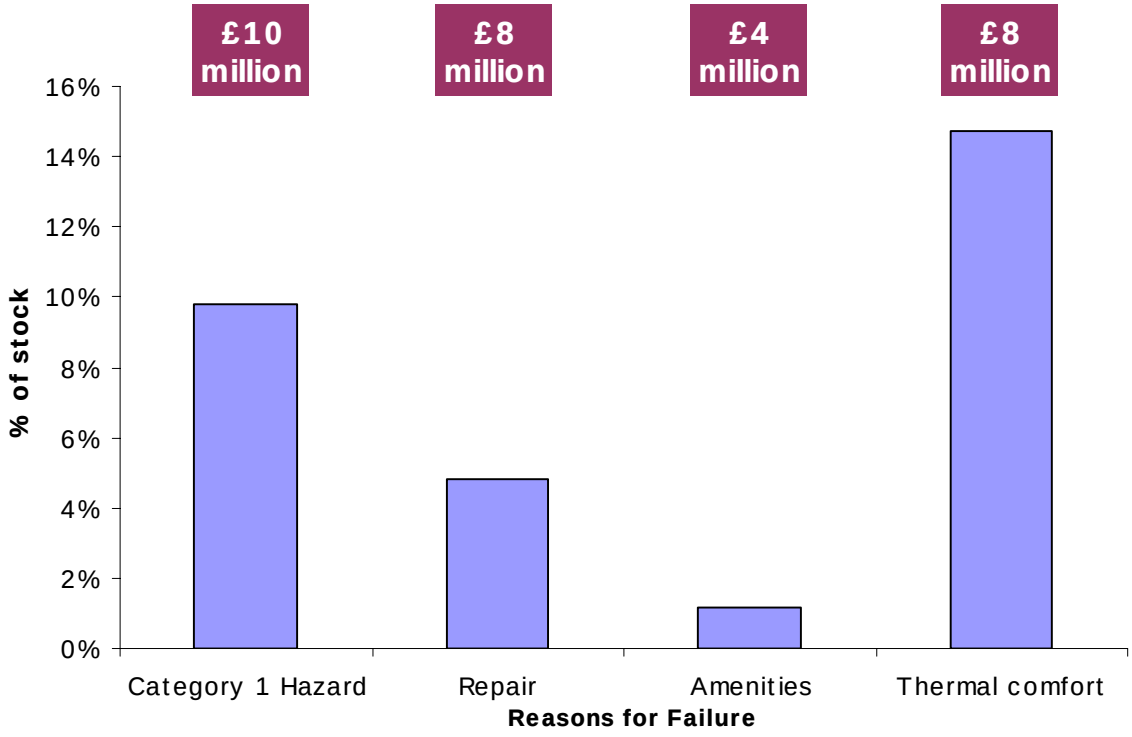
- The cost to remedy the 4,200 dwellings occupied by those in fuel poverty (i.e. spending more than 10% of income on heating) is £12.2 million.
- The mean SAP (energy rating on a scale of 0 (poor) to 100 (good) is 52 in East Dorset which is higher than that found nationally (46).
- The less energy efficient dwellings are older dwellings (pre 1919); semi detached houses and privately rented dwellings
- Improving energy efficiency will contributes towards a range of East Dorset's corporate priorities
- The level of excess cold hazards is an issue given the numbers of older residents in East Dorset
- Fuel poverty is far more likely to affect households in rural area of the district as the graph below illustrates.

Fuel poverty by sub-area



Cost implications for repair and improvement

The following graph illustrates the total cost of remedying each of the causes of non decency listed. These costs are the total sum that would be needed for remedial work, regardless of the source of funding.



What of the future?

The comprehensive spending review by the government, published in late 2007, will have a significant impact on private sector housing. The principal change relates to the priorities that local authorities are expected be measured against. All previous targets, including Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) have been removed and replaced with Public Service Agreements (PSAs) relating to 198 national indicators.

Effects of the comprehensive spending review include:

- Removal of the PSA7 target for decent homes (as a national indicator, but monitoring likely to continue at a regional level)
- Flexible target setting for individual authorities from the list of 198 PSA and national targets. Most relevant to the condition of private sector housing are:
  - PSA17 Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life;
  - PSA20 Increase long term housing supply and affordability;
  - NI 186 Per Capita CO2 emissions
  - NI 187 Fuel Poverty

The national housing agenda is changing priorities, and moving away from dwelling condition toward:

provision of sufficient affordable housing for all

the health, safety and well being of occupiers

reduction in carbon emissions through improved energy efficiency

East Dorset's private sector housing stock has a lower level of non decency than that found nationally, particularly with category 1 hazard failures. Practical issues regarding improvement to older dwellings still exist, and meeting national priorities especially for improving energy efficiency will be challenging in many cases.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the survey

1.1.1 Private sector House Condition Surveys (HCS) are conducted on a regular basis by local authorities as a means of maintaining a detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector. Such a picture forms a useful evidence base that can feed into statistical returns and other internal reports. The information is also useful in presenting the potential obligations on the authority in relation to current housing legislation.

1.1.2 Section 605 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) placed a duty on Local authorities to consider the condition of the stock within their area, in terms of their statutory responsibilities to deal with unfit housing, and to provide assistance with housing renewal. Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 replaced this with a similar duty to keep housing conditions under review. In 2007 East Dorset District Council commissioned a comprehensive House Condition Survey to address this legal requirement, and also to inform the housing strategy and other housing policies. The house condition survey was conducted in the early part of 2008.

1.1.3 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 came into effect on the 19 July 2003 and led to a major change in the way Local authorities can give financial help for people to repair or improve private sector homes. Before the Order, the Government set clear rules which controlled the way financial help could be given and specified the types of grant which could be offered. The Order set aside most of these rules (apart from the requirement to give mandatory Disabled Facility Grants). It now allows Local authorities to adopt a flexible approach, using discretion to set up their own framework for giving financial assistance to reflect local circumstances, needs and resources.

1.1.4 In 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), published guidance under Circular 05/2003. In order to use the new freedom, a Local Authority must prepare and publish a Private Sector Renewal Policy. The policy must show that the new framework for financial assistance is consistent with national, regional and local policies. In particular, it has to show that the local priorities the strategy is seeking to address have been identified from evidence of local housing conditions including stock condition.

1.1.5 The Housing Act 2004 received Royal Assent in November 2004. The Act makes a number of important changes to the statutory framework for private sector housing, which came into effect in April 2006:

- The existing fitness standard and the enforcement system have been replaced by the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- The compulsory licensing of higher risk houses in multiple occupation (HMO) (three or more storeys, five or more tenants and two or more households).
- New discretionary powers including the option for selective licensing of private landlords, empty dwelling management orders and tenancy deposit protection.

1.1.6 Operating Guidance was published on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System in February 2006. This guidance describes the new system and the methods for measurement of hazards, as well as the division of category 1 and 2 hazards. Guidance has been issued by the ODPM on the licensing provisions for HMOs, which describes the high risk HMOs that require mandatory licensing and those that fall under additional, voluntary licensing.

1.1.7 As the Rating System has now replaced the fitness standard, this report will deal with findings based on statutory hazards, not unfitness.

Mandatory Duties

- Unfit houses (Housing Act 1985) - to take the most satisfactory course of action – works to make property fit, closure/demolition or clearance declaration.

With effect from April 2006 replaced by:

- Category 1 Hazards, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Housing Act 2004) – to take the most satisfactory course of action – improvement notices, prohibition orders, hazard awareness notices, emergency remedial action, emergency prohibition orders, demolition orders or slum clearance declaration.

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (Housing Act 1985) - to inspect certain HMOs, to keep a register of notices served, to require registration where a registration scheme is in force.

With effect from April 2006 replaced by:

- HMO Licensing by the Authority (Housing Act 2004) of all HMOs of three or more storeys, with five or more residents and two or more households. Certain exceptions apply and are defined under sections 254 to 259 of the Housing Act 2004.

- Overcrowding - (Housing Act 1985) - to inspect and report on overcrowding

Now In Addition

- Overcrowding – (Housing Act 2004) – to inspect and report on overcrowding as defined under sections 139 to 144 of the Housing Act 2004 along with statutory duty to deal with any category 1 overcrowding hazards found under the HHSRS.

- The provision of adaptations and facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996) - to approve applications for Disabled Facilities Grants for facilities and/or access
- Energy Conservation (Home Energy Conservation Act 1995) - to have in place a strategy for the promotion and adoption of energy efficiency measures and to work towards specified Government targets to reduce fossil fuel use.

1.1.8 In addition to the mandatory duties outlined above there are a number of non-mandatory powers available to the Authority under the Housing Act 2004. These include: taking the most satisfactory course of action in relation to category 2 hazards under the HHSRS (hazard categories are defined in chapter 5 of this report); additional licensing of HMOs that do not fall under the definition for mandatory licensing and serving of overcrowding notices. Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, provides for selective licensing of other private rented sector accommodation subject to certain conditions being met.

1.1.9 This report will provide much of the evidence base, recommended under the ODPM guidance 05/2003, for the Authority's private sector renewal strategy. In addition, information in the report is likely to prove useful as a source for a wide variety of private sector housing issues.

1.2 Nature of the survey

1.2.1 The survey was a sample survey of a nominal 800 dwellings and covered all private sector tenures as well as including registered social landlord (RSL) properties. The survey was based on a stratified random sample of addresses in East Dorset, incorporating a 25% longitudinal sample from the last survey, in order to gain a representative picture across the district. A sample of 1,600 was drawn with, in practice, 814 surveys being undertaken in total.

1.2.2 Each of the 814 surveys conducted contained information on the following areas: General characteristics of the dwelling; condition of the internal and external fabric; provision of amenities; compliance with the fitness standard; compliance with housing health and safety; age and type of elements; energy efficiency measures; compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and socio-economic information about the household (where occupied).

1.2.3 On the basis of the detailed projections produced by this model survey sampling was conducted on four sub areas: South, East, Rural and Wimborne. The rationale behind selecting these sub-areas is described in section 1.5 on sub-area analysis.

1.3 Central Government Guidance on house condition surveys

1.3.1 The 1993 Department of the Environment Local House Condition Survey Guidance Manual sets out a methodology that includes a detailed survey form in a modular format, and a step-by-step guide to survey implementation.

1.3.2 The 1993 guidance was updated in 2000 and under the new guidance local authorities are encouraged to make full use of the data gathered from house condition surveys in conjunction with data from other sources. Also included is guidance on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. The 2008 East Dorset District Council HCS followed the ODPM 2000 guidance.

1.3.3 The Comprehensive Local Authority Stock Survey Information Collation (CLASSIC) software system (a CPC package) was used to analyse the results of the survey and to produce the outputs required from the data to write this report.

1.4 Comparative statistics

1.4.1 Comparisons to the position for all England are drawn from the 2005 English House Condition Survey (EHCS), published by the ODPM and available as a download document from their website. This document is considerably shorter than the 2003 EHCS and in some cases comparisons are still made to the 2003 and 2004 EHCS or to figures modelled up to the 2005 position based on 2003 EHCS ratios applied pro rata. The headline results from the 2006 EHCS have been published but these are partial only. At the time of the production of this report the full EHCS 2006 report had not been published.

1.5 Sub-area analysis

1.5.1 The sampling was based on a very detailed regime to give a representative picture of the stock as a whole. Although the sample was drawn at the neighbourhood level, these areas are far too small to allow for meaningful reporting due to the level of statistical variance that occurs when looking at extremely small samples. As a consequence the survey findings were grouped into four geographic areas (a number of sub-areas which still allows effective analysis of the results given the overall sample size).

Table 1.1 Sub areas

Parish	Area
ST LEONARDS AND ST IVES	South
COLEHILL	South
CORFE MULLEN	South
WEST PARLEY	South
WEST MOORS	South
FERNDOWN	South
VERWOOD	East
ALDERHOLT	East
HINTON PARVA	Rural
HINTON MARTELL	Rural
GUSSAGE ST MICHAEL	Rural
GUSSAGE ALL SAINTS	Rural
CRANBORNE	Rural
MORE CRICHEL	Rural
CHALBURY	Rural
EDMONDSHAM	Rural
HOLT	Rural
LONG CRICHEL	Rural
WOODLANDS	Rural
PAMPHILL	Rural
PENTRIDGE	Rural
SHAPWICK	Rural
SIXPENNY HANDLEY	Rural
STURMINSTER MARSHALL	Rural
WIMBORNE ST GILES	Rural
WITCHAMPTON	Rural
HORTON	Rural
WIMBORNE MINSTER	Wimborne

Table 1.2 Private Sector stock totals by sub-area

Areas	Dwellings	Percent
South	24,000	62.0%
East	7,600	19.6%
Rural	3,900	10.1%
Wimborne	3,200	8.3%
Total	**38,700**	**100%**

1.5.2 Whilst the bulk of this report considers all of the tenure groups surveyed (owner occupied, privately rented and RSL) where vulnerability is concerned and the authority's position in respect of the former PSA 7 target which dealt with the number of vulnerable private sector households in non decent homes, only the private sector stock is included and not the RSL stock. Even though the PSA 7 target ceased to apply after 1 April 2008, it is still included in the Communities and Local Government (CLG), Departmental Strategic Objective DSO2 (To improve the supply, environmental performance and quality of housing that is more responsive to the needs of individuals, communities and the economy) indicator 2.8 (percentage of vulnerable households in decent houses in the private sector).

1.6 Statistical Variance and Standard Deviation

1.6.1 By definition, sample surveys are seeking to give an accurate representation of a larger number of dwellings than those surveyed. The total to be represented is referred to in statistical terms as the 'population', and in the case of this survey the population is all private sector dwellings in East Dorset. Because any figure from a survey is based on a sample, it will be subject to some degree of variation. This statistical variance can be expressed in terms of 'confidence limits' and 'standard deviation'.

1.6.2 Standard deviation is the amount by which a given figure may be inaccurate either above or below its stated level. Confidence limits state that if the entire survey process were repeated, out of how many of these repetitions would there be confidence in staying within the variation. Traditionally, and in the case of this report, 95% confidence limits have been used, which state that if the survey were carried out 100 times, in 95 cases the standard deviation would be a given amount.

1.6.3 It should be borne in mind, therefore, that the figures in this report are estimates, and it is for this reason that figures are rounded, as described below. More detail on the calculation of standard deviation is given in the appendices.

1.7 Presentation of figures

1.7.1 Due to the nature of statistical variation, as outlined above, it is not necessary to quote each individual figure to the nearest dwelling, as

this implies a spurious level of accuracy. As with the English House Condition Survey (EHCS), figures in this report are either quoted to the nearest 100 dwellings or 10 dwellings, dependent upon the size of any given figure. Percentages within the report are only quoted to 1 decimal place for the same reason.

1.8 Key points

1.8.1 This Stock Condition Survey helps East Dorset District Council to meet specific statutory requirements and will help to inform future housing policy formulation.

1.8.2 Of a random sample of 1,600 properties, 814 surveys were completed.

1.8.3 The survey sample is split into four sub areas: South, East, Rural and Wimborne.

1.8.4 The results of this survey are accurate to 95% confidence limits.

2 Profile of the private sector housing stock

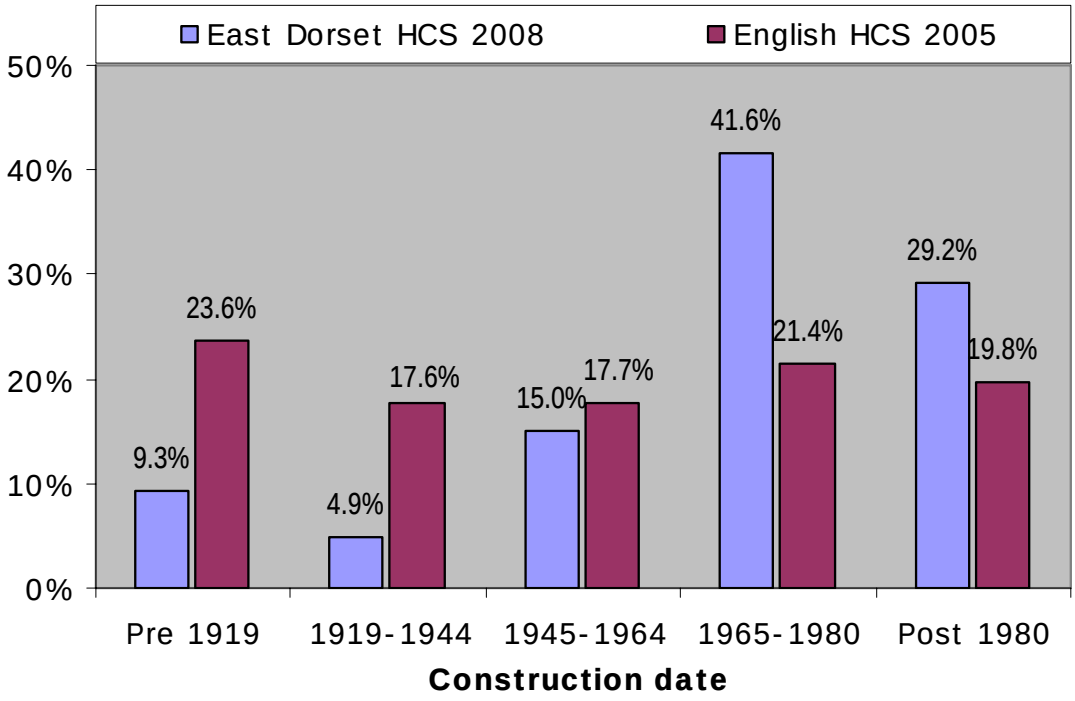
2.1 Size of the dwelling stock

2.1.1 At the time of the survey there were an estimated 38,700 private sector dwellings in East Dorset. The 38,700 total for the stock is the current estimated private sector and RSL stock total, as provided by East Dorset District Council and based on Council Tax Records. Individual weights were created for each dwelling surveyed, in accordance with the stratified sampling regime, such that each survey would represent a specific number of dwellings within East Dorset. Details of the sample stratification and weighting method are given in the Appendices.

2.2 Age of the dwelling stock

2.2.1 The age profile of the total private stock of 38,700 dwellings in East Dorset differs substantially from the average for England in that the stock profile contains a much lower proportions of dwellings built pre 1944, slightly lower levels of 1945 to 1964 stock, but with significantly higher proportions of stock built after 1964.

Figure 2.1 Dwelling age profile England and East Dorset

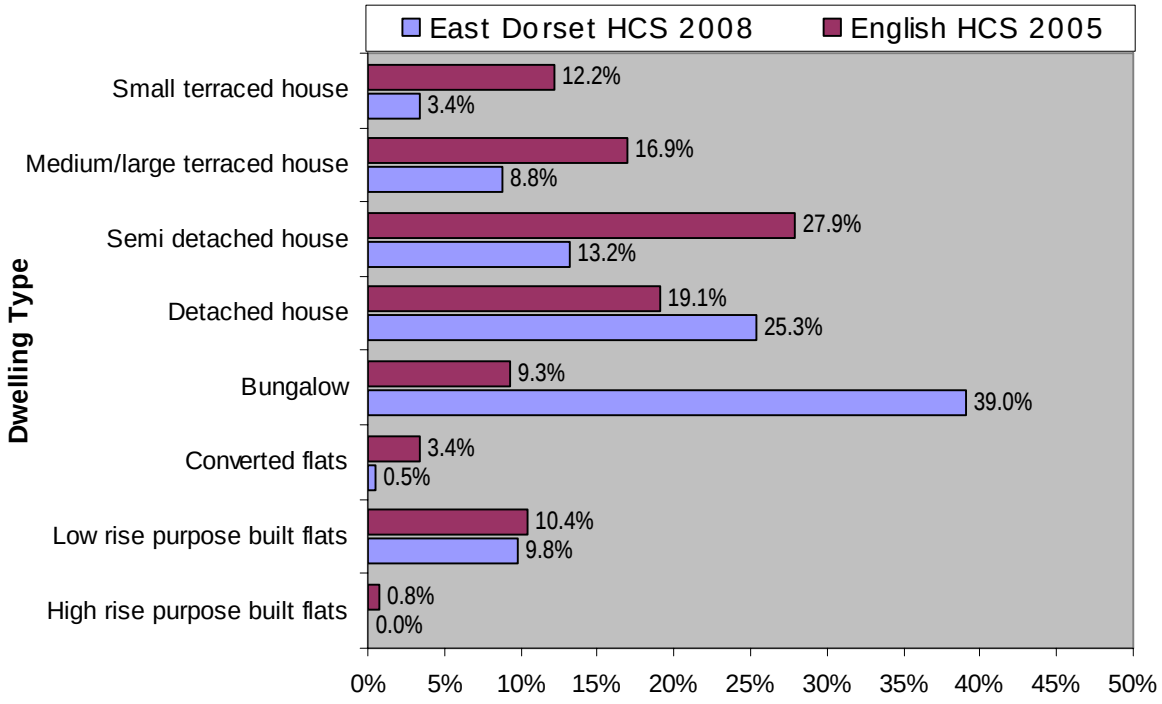


Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

2.3 Dwelling type profile

2.3.1 The building type profile in East Dorset again differs from the national pattern with much lower levels of small and medium/large terraced houses; semi detached houses and converted flats. Low rise purpose built flats (five or less storeys) have similar proportions. There are significantly higher proportions of bungalows and detached houses.

Figure 2.2 Dwelling type profile East Dorset and England



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

2.4 Tenure

2.4.1 Table 2.1 draws tenure comparisons between the stock profile for East Dorset and that for England as a whole.

Table 2.1 Tenure proportions

Tenure	Dwellings	Percent	EHCS 2005
Owner occupied	33,000	85%	71%
Privately Rented	2,900	7%	11%
Private Sector Stock	***35,900***	***93%***	***82%***
Housing Association (RSL)	2,800	7%	8%
Local Authority	0	0%	10%
Social Housing	***2,800***	***7%***	***18%***
All Tenures	**38,700**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

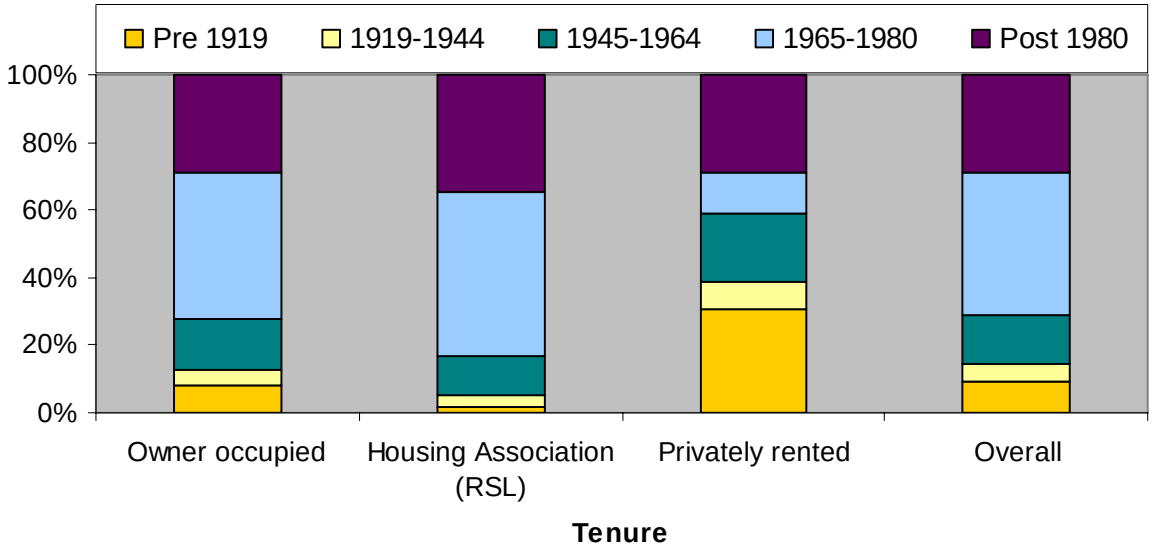
2.4.2 The breakdown given in Table 2.1 includes local authority tenure for the sake of comparative purposes with the EHCS, even though East Dorset has transferred their housing stock.

2.4.3 The tenure profile in East Dorset differs from the national average in that there is a much higher proportion of owner occupied dwellings (85% as opposed to 71% for England). The proportion of privately rented stock at 7% is appreciably lower than the national average of 11%. RSL properties have similar proportions at 7% compared to 8% nationally.

2.5 Tenure and age comparisons

2.5.1 Figure 2.3 illustrates the differing dwelling age profile between the main private tenures.

Figure 2.3 Tenure by date of construction



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

2.5.2 As would be expected, the owner occupied stock (at 85% of all dwellings) has a similar age profile to the overall stock position, with 72.4% of the stock built post 1964 compared with 70.8% in the overall stock. The privately rented sector has a higher proportion of pre 1919 dwellings with 30.4% built before this date, compared with 9.3% overall.

2.6 Dwelling Use and Houses in Multiple Occupation

2.6.1 Dwellings may be one of several different building types but these types may have different uses, for example a semi-detached house may have been converted into flats or be occupied as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Table 2.2 Dwelling use

Dwelling use	Dwellings	Percent
House	34,850	90.05%
Converted flat	170	0.44%
Purpose built flat	3,650	9.43%
Licensable HMO	10	0.03%
Other HMO	20	0.05%
Total	**38,700**	**100%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

2.6.2 The vast majority of dwellings (90.05%) are houses generally occupied as built. Of the remainder, most are purpose built or converted flats. An estimated 0.08% of dwellings are HMOs, representing just 30 buildings being used to house multiple households. The national average for HMOs is approximately 2%.

2.6.3 The definition of HMO is that used in the Housing Act 2004, of which only some will potentially be subject to mandatory licensing (described below). Some converted flats are now within the new HMO definition as it explicitly includes converted flats where the work does not meet specified standards (generally the Building Regulations 1991) and where less than two thirds are owner occupied.

2.6.4 HMOs form only a very small proportion of East Dorset District Council's stock and only 10 (0.03%) of potentially licensable HMOs were found. It should be borne in mind that figures from the survey are estimates derived from the sample of properties inspected and are therefore subject to variation. The authority should still take steps to confirm the numbers and location of any HMOs that may be subject to mandatory licensing.

2.7 Vacant dwellings

2.7.1 Vacant dwellings can be difficult to identify and there are frequently problems in gaining access. By using a combination of sources, including the survey, Council Tax lists, the Census and the council's own figures, it has been possible to estimate that there are 490 dwellings, 1.3% of the private housing stock, within East Dorset, that are considered vacant. The national average is approximately 3.5%.

2.7.2 From the stock condition survey it is estimated that 240 (0.6%) of the private sector and RSL dwellings within East Dorset are long-term vacant, defined as any dwelling vacant for six months or more, or subject to unauthorised occupation.

Table 2.3 All dwellings by Occupancy Status

Vacancy Status	Dwellings	Percent
Occupied	38,210	98.7%
Vacant for sale	120	0.3%
Vacant being modernised*	90	0.2%
Vacant to let	40	0.1%
Long term vacant*	240	0.6%
Total vacant dwellings	**490**	**1.3%**
Total stock	**38,700**	**100.0%**

** Includes vacant dwellings to let where they are being modernised prior to letting or have not been let for over 6 months*

2.7.3 The overall estimated proportion of long term vacant properties at 0.6% is well below the average for England (approximately 1.5%), with the estimated 240 long-term vacant properties representing a wasted resource, something that the Council may wish to pursue having regard to the additional powers granted by the Housing Act 2004 to deal with long term vacant dwellings.

2.8 Key points

2.8.1 There is an estimated 38,700 private sector dwellings in East Dorset.

2.8.2 70.8% of properties were built after 1964.

2.8.3 85% of properties in East Dorset are owner occupied, 7% are privately rented, with 7% owned by Registered Social Landlords.

2.8.4 It is estimated that there are approximately 240 long term vacant dwellings which have been empty for more than 6 months.

3 Profile of Residents

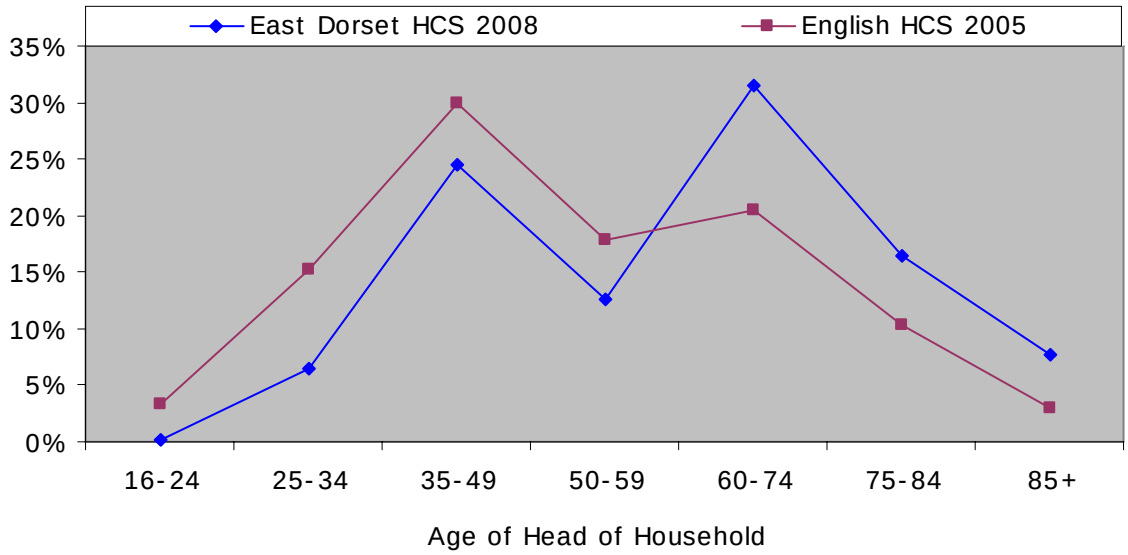
3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This chapter will look at some of the key characteristics of households within the surveyed dwellings to determine whether links exist with dwelling condition.

3.2 Age Profile

3.2.1 The following chart examines the age distribution of heads of household within the stock, both for East Dorset and for England as a whole.

Figure 3.1 Age of head of household East Dorset and England



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

3.2.2 The survey found the age profile of heads of household in East Dorset differs substantially from the national position. There are lower proportions of heads of household in those age bands 16 to 59 years but with substantially higher proportions in those age bands 60 and over (55.8% compared with 33.8%), particularly in the 60 to 74 age band (31.5% compared with 20.4%). The significantly higher proportions of those aged 60 and over does have potential implications for private sector housing policy due to the greater need for support associated with older households.

3.3 Household types

3.3.1 The following table gives the distribution of different household types, within the stock, and compares this to England as a whole. Household types are derived from interviewing occupiers and determining the number of adults and children within the household. These figures are

then used to determine household type. For example, two or more adults with one or more children are considered a 'traditional family' for the purposes of this analysis.

Table 3.1 Household type distribution

Household type	East Dorset 2008		England 2004
Adult group (3+ adults)	3,600	9.3%	7%
Lone Adult	2,000	5.2%	12%
Lone Older (60+ years)	7,900	20.4%	15%
Single Parent	1,300	3.4%	8%
Traditional Family	8,000	20.7%	23%
Two Adults	15,700	40.6%	33%
Vacant	200	0.5%	2%
Total Household Type	**38,700**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2004 EHCS

3.3.2 The most notable difference between East Dorset and England is the significantly lower proportion of lone adult households at 5.2% compared with the national average of 12%. Single parent households and traditional families are also lower than that found nationally. Conversely, the proportions of two adult, lone older and adult group households have higher proportions.

3.4 Length of residence

3.4.1 When asked how long has someone in the present household lived in the property, the following results were obtained, which show that significant proportions have lived in the same property for five years or less, particularly in the Wimborne sub-area. Similar data taken from the Survey of English Housing 2006/2007, shows that 35.8% of residents had lived in their dwellings for between one and five years, which compares against the 37.9% for the authority area as a whole.

Table 3.2 Length of residence

Area Name	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	21 to 25 years	26 to 30 years	Over 30 years
South	38.5%	18.1%	11.4%	12.3%	7.1%	5.0%	7.6%
East	36.6%	23.2%	7.8%	10.9%	7.5%	9.0%	4.9%
Rural	31.3%	16.1%	12.9%	11.4%	8.2%	4.2%	15.9%
Wimborne	44.0%	19.9%	10.4%	8.7%	3.9%	4.4%	8.6%
East Dorset	37.9%	19.1%	10.8%	11.6%	7.0%	5.7%	7.9%

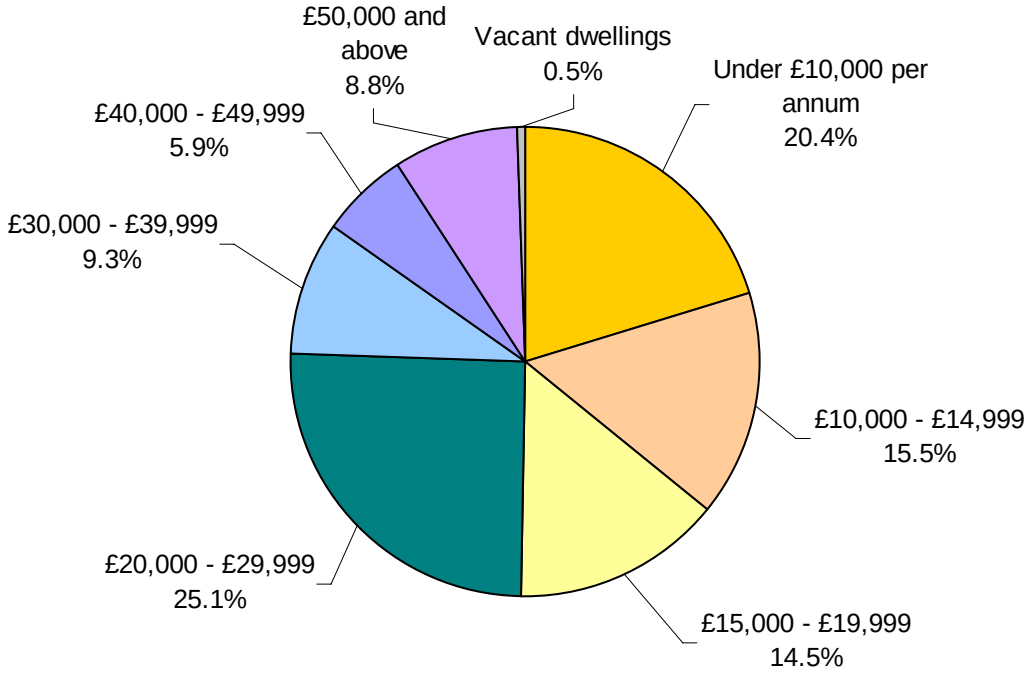
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Residents were asked about the income of the head of household and, where appropriate, the partner of the head of household. Responses

were combined to give a gross household income and the results of these are given below.

Figure 3.2 Household incomes in bands



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

Table 3.3 Number of households within each income band

Income band	No. of households East Dorset 2008		Family Resources Survey*
Under £10,000 per annum	20.4%	7,900	22%
£10,000 - £14,999	15.5%	6,000	15%
£15,000 - £19,999	14.5%	5,600	11%
£20,000 - £29,999	25.1%	9,700	18%
£30,000 - £39,999	9.3%	3,600	13%
£40,000 - £49,999	5.9%	2,300	8%
£50,000 and above	8.8%	3,400	13%
Vacant dwellings	0.5%	200	**n/a**
Total	**100%**	**38,700**	**100%**

** Source: Family Resources Survey 2005/2006 Department of Works and Pensions*

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.5.2 The figures in the chart and the table indicate that, whilst there are generally higher proportions than national averages of households in the income bands between £15,000 and £39,999, affordability will still be an issue affecting repair and improvement in the private sector dwelling stock of East Dorset as 20.4% of households have an annual income of £10,000 or less and 35.9% have a household income under £15,000. It is notable though that for income groups up to £20,000

there are 50.4% of households compared to that found within the Family Resources Survey which was 48%.

3.5.3 The table below takes the average weekly income figure for the three tenures, as such figures are available nationally, and a comparison is therefore possible. In addition the England 2005 figures have been increased to reflect the Consumer Price Index inflationary factor to April 2008 which is shown in a separate column.

Table 3.4 Average weekly income East Dorset and England

Tenure	East Dorset HCS 2008	England 2005	Consumer Price Index Inflation Factored
Owner occupied	£459	£506	£544
Privately rented	£402	£377	£406
Housing Association (RSL)	£307	£234	£252
Average	£389	£372	£401

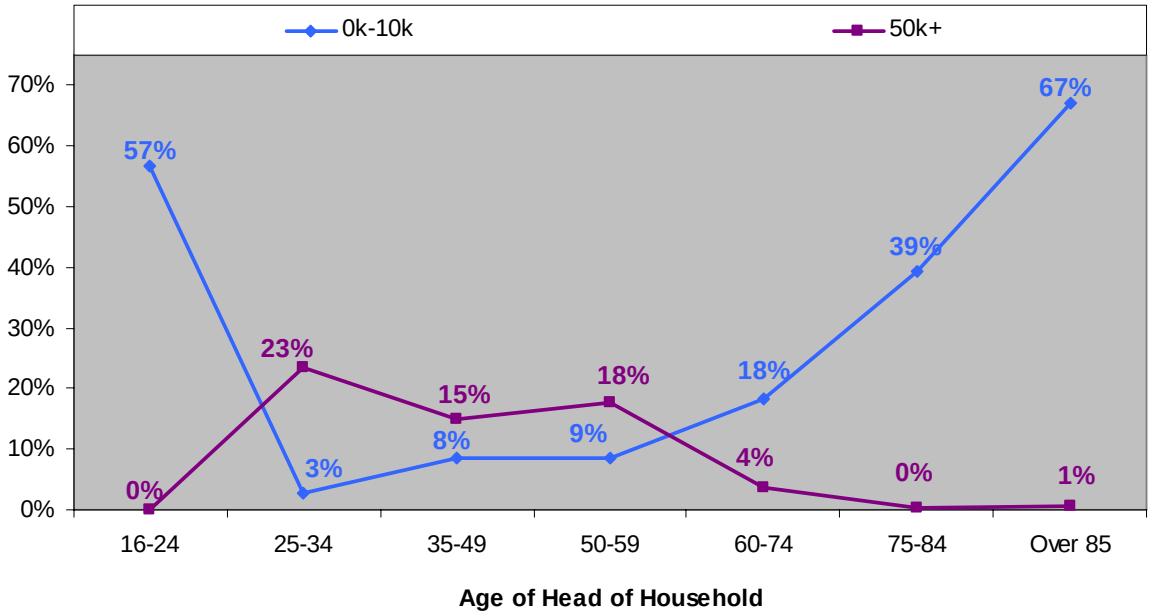
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2005

3.5.4 These figures demonstrate that recent average incomes in East Dorset are, for owner occupiers, lower than both the England 2005 and the index linked national averages with the privately rented sector being slightly lower than the index linked figure. Average incomes for the RSL tenure group show much higher averages then either of those for England 2005 or for the index linked income.

3.6 Income and age of head of household

3.6.1 Variations in income level are often associated with social characteristics such as the age of head of household, household type, disability etc. This section will look at the data from the survey to see what links can be shown and the possible associations between these links and unsatisfactory housing conditions described later.

Figure 3.3 High and low incomes by age of head of household



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.6.2 The chart illustrates that low income (annual household income below £10,000 per annum) is mostly associated with the younger and older age groups. The greatest proportions of low income households are where the head of household are aged between 16 and 24 and over 85. As is commonly the case, households between 25-59 years have the lowest proportion of low incomes and the greatest proportion of high incomes. This pattern indicates that the greatest need for assistance to vulnerable occupiers is at both the youngest and eldest ends of the age range.

3.7 Income and household type

3.7.1 The following table compares low and high annual household income figures by household type.

Table 3.5 Low and High household incomes by household type

Household Type	Low income (household income less than £10,000 per annum)	High income (household income above £30,000 per annum)
Adult group (3+ adults)	14%	27%
Lone Adult	6%	7%
Lone Older	54%	0%
Single Parent	36%	0%
Traditional Family	5%	43%
Two Adults	12%	24%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.7.2 The table does show that clear associations exist. Lone older and single parent households are strongly associated with low incomes,

while traditional families, adult group and two adult households have elevated proportions with higher incomes.

3.8 Income and residents with disabilities

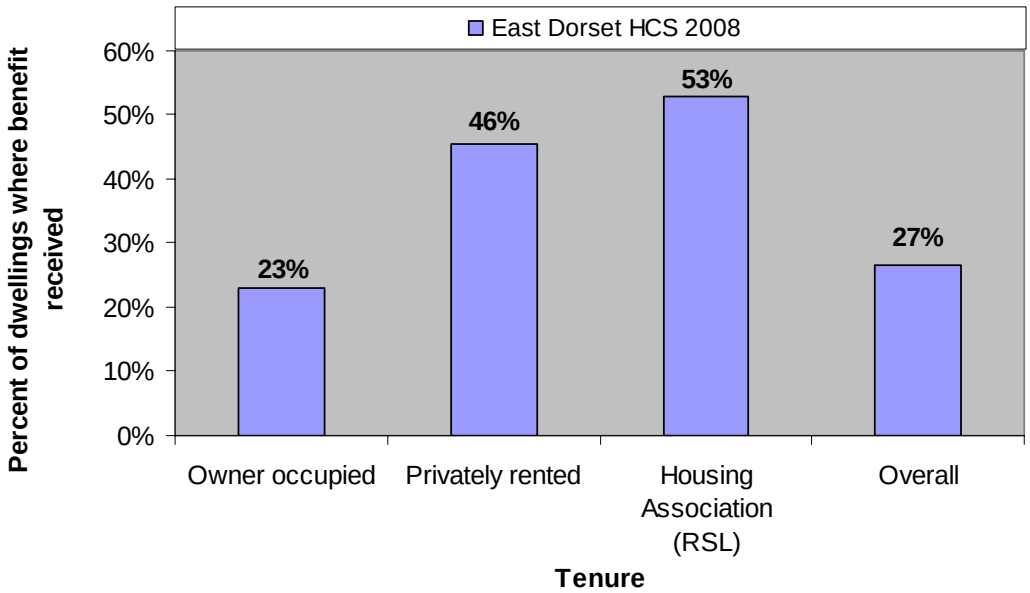
3.8.1 It is important to note that this survey used a broad definition of disabled person. This included residents that are frail elderly, as well as registered disabled persons and other persons with a disability.

3.8.2 There is a strong association between disability and income, as 42.9% of households with a disabled resident have a household income below £10,000 per annum, compared with 16% where there is no person with a disability. This represents approximately 2,700 such dwellings in East Dorset. The residents of these dwellings may not only have physical difficulty dealing with repairs, but may be less likely to be able to afford alternative provision.

3.9 Benefit receipt

3.9.1 In addition to income, householders were asked if anyone within the dwelling was in receipt of one or more of a range of means tested benefits. Overall 10,300 (27%) households are estimated to be in receipt of a benefit, which reflects the earlier findings on households on low income. At the national level 17% of private sector households have at least one resident in receipt of a benefit which is less than that found within this survey. The distribution of benefit receipt by tenure shows the highest proportion for the RSL tenure type (53%) followed by the privately rented sector (46% compared with 23% in the owner occupied sector).

Figure 3.4 Benefit receipt by tenure



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.10 Value of dwellings and equity

3.10.1 Owner occupiers were asked about the value of their dwelling, the level of any outstanding mortgage, any other debt and the consequent total equity. This was to allow the relationship between available equity and dwelling condition to be examined. Such relationships are relevant to the Regulatory Reform Order 2002; Government guidance focuses on local authorities moving towards facilitating loans/equity release rather than giving grants when offering financial assistance to householders.

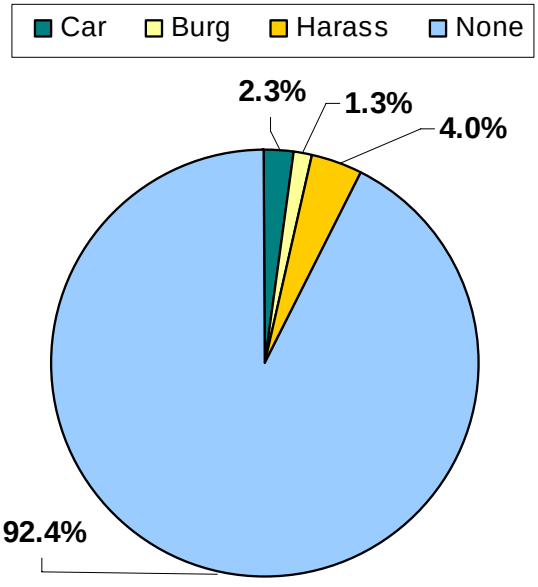
3.10.2 The average value of a dwelling in East Dorset is £309,000. This figure is based on the average sale prices in East Dorset compiled by the Land Registry from January to March 2008. The figure is well above the average value across England of £226,200. In addition, East Dorset has the highest average property value of any of the Dorset authorities.

3.10.3 The average mortgage level for owner-occupied dwellings in East Dorset, based upon occupier responses, is £110,000, resulting in an average equity of £199,000 per dwelling using the Land Registry average value.

3.11 Crime and Security

3.11.1 All residents were asked about their experiences of crime whilst living in East Dorset and the level of security measures, to their dwelling, for crime prevention. Figure 3.5 below shows the proportions of residents experiencing crime in East Dorset over the past year.

Figure 3.5 Per cent of households experiencing crime in East Dorset



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.11.2 The vast majority of residents (92.4%) have not experienced crime whilst living in East Dorset. The category with the highest return at 4% was harassment followed by car crime at 2.3%. Burglary had affected

1.3% of residents. This theme was extended to consider whether or not they felt that any of the previous crime issues with anti social behaviour added, had got any worse over the past 12 months. Overall 75.2% felt that they had not. However, some residents felt that car crime (3.1%), burglary (3.2%), harassment (4.5%) and particularly anti social behaviour (11.2%) had got worse.

3.11.3 When asked about security measures fitted to their dwellings, the following table provides the results:

Table 3.6 Provision of security measures

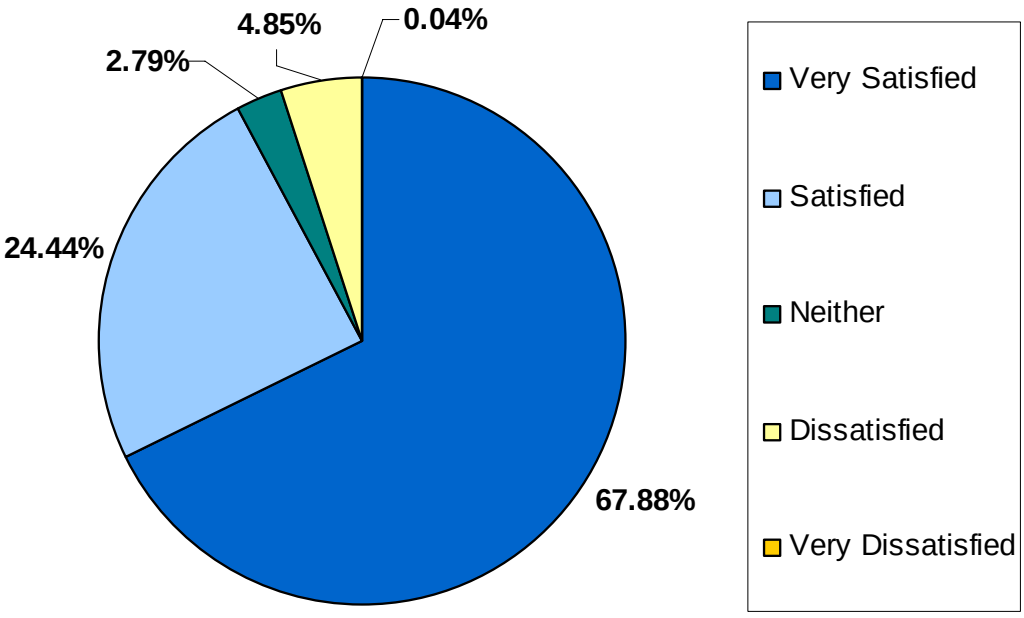
Security Measure	Dwellings	Per cent
Burglar alarm	10,400	26.9%
Secure doors	33,500	86.6%
Window locks	32,400	83.7%
Other security	12,200	31.5%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.12 Satisfaction with Home

3.12.1 Residents were asked as to the general level of satisfaction with their home. The chart below summarises the responses:

Figure 3.6 Satisfaction with home



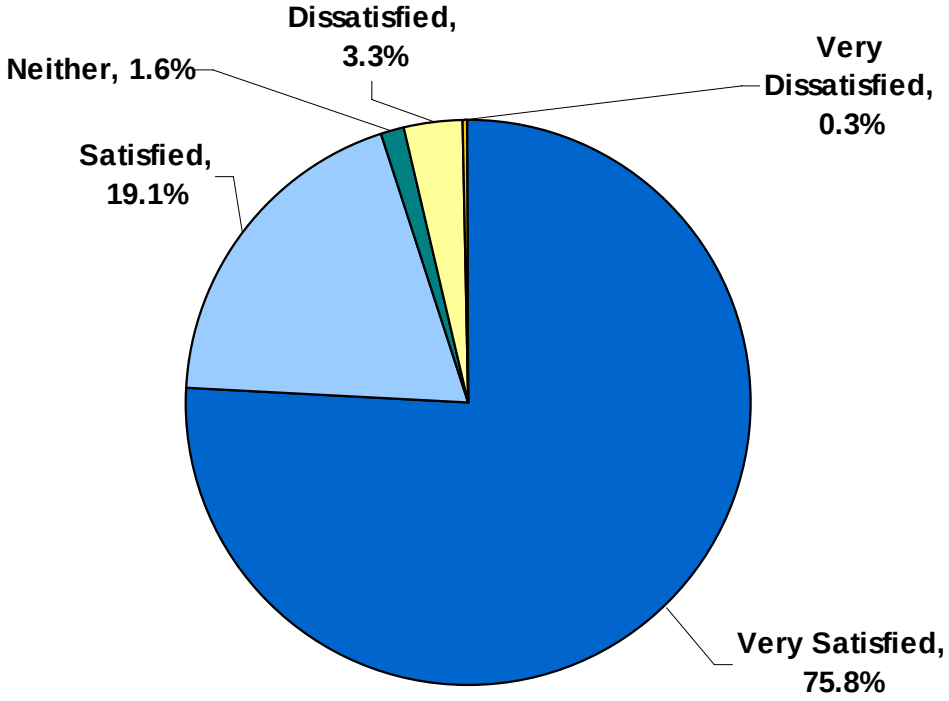
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.12.2 The chart shows quite clearly that the great majority of people are either satisfied or very satisfied with their home (combined total of 92.3%). Only 4.9% of residents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

3.13 Residents' attitude towards their area

3.13.1 Residents were asked how satisfied they were with the quality of their area and environment, rated from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. The chart below summarises the responses:

Figure 3.7 Satisfaction with environment and area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.13.2 The majority of householders (94.9%) stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the area in which they live and only 3.6% said that they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with it.

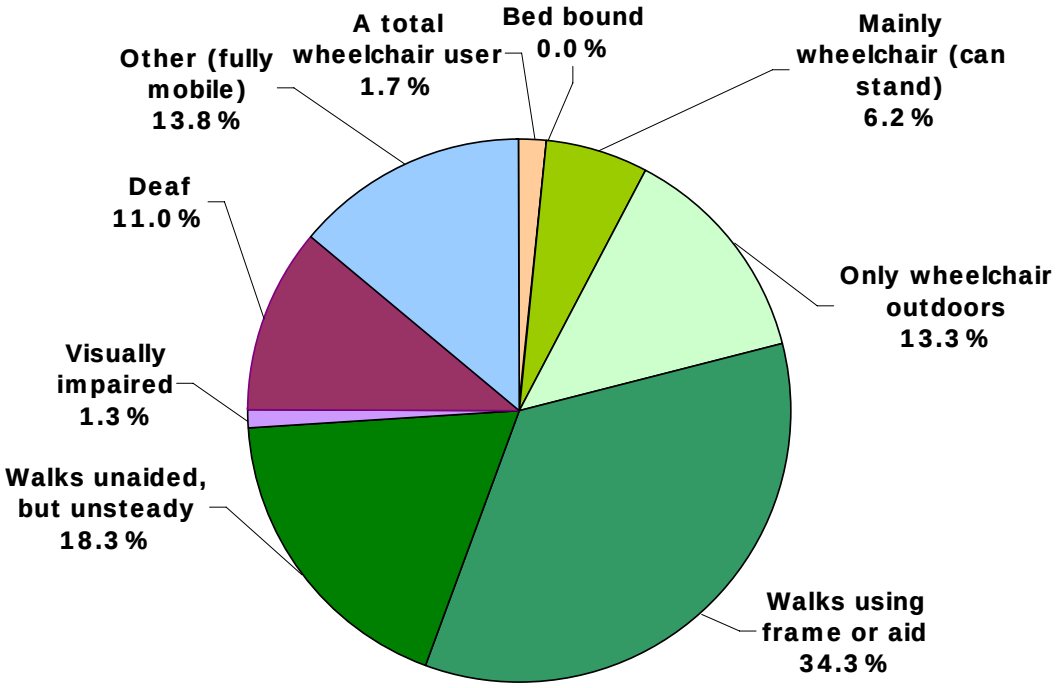
3.13.3 When asked if they suffered significant levels of external noise 3.5% said that they did and of those 69.1% indicated that it was due to environmental noise such as roads, railways, factories etc.

3.14 Residents with disabilities

3.14.1 Residents were asked if any member of the household suffers from a long term illness or disability. It is estimated from the results of this question that 5,600 (14.5%) dwellings have at least one resident with a long term illness or disability. Residents were further asked to choose the condition that best described their disability and the following chart illustrates the results of this.

3.14.2 Initially it may seem that 14.5% is a relatively high proportion of households where at least one household member has a disability. The definition used, however, is very broad and it can be seen from the graph that 52.6% of people who responded stated that their disability was either walking using a frame or walking unaided, but unsteadily. The vast majority of these residents are frail elderly, but do represent people who are likely to have specific housing needs.

Figure 3.8 Residents with disabilities by type



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.14.3 In order to address the specific housing needs of residents with a disability,) the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) by local authorities remains mandatory. The potential requirement for adaptations for disabled occupiers and the potential DFG demand are discussed in more detail in chapter nine.

3.15 Ethnic origin

3.15.1 Residents were asked to specify the majority ethnic origin type within their household and the results are given in the following table:

Table 3.7 Ethnic origin

Ethnic Origin	Dwellings	Per cent
White British	38,660	99.91%
White Irish	0	0.00%
White Other	20	0.04%
White/Black Caribbean	0	0.00%
White/Black African	0	0.00%
White/Asian	0	0.00%
Other mixed	0	0.00%
Indian	0	0.00%
Pakistani	0	0.00%
Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Asian Other	0	0.00%
Black Caribbean	0	0.00%
Black African	0	0.00%
Black Other	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%
Other	20	0.05%
Total	**38,700**	**100.0%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.15.2 The majority of households described their ethnic origin as being predominantly White British (99.9%), which is broadly consistent with the Census 2001 results which showed White British at (97.2%). Because of this other ethnic groups are represented at levels which are not statistically robust enough to provide any meaningful comparisons.

3.16 Repair Issues to Dwelling

3.16.1 Residents were asked if they were aware of any repair issues to the dwelling within which they lived. A total of 5,800 (15.1%) indicated that they were aware of repair issues, with an average cost to remedy, as estimated by the occupier, of £5,100. The distribution of estimated repair costs is given in the following table:

Table 3.8 Occupiers estimated cost of repair issues

Repair Cost Band	Percentage
£1 to £4,999	80.3%
£5,000 to £9,999	5.3%
£10,000 to £14,999	4.6%
£15,000 to £19,999	2.3%
£20,000 to £24,999	5.3%
£25,000 +	2.1%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.16.2 Where it was indicated that repair work was required occupiers were asked if they could afford to carry out the work or not with 52.3% saying that they were not affordable.

3.16.3 For those that indicated that the repairs were affordable, residents were asked how they would fund the works, with the majority (51%) saying they would pay through savings and the balance (49%) through a loan.

3.17 Overcrowding

3.17.1 In the ODPM report Overcrowding in England: the national and regional picture it states that "Households that are statutorily overcrowded are so rare that a reliable estimate of numbers cannot be produced at a national (England) level even using data from the Survey of English Housing and the 2001 English House Condition Survey, which are relatively large surveys. It follows that estimates for individual regions cannot be produced using these sources".

3.17.2 As with the above comments, this survey, which is considerably smaller than both of those mentioned, cannot produce any results that would be of any statistical relevance. Given that and issues revolving around the sample size, this section attempts to provide some basic information on the level of estimated overcrowding within East Dorset.

3.17.3 The existing statutory overcrowding standards were set in 1935 and restated in Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985, and include both a room standard and a space standard.

3.17.4 In the Court of Appeal case Elrify and City of Westminster Council (2007) it was established that both of the Housing Act measurements must be calculated to establish if a statutory overcrowding situation existed.

3.17.5 The Survey of English Housing uses a Bedroom standard as an indicator of occupation density, allocating a number of bedrooms to each household according to the age, sex and marital status composition coupled with the relationship of the members to one another.

3.17.6 If the Housing Act overcrowding measurement is taken, the estimated level of overcrowding by sub-area is contained within the following table:

Table 3.9 Statutory measurement of overcrowding

Area Name	Overcrowded	Not Overcrowded
South	2.6%	97.4%
East	2.4%	97.6%
Rural	4.7%	95.3%
Wimborne	4.2%	95.8%
East Dorset	2.9%	97.1%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.17.7 Looking at the Survey of English Housing bedroom standard of occupation density, the following table again provides a breakdown by sub-area:

Table 3.10 Bedroom standard measurement of overcrowding

Area Name	Overcrowded	Not overcrowded
South	3.6%	96.4%
East	4.4%	95.6%
Rural	5.3%	94.7%
Wimborne	5.1%	94.9%
East Dorset	4.0%	96.0%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

3.17.8 With both standards the Rural sub-area has the highest levels being 5.3% using the Bedroom Standard. This is to be expected as it uses a more limited room indicator of occupation density. It must, however, be taken in the context described by the ODPM report mentioned above that a reliable estimate of numbers cannot be produced. Both these systems result in an estimated total of between 1,100 and 1,600 overcrowded dwellings within the District. However, this data should be treated with caution.

3.17.9 Sections 139 to 144 of the Housing Act 2004 relate to the service of an overcrowding notice. It applies to a HMO if it has no interim or final management order in force and it is not required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act. No HMOs were found to be overcrowded.

3.17.10 Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme, one of the elements to be considered is that of Crowding and Space, which takes into account a number of matters that are deemed likely to affect the likelihood and harm outcomes. This also indicates that the average likelihood of an illness or injury occurring is 1 in 8,000, which indicates the low average potential for harm. No properties during the survey were scored under this heading.

3.18 Key points

3.18.1 East Dorset has a higher proportion of residents in the 60 and over age band (55.8%) when compared to the national average (33.8%).

3.18.2 20.4% of all households are made up of a person over the age of 60 living alone.

3.18.3 35.9% of households have a combined income of less than £15,000 per annum.

3.18.4 The greatest proportion of low income households are where the head of household is aged 85 and over.

3.18.5 42.9% of households with a disabled resident have a household income below £10,000 (compared to 16% in the general population).

3.18.6 10,300 households in East Dorset are estimated to be in receipt of a means tested benefit (27% of households, compared to 17% nationally).

3.18.7 14.5% of dwellings have at least 1 resident with a long term illness or disability.

4 The Decent Homes Standard

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 It is Government policy that everyone should have the opportunity of living in a "decent home". The Decent Homes Standard contains four broad criteria that a property should:

A - be above the legal minimum standard for housing, and

B - be in a reasonable state of repair, and

C - have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and services, and

D - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

4.1.2 If a dwelling fails any one of these criteria it is considered to be "non decent". A detailed definition of the criteria and their sub-categories are described in the ODPM guidance: "A Decent Home – The definition and guidance for implementation" June 2006.

4.1.3 The revised guidance does not substantially change the criteria for the decent homes standard laid out in 2002 with the exception of thermal comfort. This has changed from a calculated, energy efficiency based approach to a simpler, but more practical system which takes into account the heating systems, fuel and insulation in a dwelling to determine if it provides adequate thermal comfort.

4.1.4 Until recently, obligations under the Decent Homes Standard were directed solely at the social housing sector. Under "The Decent Homes Target Implementation Plan" June 2003 – as modified April 2004, the ODPM outlined its commitments under Public Service Agreement (PSA) 7. These stated that PSA 7 will have been met if:

- There is a year on year increase in the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes;
- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 65% by 2006/07.
- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 70% by 2010/11.
- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 75% by 2020/21.

4.1.5 In the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007, the Government set out its intention to scrap the PSA7 target with effect from 1 April 2008.

This has now been implemented. However, the percentage of vulnerable households in decent homes in the private sector remains part of CLG's Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSO2, 2.8)

4.1.6 Accordingly the East Dorset house condition survey collected adequate and appropriate data to allow judgement of dwellings across all tenures against the Decent Homes Standard.

4.2 Change of emphasis and the Housing Act 2004

4.2.1 Whilst the changes under the revised definition and guidance for the decent homes standard apply, there has been a change in criterion A of the standard from April 2006. Prior to this change criterion A used the Housing Fitness Standard as the measure of whether a dwelling meets the minimum legal standard. From April 2006 the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 replaced the existing statutory fitness standard.

4.2.2 The new system assesses "hazards" within dwellings and categorises them into Category 1 and Category 2 hazards. Local housing authorities will have a duty to take action to deal with Category 1 hazards. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System also applies to the Decent Homes Standard – if there is a Category 1 Hazard at the property it will fail Criterion A of the standard.

4.2.3 As the new HHSRS regime came into effect in April 2006, this report will present findings relating to decent homes using Category 1 Hazards only. Detailed definitions of both the Rating System and Housing Fitness Standard are given in the following chapter.

4.3 The meaning of non decency

4.3.1 Concern has been raised by a number of local authorities over the term 'non decent', which tends to conjure up images of dilapidated houses and serious disrepair issues. It is the case, however, that a dwelling can fail the Decent Homes Standard on a single item, such as the heating system, whilst being in a very good state of repair. The owner of such a property may well not think that there is anything wrong with their home.

4.3.2 It is possible to regard the Decent Homes Standard as an ideal standard or a level to aspire to. In practice, it is a relatively low standard and failure to meet the standard should be regarded as a trigger for action. In some cases, however, it may not be practical to make a dwelling decent and it may also not be in the best interests of the occupiers to do so. The guidance on recording of outcomes recognises that there may be instances where it is appropriate to record cases where work to achieve only partial compliance with the standard has been achieved, or where non compliance results from the occupier refusing to have work carried out.

4.4 Overall level of non decency

4.4.1 Based on the House Condition Survey data 8,700 dwellings (22.4%) can be classified non decent. In England as a whole the rate is 36.7% (owner occupied, privately rented and RSL stock) making the East Dorset rate substantially less than the national rate. The all England figure is taken as the proportion of non decent private sector dwellings from the 2006 EHCS, which used the HHSRS for criterion A for the first time. This led to a significant increase in criterion A failure (homes not meeting the statutory component of the Decent Homes standard) from 4% under the old fitness standard to 22% under the HHSRS Category 1 hazard rate, increasing the overall non decency rate from 26.8% for privately and RSL occupied dwellings in 2005 to 36.7% in 2006.

4.4.2 The Decent Homes Standard contains 4 criteria. The table below gives a breakdown of the reasons for failure. The table lists both dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard (the new criterion A) and also unfit dwellings (the former criterion A):

Table 4.1 Reasons for failure of dwellings as a decent home.

Reason	Dwellings	Percent (of non decent)	Percent (of stock)	Percent (EHCS 2006)
Unfit dwellings	1,600	18.4%	4.1%	N/a
Category 1 hazard dwellings	3,800	43.8%	9.8%	22.4%
In need of repair	1,900	21.9%	4.8%	7.9%
Lacking modern facilities	400	4.6%	1.1%	2.2%
Poor degree of thermal comfort	5,700	65.7%	14.7%	18.3%

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2006 EHCS

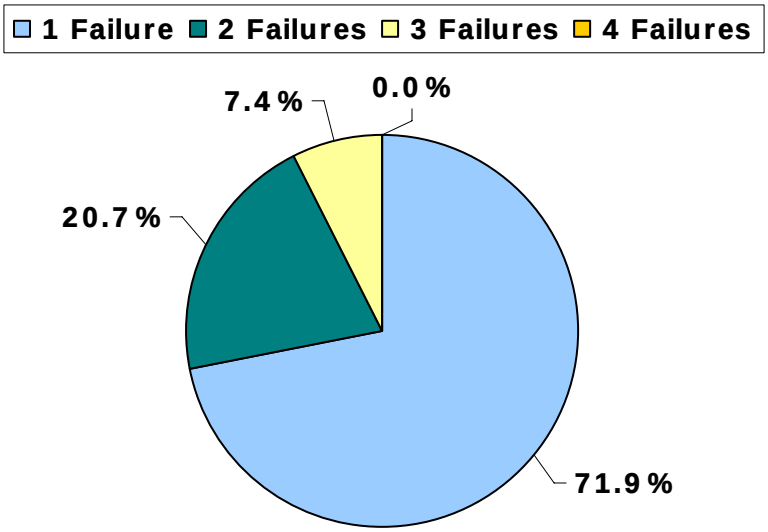
4.4.3 The percentages by non decent do not total 100%. This reflects the fact that the categories are not mutually exclusive; although any dwelling can fail on just one criterion, it may fail on two or more.

4.4.4 In East Dorset, the hierarchy of reasons for failure differs slightly to that of the national profile with thermal comfort failure and Category 1 hazards being reversed hierarchically. This follows the general trend prior to the EHCS 2006 headline report, when poor degree of thermal comfort was the usual primary reason for failure of the Decent Homes Standard. It should be borne in mind that excess cold is the main Category 1 hazard reason for failure (see chapter 5) and this overlaps heavily with poor thermal comfort.

4.5 Numbers of failures per dwelling

4.5.1 As mentioned above, dwellings can fail to be decent for more than one reason. The total number of failures per dwelling can give an indication of the severity of problems in particular dwellings. The following chart looks at the number of failures per dwelling in non decent dwellings.

Figure 4.1 Degree of failure of the Decent Homes Standard



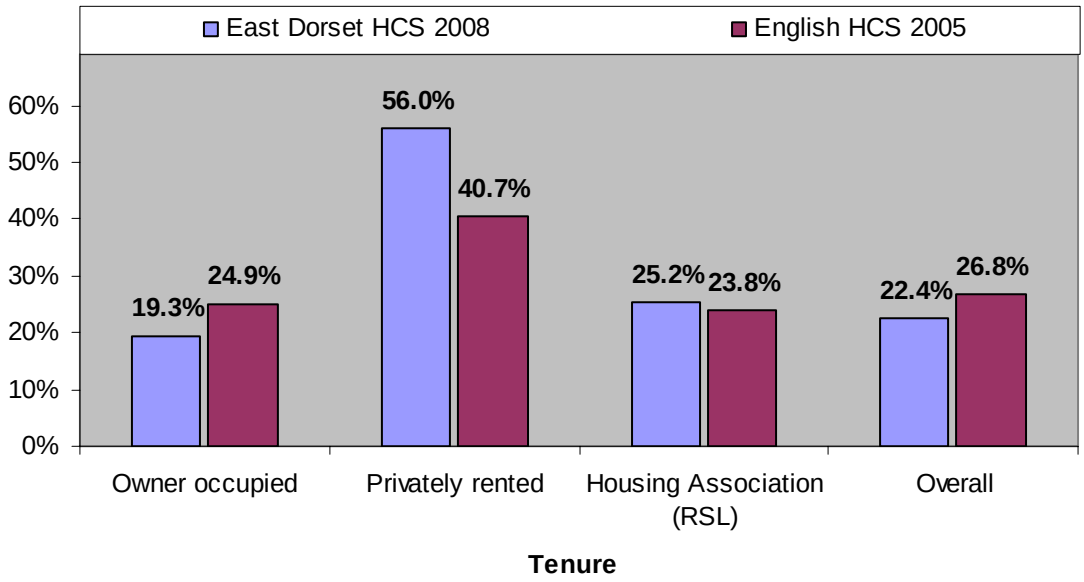
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.5.2 It is clear that the great bulk of failures are in respect of one criterion only. Realistically in the majority of cases this will relate to heating/insulation issues whether as a failure for an excess hazard or failure of the thermal comfort criterion.

4.6 Non decency by general characteristics

4.6.1 Figure 4.2 shows the proportions of non decent private sector dwellings by tenure. The distribution by tenure is typical of the national picture in that privately rented dwellings have the highest rate of non decency by a significant margin at 56%.

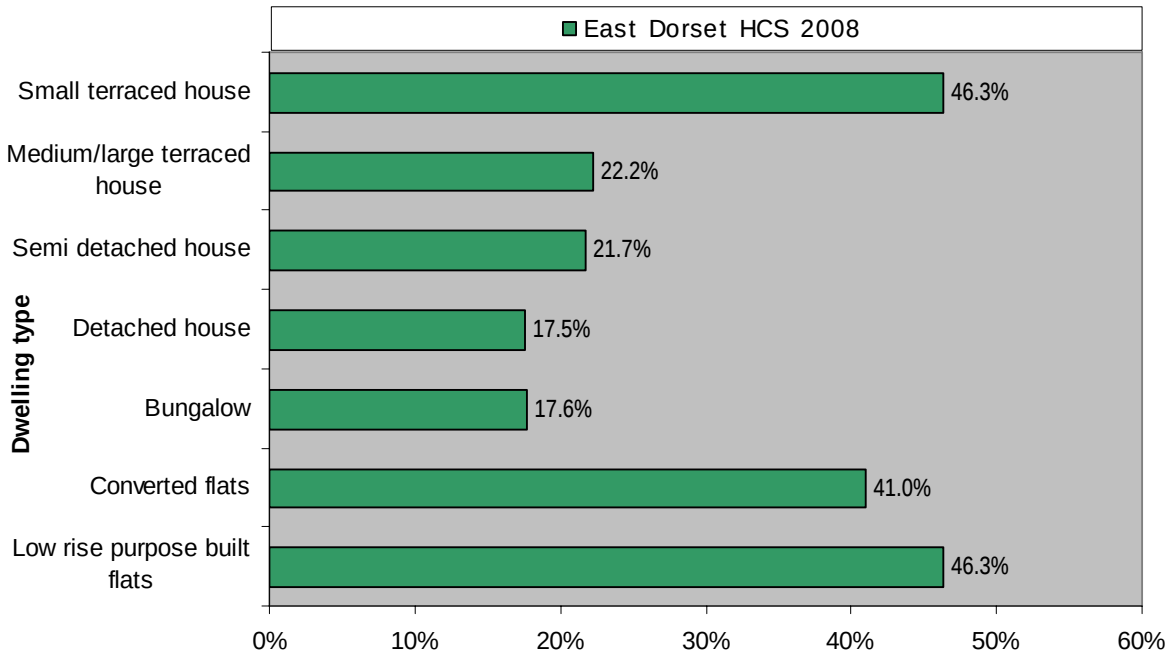
Figure 4.2 Tenure by non decent dwellings



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

4.6.2 The next chart examines decent homes failures by dwelling type.

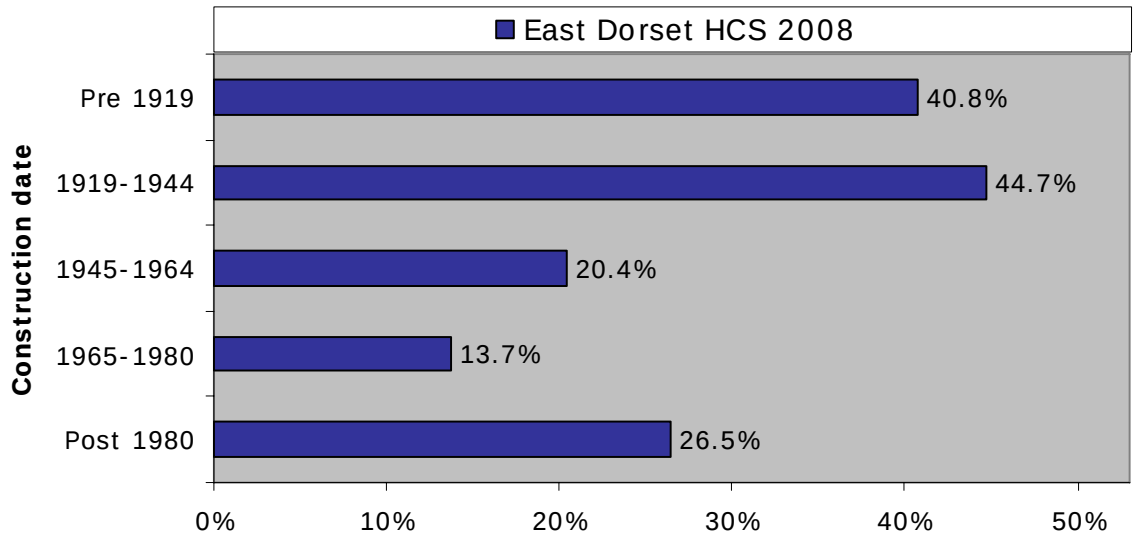
Figure 4.3 Non decent dwellings by dwelling type



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.6.3 The highest rate of non decency is found jointly in low rise purpose built flats and small terraced houses both at 46.3%, followed by converted flats (41%). It is usually the case that converted flats have the highest rate of non decency owing to their association with the privately rented sector and disrepair. The lowest rate of non decency, by a small margin, is found in detached houses at 17.5%.

Figure 4.4 Non decent dwellings by date of construction

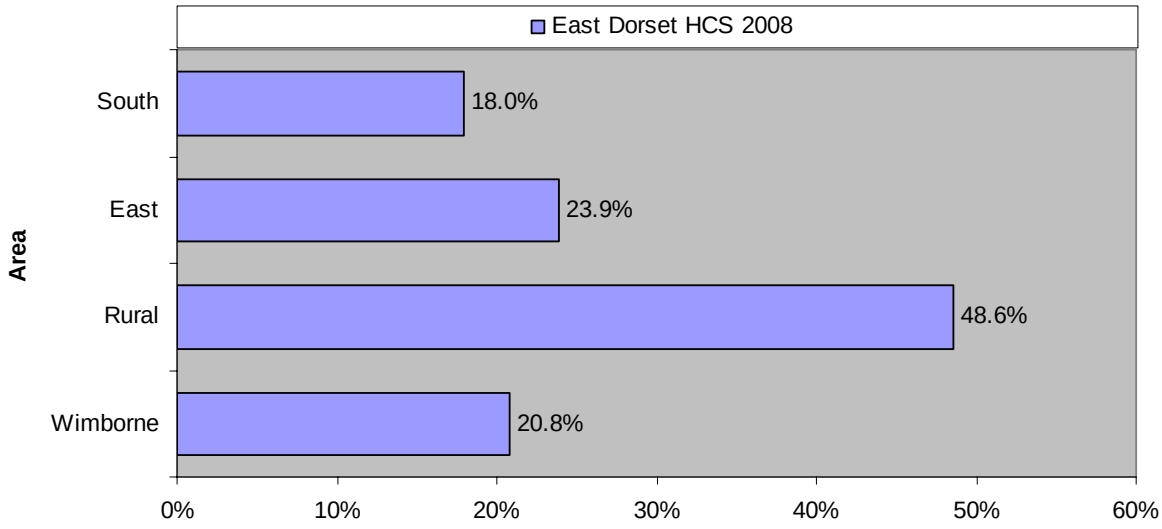


Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.6.4 The rate of failure of the Decent Homes Standard differs from the usual pattern of increasing failure rate with age of dwelling. Whilst the pre 1919 and 1919 to 1944 properties have the highest levels of non decency, which are frequently associated with poor thermal comfort and with category 1 hazards in respect of excess cold and falling on stairs etc. However, the post 1980 age group has the next highest rate at 26.5%, although the majority are due to thermal comfort failure.

4.6.5 The distribution by sub-area is shown in the next figure. The highest rates are recorded in the Rural area at 48.6%. The lowest rate was found in the South area (18%).

Figure 4.5 Non decent dwellings by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.7 Cost to Remedy

4.7.1 Having determined the reasons for dwellings being classified as non decent, it is possible to indicate what level of repairs / improvements would be needed to make all dwellings decent.

4.7.2 The cost to remedy non decency has been determined by examining the specific failures of each non decent dwelling and determining the work necessary to make the dwelling decent. This is done for each criterion of the standard and the table below shows the cost distribution for all non decent dwellings in the stock.

Table 4.2 Repair cost by non-decency reason (HHSRS)

Reason	Total Cost (£ million)	Cost per dwelling (£)
Category 1 Hazard	£10.3	£2,720
Repair	£7.8	£4,200
Amenities	£3.7	£8,800
Thermal comfort	£7.7	£1,400
Total	**£29.4**	**£3,800**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.7.3 The costs are based on the assumption that only the items that cause dwellings to be non decent are dealt with. Comprehensive repairs (referred to later) most closely resemble traditional renovation grant costs, but the costs given here are lower as they relate to the works necessary to deal only with items that fail the standard and not all repair issues.

4.7.4 The cost to remedy Category 1 Hazards is generally lower than the cost to rectify unfitness. This is due to the fact that many of these hazards do not involve expensive work to the fabric of the dwelling as is often the case with fitness failures (which tend to be associated more with disrepair).

4.7.5 Remedies for dwellings failing due to thermal comfort are more complex. Limited individual improvements to dwellings would lift them above the necessary standard, whereas others would require multiple improvements. This is discussed in more detail in Section 9.

4.7.6 The next table considers the level of non decent remedial costs where the occupier is in receipt of a means tested benefit. Overall there are 3,000 properties, with 1,600 of those (51.6%) having repair costs that are £5,000 or less, with the East sub-area having the highest rate at 75%.

Table 4.3 Repair cost by non-decency and sub-area where on benefit

Sub-area	Number where Costs £5,000 or less	Percentage of total	Number where Costs greater than £5,000	Percentage of total	Total
South	910	50.0%	910	50.0%	1,820
East	330	89.2%	40	10.5%	370
Rural	320	47.8%	350	52.2%	670
Wimborne	90	45.0%	110	55.0%	200
East Dorset	1,640	53.6%	1,420	46.4%	3,060

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.8 Private sector vulnerable occupier base-line

4.8.1 Up until the 1 April 2008, the government target for achieving decency standards in the private sector was that set by PSA7, where 65% of all dwellings occupied by vulnerable residents should be made decent by 2006/07. In practice, the most challenging target was the 70% to be met by 2010/11. As indicated previously, although the PSA7 target no longer exists, it is still a CLG Departmental Strategic Objective under DSO2, 2.8). It is highly likely therefore, that Regional Housing bodies will continue to apply targeting in respect of vulnerable households in decent homes when making capital allocations.

4.8.2 Vulnerable households are defined as those in receipt of the benefits listed below, certain of which are means tested:

- Income support
- Housing benefit
- Council tax benefit
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Attendance allowance
- Disabled living allowance
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- War disablement pension
- Pension credit
- Working tax credit (with a disability element) [total income < £15,460]
- Child tax credit [total income < £15,460]

4.8.3 In East Dorset, at present there are 8,800 private sector dwellings (owner occupied and privately rented but excluding RSL dwellings) that are occupied by residents in receipt of one of the benefits listed above. Of these an estimated 2,760 are classified non decent, which represents 31.3% of dwellings occupied by a vulnerable resident. Conversely this means that 68.7% are decent. The EHCS 2005 found that 33.9% of vulnerable households were living in non decent homes.

4.8.4 On this basis East Dorset met the target for 2006/07 for 65% of vulnerable households to be living in decent homes.

4.8.5 In order to raise the proportion of private sector dwellings, occupied by vulnerable people, above the 70% threshold for decency, 120 dwellings will need to be made decent by 2010. As these figures are based on a sample survey they will be subject to statistical variance, but nonetheless this indicates some work still needs to be done to meet the 70% target.

4.8.6 When the proportions of vulnerable households in non decent properties by tenure is considered, the results show that there is no shortfall in the owner occupied sector with all of the shortfall to be found in the much smaller privately rented sector.

4.8.7 The proportion of non decent dwellings by sub-area has already been considered earlier. The table below gives the numbers of non-decent dwellings within each sub-area with the rate of non decency, and also lists the level of shortfall for each sub-area in terms of meeting the 70% target for vulnerable occupiers in the private sector.

Table 4.4 Non decent dwellings with vulnerable households by sub-area

Sub-area	Vulnerable households in non decent dwellings	Percent vulnerable households in non decent dwellings	Shortfall vulnerable occupiers
South	**1,760**	**29.1%**	**-52**
East	**260**	**20.8%**	**-116**
Rural	**600**	**63.6%**	**316**
Wimborne	**140**	**24.2%**	**-33**
Total	**2,760**	**31.3%**	**120**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

4.8.8 Only the Rural sub-area has a shortfall against the CLG target.

4.8.9 It should be borne in mind that, unlike the figures for non decency only, the above figures are affected also by the proportion of vulnerable occupiers in these sub-areas and not just the rate of non decency.

4.9 Key points

4.9.1 8,700 (22.4%) of dwellings in East Dorset can be classified as non decent compared to 36.7% nationally.

4.9.2 In East Dorset 14.7% of the housing stock possess a poor degree of thermal comfort and 9.8% possess a category 1 hazard under the HHSRS.

4.9.3 High levels of non decency are found in low rise purpose built flats and small terraced houses jointly, with 46.3% of such dwellings failing the Decent Homes Standard.

4.9.4 It will cost an average of £3,800 per dwelling to remedy non decency in the East Dorset housing stock.

5 Unfitness and Category 1 Hazards

5.1 Requirement to remedy poor housing

5.1.1 Formerly, under Part XI of the Housing Act 1985, local authorities had a statutory duty to take: 'The most satisfactory course of action', with regard to unfit dwellings and the Act was supported by relevant statutory guidance. A range of enforcement measures were available including service of statutory notices to make properties fit. Closure or demolition was only appropriate in the most extreme cases.

5.1.2 With owner occupied dwellings in particular, many local authorities looked to offer financial assistance, especially where owners were on low incomes. In the private rented sector enforcement action was much more likely in respect of unfit homes.

5.1.3 From April 2006 Part XI of the Housing Act 1985 was replaced by Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. The new Act repeals the existing housing fitness standard and through statutory instruments and statutory guidance replaces it with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

5.1.4 As described in chapter one, the Act differentiates between Category 1 and Category 2 hazards. Local authorities have a duty to take 'the most appropriate course of action' in respect of any hazard scored under the HHSRS as Category 1 and in effect this duty replaces the existing fitness standard. Authorities have discretionary power to take action with Category 2 hazards (which do not score past the threshold for Category 1). Further information on the fitness standard and on the HHSRS is given in chapter one, the appendices and below.

5.2 Reporting on the two standards

5.2.1 The previous chapter lists the overall proportion of dwellings that are unfit and the proportion that contain Category 1 Hazards. This chapter will take these two measures of condition further by examining the relationship between the two and other dwelling and social characteristics. However, given the April 2006 introduction of the HHSRS, the chapter will focus to a greater degree on the new system.

5.2.2 In addition the chapter will examine the cost implications for remedying these condition issues, as well as considering affordability for the residents, in terms of carrying out repair and/or improvement work.

5.3 Definition of unfit dwellings

5.3.1 A dwelling was deemed to be unfit for human habitation if it did not comply with the Housing Fitness Standard, as defined in the Housing Act 1985. The standard was a 'whole house' standard. A surveyor

noted defects in the dwelling inspected, and then made a judgment regarding the fitness of the dwelling, based upon this accumulated information.

5.3.2 A dwelling was unfit if it failed to meet one or more of one of 11 different requirements and due to the failure, was not reasonably suitable for occupation. The 11 criteria were as follows:

- Structural Stability
- Disrepair
- Dampness
- Ventilation
- Heating
- Lighting
- Water Supply
- Food preparation
- WC
- Bath/Shower/WHB
- Drainage

5.4 Definition of Hazards under the HHSRS and Category level

5.4.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is intended to be a replacement for the fitness standard and is a prescribed method of assessing individual hazards, rather than a conventional standard to give a judgment of fit or unfit. The HHSRS is evidence based – national statistics on the health impacts of hazards encountered in the home are used as a basis for assessing individual hazards.

5.4.2 After the trial, the system for collecting hazard information was subsequently reviewed, along with the underlying statistics and a new, second version produced. Guidance on Version 2 of the HHSRS was subsequently published in November 2004 and it is Version 2 that has been brought into force from April 2006, by statutory instruments made under the Housing Act 2004. The results from this survey will give an indication of likely future problems and will provide a useful comparative tool.

5.4.3 The new system deals with a much broader range of issues than the previous fitness standard. It covers a total of 29 hazards in four main groups:

- *Physiological Requirements* (e.g. damp & mould growth, excess cold, asbestos, carbon monoxide, radon, etc)
- *Psychological Requirements* (crowding and space, entry by intruders, lighting, noise)
- *Protection Against Infection* (domestic hygiene, food safety, personal hygiene, water supply)
- *Protection Against Accidents* (e.g. falls on the level, on stairs & steps & between levels, electrics, fire, collision…).

5.4.4 The HHSRS scoring system combines two elements: firstly, the probability that deficiency (i.e. a fault in a dwelling (whether due to disrepair or a design fault) will lead to a harmful occurrence (e.g. an accident or illness) and the spread of likely outcomes (i.e. the nature of the injury or illness). If an accident is very likely to occur and the outcome is likely to be extreme or severe (e.g. death or a major or fatal injury) then the score will be very high.

5.4.5 All dwellings contain certain aspects that can be perceived as potentially hazardous, such as staircases and steps, heating appliances, electrical installation, glass, combustible materials, etc. It is when disrepair or inherent defective design makes an element of a dwelling significantly more likely to cause a harmful occurrence that it is scored under the HHSRS.

5.4.6 In this survey, surveyors were required to assess all hazards under the HHSRS and the survey form allowed for this. Excess Cold and Damp & Mould Growth were modelled from survey data, at the individual dwelling level, in order to provide a more accurate picture for these hazards. The modelling of excess cold hazards using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) was outlined in government guidance "A Decent Home – The definition and guidance for implementation" June 2006, with a SAP rating of less than 35 (using SAP 2001) being used as a proxy for the likely presence of a Category 1 hazard from excess cold. This has been used by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) as part of the housing stock projections for excess cold hazards. Surveyors did, however, have the option to score excess cold and/or damp & mould hazards on the survey form as an additional option.

5.4.7 The modelling of excess cold hazards is based on the use of the individual SAP rating for each dwelling, which is scaled to give a hazard score. Where a dwelling has a SAP rating of less than 35, this produces a category 1 hazard score.

5.4.8 The exact scores generated under the HHSRS can be banded into one of ten bands from A to J, with bands A to C being further defined as Category 1 Hazards and those in bands D to J as category 2. The threshold score for a Category 1 Hazard is 1,000. As stated earlier, a Local Authority has a duty to deal with any Category 1 Hazards found and a discretionary power to deal with Category 2 hazards. This survey focuses particularly on Category 1 Hazards, but describes all hazards, including category 2, for comparative purposes.

5.5 Overall dwelling conditions

5.5.1 The overall unfitness rate for East Dorset is 4.1%, which is just above the rate for private sector dwellings in England of 4.0%. There are currently an estimated 1,600 unfit dwellings of which 1,000 are houses and 600 flats.

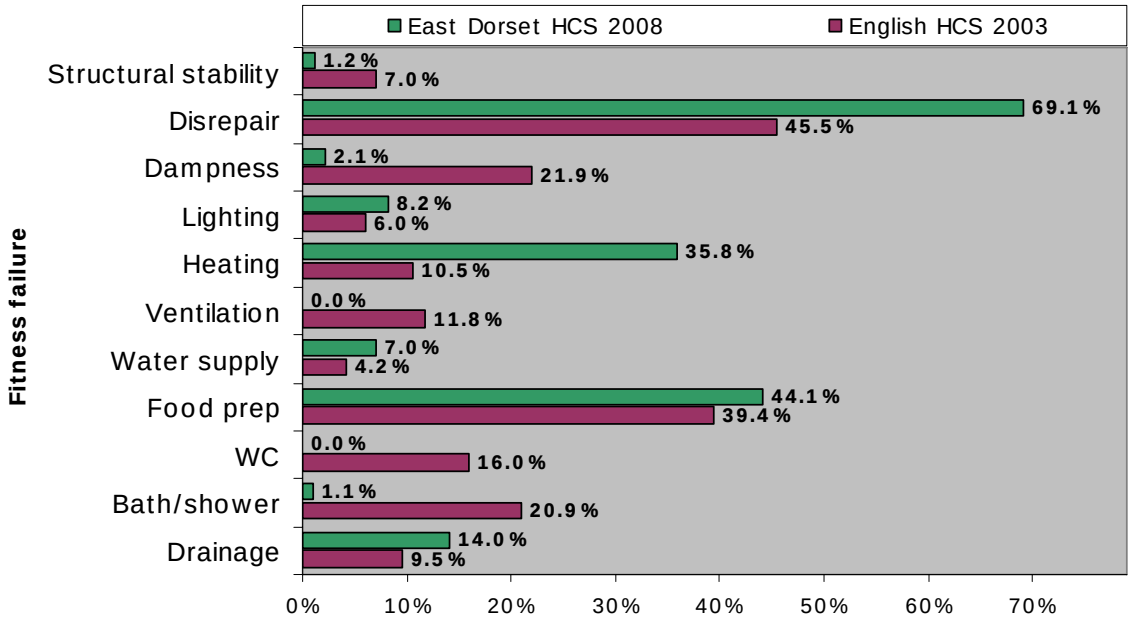
5.5.2 The overall proportion of dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard is 9.8% compared to 22.4% (owner occupied, privately rented and RSL dwellings) found in the EHCS 2006, representing 3,800 dwellings across East Dorset with 3,300 being houses and 500 being flats.

5.5.3 The fitness standard and the HHSRS, whilst having similar issues, are significantly different in their approach, the HHSRS being an evidence based assessment of health impacts of property deficiencies whilst the fitness standard is purely an assessment of building condition. The HHSRS covers a broader range of matters including many aspects that are not covered under the fitness standard. This can lead to a higher percentage failure rate under the HHSRS than the fitness standard.

5.6 Reasons for unfitness and Category 1 Hazards

5.6.1 The fitness standard describes eleven different criteria on which a dwelling can fail to be fit. The most common reasons for unfitness in East Dorset, assessed against the total number of unfit dwellings, are failures associated with the following fitness categories: disrepair (69.1%), food preparation (44.1%) and heating (35.8%). East Dorset follows the national pattern with disrepair and food preparation the two highest ranked in the hierarchy of failure.

Figure 5.1 Unfit dwellings by reason for unfitness, as % unfit dwellings

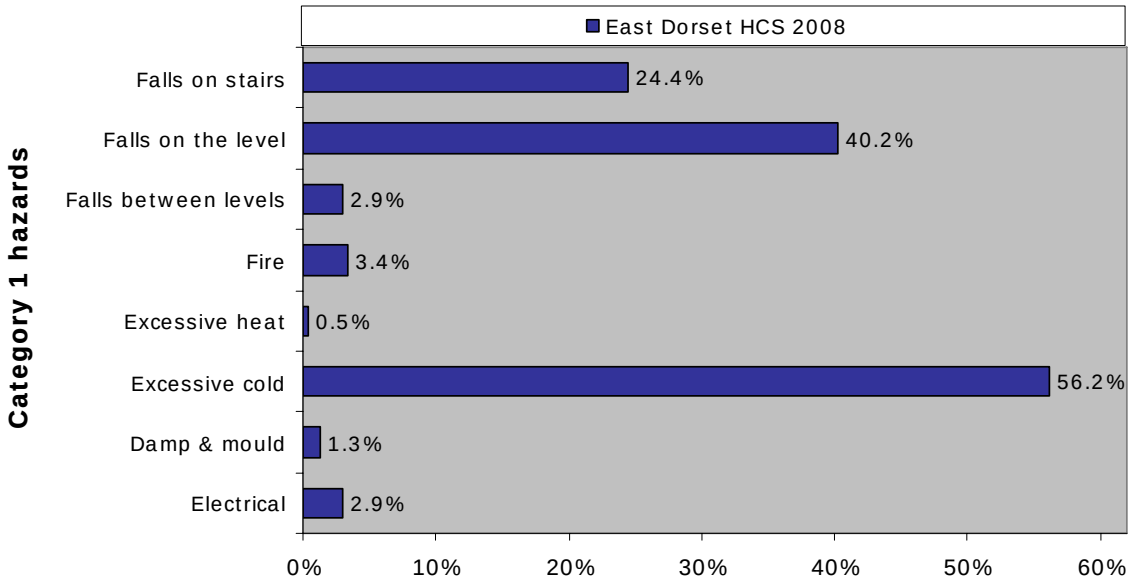


2003 EHCS figures are used as there are no comparative figures available from the 2005 EHCS

5.6.2 The percentages given in the above figure are as a percentage of all unfit dwellings, for example heating failures account for 35.8% of the 1,600 unfit dwellings. The total percentage for all categories combined is greater than 100% as some dwellings will fail the fitness standard on more than one criterion.

5.6.3 The following graph gives the proportion of dwellings with each category 1 hazard by type.

Figure 5.2 Category 1 Hazards by reason, as % of Category 1 Hazards



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.6.4 The figures for Category 1 Hazards are dominated by excess cold hazards by a substantial margin. As commonly found, this is followed by falling on the level and stairs etc. Initial trials of the system suggested that these hazards would be the most commonly found. There are no direct English House Condition Survey figures available at the moment or other national sources, but excess cold has been found to be the most common hazard in other recent house condition surveys.

5.7 Severity of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards

5.7.1 One indication of the severity of unfitness is the number of items on which a dwelling fails the fitness standard. In East Dorset a higher proportion of dwellings (58.2%) fail for multiple reasons of unfitness to that for England (45.5%) with all of theses being in the owner occupied and privately rented sectors. The same process for Category 1 Hazards shows that 28.9% of dwellings have multiple Category 1 Hazards, far lower than the proportion that is multiply unfit. There are no comparative figures from the 2004 or 2005 EHCS for Category 1 Hazards.

5.8 Overlap between Category 1 Hazards and Unfitness

5.8.1 Whilst the HHSRS deals with a number of similar issues as the fitness standard, it is important to appreciate that the HHSRS system is significantly different in approach.

(i) It is a prescribed method of assessment which refers to a national evidence base on the health impacts of deficiencies in dwellings as opposed to a standard which focuses on building condition i.e. it is more concerned with the effect on health of a fault in a building rather than the fact that a fault exists.

(ii) The HHSRS system is concerned with deficiencies in dwellings which can include inherent poor design as well as simply disrepair.

(iii) "Health" in the new Act is defined to include "physical, mental and social wellbeing" i.e. it includes stress and issues such as social exclusion.

(iv) The range of hazards covered is broad and includes many matters not covered by the fitness standard, for example the presence of lead and radon, excess heat, noise, falls, fire, and hot surfaces.

5.8.2 Comparing "adequate provision of heating" under the fitness standard and "excess cold" under the HHSRS illustrates the differences. An estimated 35.8% of properties fail due to inadequate heating whereas Category 1 Hazards on excess cold represent 56.2% of failures under the HHSRS. The fitness standard on heating has been criticised – it is met even if a dwelling does not have a fixed heating appliance, provided there is provision for one in the main living room (e.g. dedicated gas point or dedicated 13 amp socket outlet) and socket outlets/gas fires in other habitable rooms.

5.8.3 In contrast, the hazard of excess cold refers to the national evidence base which shows that a minimum of 20,000 excess winter deaths occur because of cold conditions (Housing Health and Safety Rating System: Operating Guidance, 2005, ODPM). Scoring the hazard takes into account both the effectiveness of the heating system (if any) and the thermal insulation of the dwelling. It is possible that a Category 1 Hazard could exist in a dwelling with full gas central heating but an old and inefficient boiler and where no insulation were present in both the loft and walls.

5.8.4 The example of heating and excessive cold illustrates the shift of emphasis from unfitness to the HHSRS. Heating failures did not consider the overall efficiency of the dwelling at all. Failures due to excessive cold are designed to look at the potential health impact of having a dwelling that cannot be heated properly. The latter has a direct bearing on excess winter deaths and secondary problems with potential mould growth and respiratory problems.

5.8.5 Because of the significant differences in approach with the new system, it is common that there is no direct overlap between dwellings which fail the fitness standard and those where there is a Category 1 Hazard.

5.8.6 In East Dorset, for dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard there is a 25.6% overlap with unfit dwellings, i.e. of all the dwellings found to have a Category 1 Hazard, 25.6% (970 properties) also fail the former Housing Fitness Standard and the remaining 74.4% (2,830) have a Category 1 Hazard, but no corresponding fitness failure. This degree of overlap is typical of that found in most studies conducted by CPC in recent years. An analysis of the overlap for several authorities with different stock types showed an average overlap of 13% with the lowest at 8% and the highest 30%.

5.8.7 The lack of overlap does present an important issue for the Local Authority, as given that 74.4% of dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard are not unfit (2,830 properties), they present a whole new set of dwellings that now require action. This reinforces the message that the HHSRS is an evidence based system drawing upon national figures, which show the health impact of deficiencies in dwellings, whereas the fitness standard was based on the failure of the dwelling to meet standards, on the condition of building elements, or provision of elements. Only if unfitness items cause a potential hazard will they score under the HHSRS.

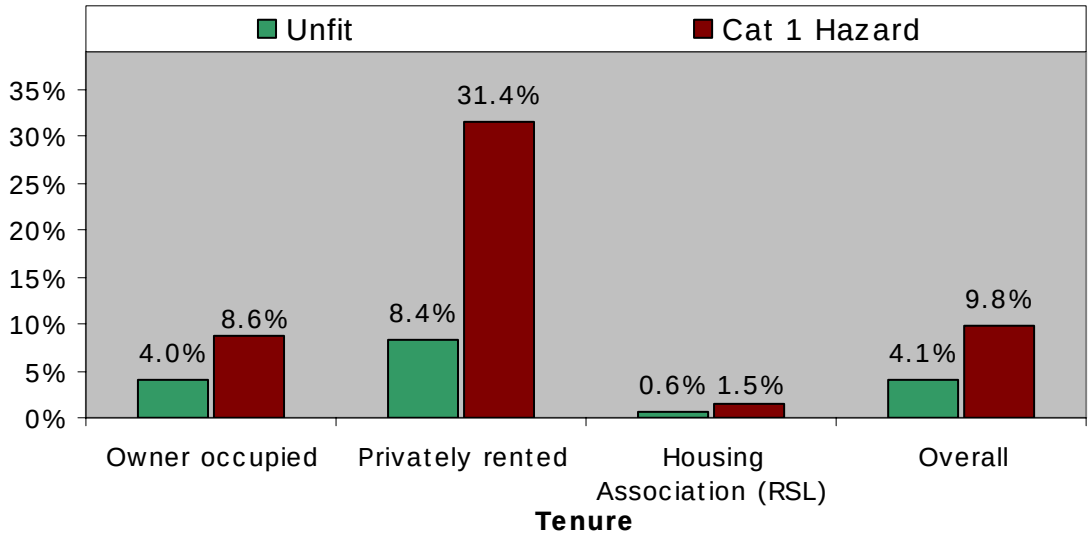
5.8.8 The 25.6% overlap between serious hazards and unfitness represents 970 dwellings that are both unfit and have a Category 1 Hazard, which is 2.5% of the private sector stock including RSL properties. Those dwellings that are currently unfit, however, still represent clear targets for action as such dwellings are still far more prone to having serious hazards than dwellings that are not unfit.

5.9 Unfitness & Category 1 Hazards by general characteristics

5.9.1 This section examines the relationship between those general stock characteristics set out in chapter two, with the level of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards. The following charts and commentary examine the rates of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards by tenure, dwelling type and construction date.

5.9.2 Unfitness has a higher rate in the private rented sector than the owner occupied and RSL sectors, and this is repeated for Category 1 Hazards, but which are more strongly associated with privately rented dwellings. Whilst the differential is less with unfitness, Category 1 Hazards in privately rented sector dwellings are significantly higher than that for owner occupied properties at 31.4% compared to 8.6%. This is another indicator that suggests the privately rented sector could be a priority in East Dorset.

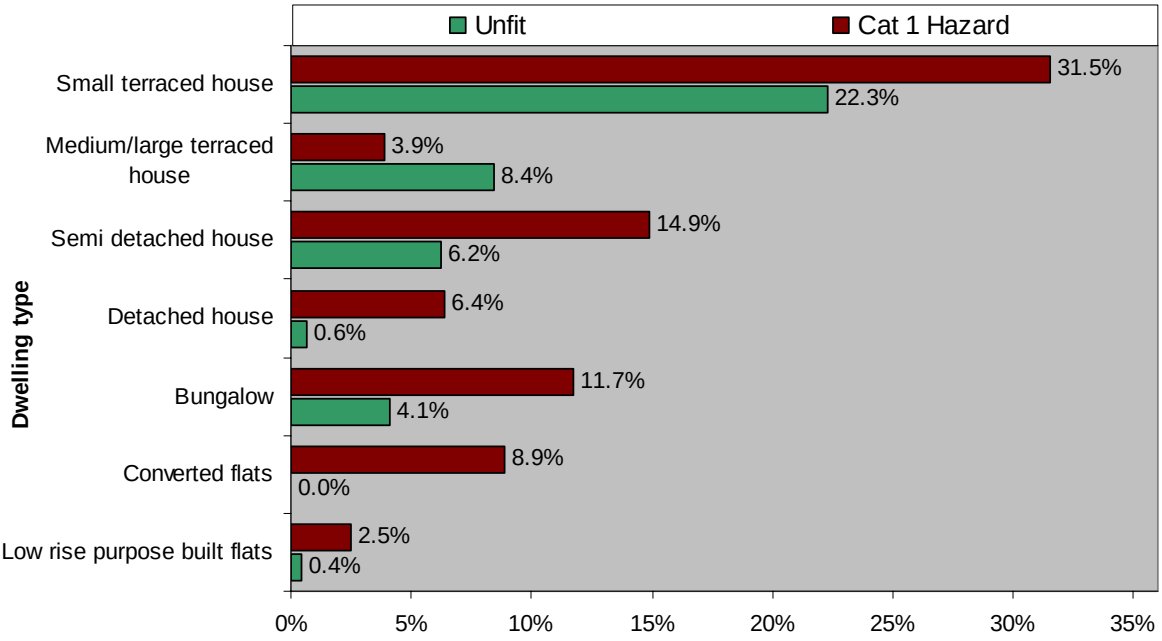
Figure 5.3 Rates of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards by tenure



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.9.3 The chart below shows the rates of unfitness/Category 1 Hazards by build type. The highest rate of unfitness is found in small terraced houses (22.3%) followed by medium/large terraced houses (8.4%). Converted flats did not register any unfitness, but this is likely to be due to the very small proportion of these dwellings in East Dorset.

Figure 5.4 Rates of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards by building type



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

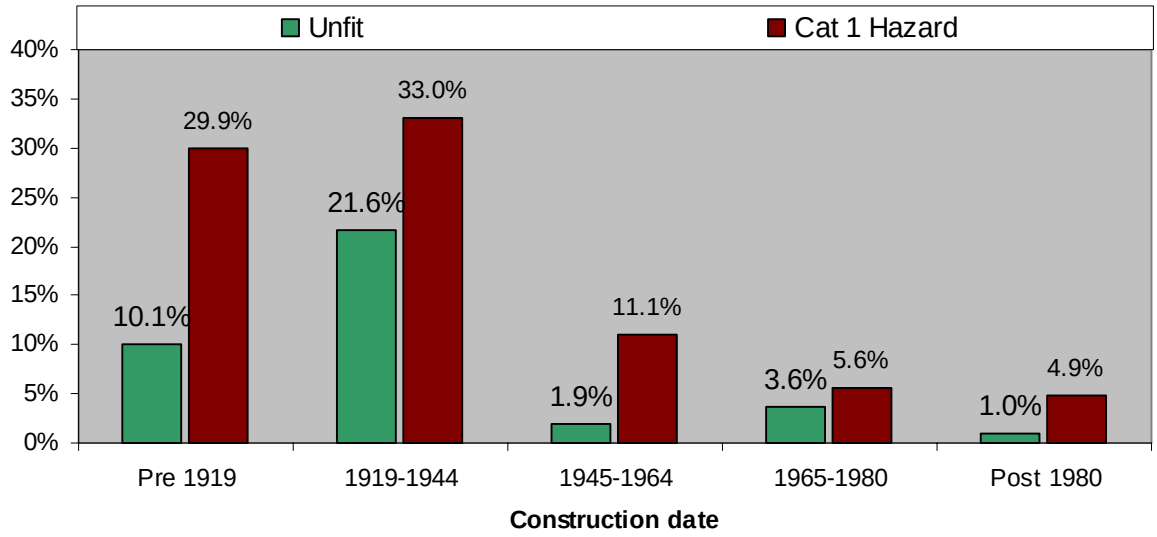
5.9.4 For dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard the highest rate, by a considerable margin, is found in small terraced houses (31.5%)

followed by semi detached houses (14.9%) and bungalows (11.7%). The type with the lowest rate is low rise purpose built flats (2.5%).

5.9.5 Generally, the rate of unfitness increases as dwellings become older. In East Dorset, this can be clearly seen although the 1919 to 1944 age group have a rate (21.6%) which is just over twice that of the pre 1919 dwellings (10.1%).

5.9.6 Category 1 Hazards are generally much less closely linked with the deterioration of building elements as the new HHSRS system is concerned primarily with the effect of deficiencies which may be due to design faults as well as disrepair. There is however, a general increase in rates as dwellings become older although, as with unfitness, the 1919 to 1944 age group bucks that trend.

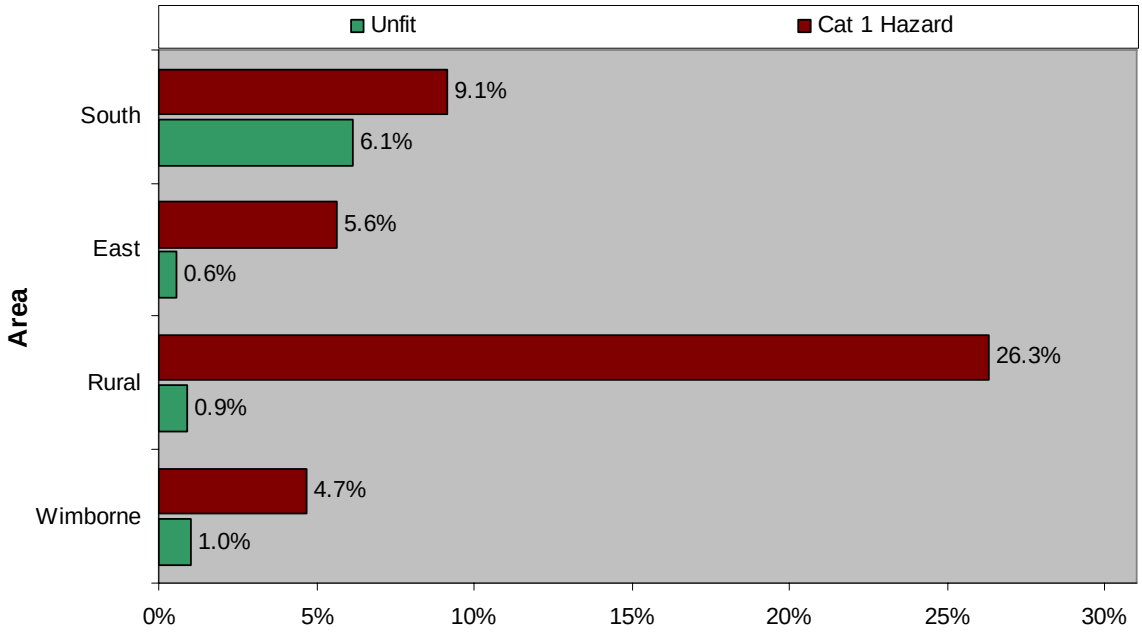
Figure 5.5 Rates of unfitness & Category 1 Hazards by construction date



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.9.7 The final division to be considered are failures under the former fitness standard and Category 1 Hazards by sub-area. The final chart shows the distribution of rates for both these measures by the four sub areas. The highest rate of failure under the former fitness standard is found in the South sub-area (6.1%), whilst the highest rate of Category 1 Hazards is found in the Rural sub-area (26.3%).

Figure 5.6 Rates of unfitness and Category 1 Hazards by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.10 Cost of works to unfit dwellings & Category 1 Hazards

5.10.1 In the previous chapter of this report the 'just fit' cost was given for remedying only those items causing unfit dwellings to be unfit. This cost represents the minimum amount of work required on these dwellings simply to bring them up to a habitable standard.

5.10.2 This section seeks to present the cost not only of bringing dwellings up to a habitable standard, but also the comprehensive cost of repairs in unfit and Category 1 Hazard dwellings. Comprehensive repair is the level of repair and improvement needed such that no new work is required to the dwelling, in the next 10 years. This level of work most closely resembles the former mandatory renovation grant regime. The table below shows the costs to just make fit, for urgent works and works required within 5 years and within 10 years.

5.10.3 The total cost of urgent works is not an increase above the just-fit costs, since urgent works in unfit dwellings are, by definition, just fit works. The total level of comprehensive repair in unfit dwellings, in East Dorset, is an average of £10,100 per dwelling, with privately rented dwellings having the highest average cost.

Table 5.1 Repair costs in unfit dwellings by tenure

Tenure	Just fit	Urgent[2]	5 year[2]	Comprehensive[2]
Owner occupied (£m)[1]	**6.51**	**6.51**	**10.40**	**11.89**
Average (£s)	*4,900*	*4,900*	*7,800*	*8,900*
Privately Rented (£m)[1]	**1.97**	**1.97**	**3.37**	**4.04**
Average (£s)	*8,200*	*8,200*	*14,000*	*16,800*
RSL (£m)[1]	**0.04**	**0.04**	**0.05**	**0.06**
Average (£s)	*2,500*	*2,500*	*3,100*	*3,700*
All tenures (£m)[1]	**8.52**	**8.52**	**13.82**	**16.00**
Average (£s)	*5,400*	*5,400*	*8,700*	*10,100*

1. Figures given in millions of pounds sterling

2. Figures are cumulative and therefore include the previous column

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.10.4 The following table gives the same distribution, but for dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard instead.

Table 5.2 Repair costs in Category 1 Hazard dwellings by tenure

Tenure	Remedial	Urgent[2]	5 year[2]	Comprehensive[2]
Owner occupied (£m)[1]	**7.08**	**9.47**	**15.01**	**20.31**
Average (£s)	*2,500*	*3,300*	*5,300*	*7,100*
Privately Rented (£m)[1]	**3.17**	**6.54**	**10.00**	**12.75**
Average (£s)	*3,500*	*7,300*	*11,100*	*14,100*
RSL (£m)[1]	**0.09**	**0.10**	**0.13**	**0.17**
Average (£s)	*2,400*	*2,600*	*3,200*	*4,200*
All tenures (£m)[1]	**10.35**	**16.12**	**25.14**	**33.23**
Average (£s)	*2,700*	*4,200*	*6,600*	*8,750*

1. Figures given in millions of pounds sterling

2. Figures are cumulative and therefore include the previous column

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

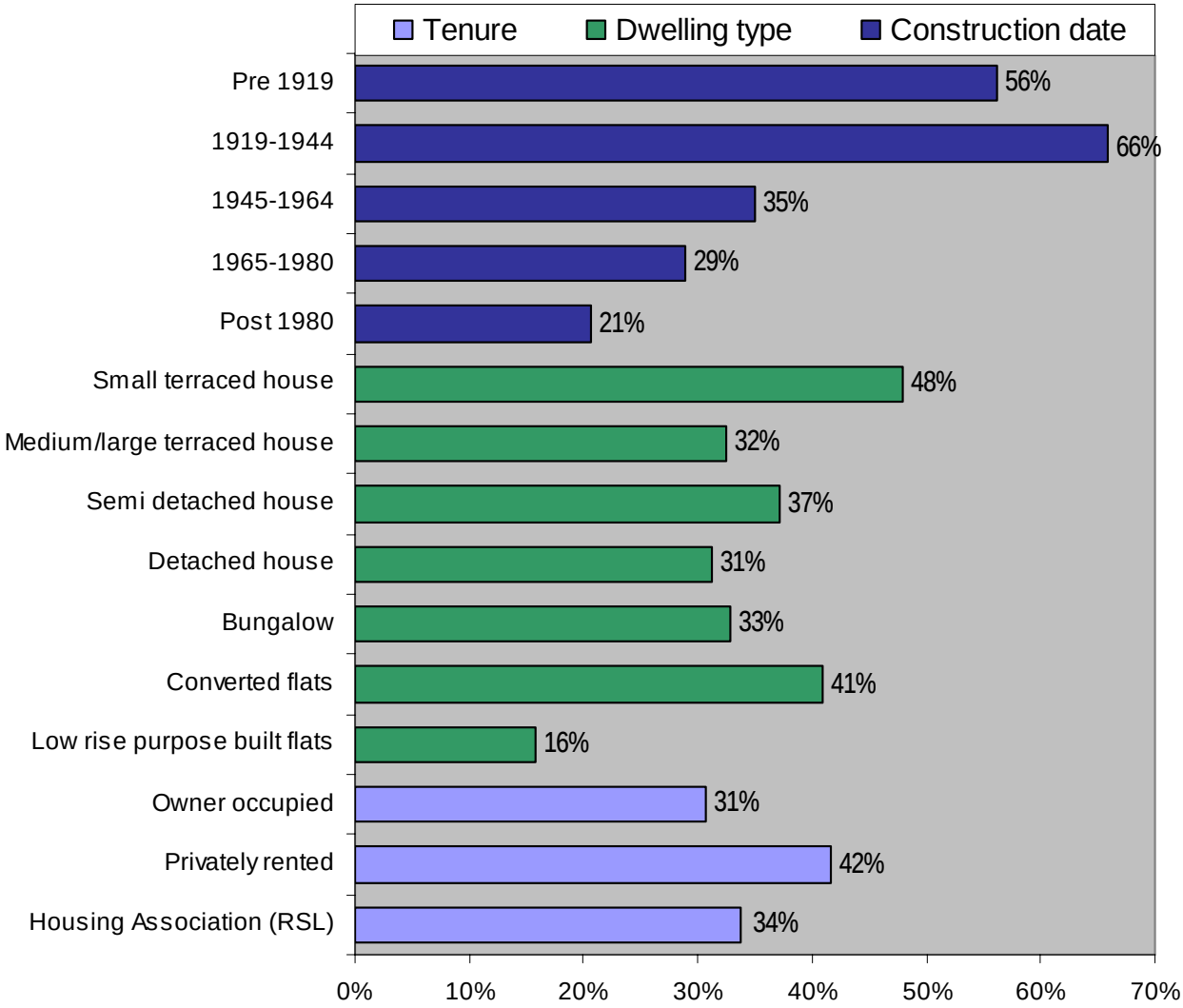
5.10.5 The average costs for just remedying hazards are lower than for unfitness as are the comprehensive works costs. This tends to be because hazards tend to occur more often in dwellings that are otherwise not defective or in poor physical condition.

5.11 Category 2 hazards in bands D and E

5.11.1 There are an estimated 12,300 (31.8 %%) dwellings in East Dorset that have at least one category 2 hazard (Bands D and E). Of those 10,600 (86.2%) have no corresponding category 1 hazard.

5.11.2 The following graph illustrates the distribution of category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by age, building type and tenure.

Figure 5.7 Category 2 hazards by general characteristics



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

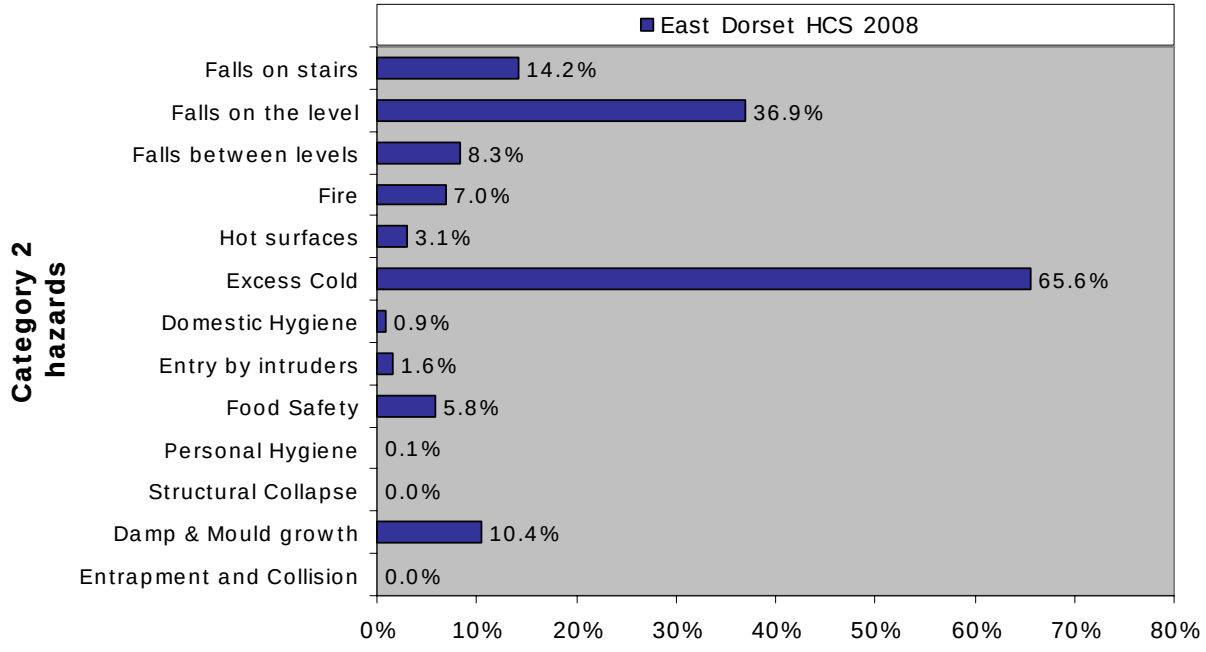
5.11.3 As might be expected, the proportion of category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by construction date increases with dwelling age with the 1919 to 1944 age group again having a higher rate than those built pre 1919.

5.11.4 Small terraced houses are the most likely dwelling type to have a Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E), with 48% having at least one hazard within bands D and E. above average.

5.11.5 The highest category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) rate by tenure is to be found in the privately rented stock at 42%.

5.11.6 The following graph illustrates the distribution of category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by hazard type.

Figure 5.8 Category 2 hazards by hazard type

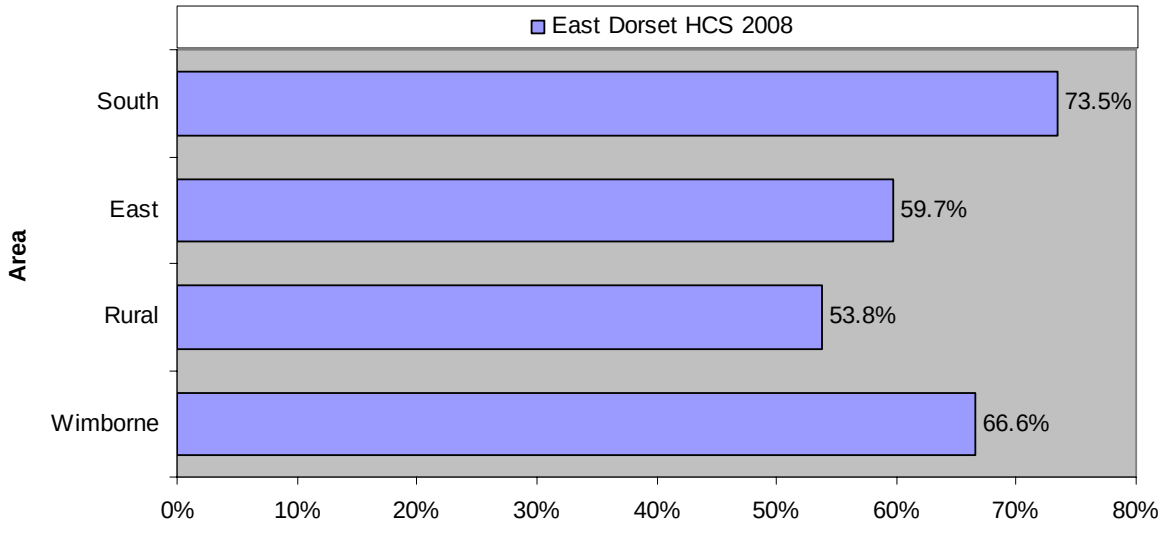


Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.11.7 As with category 1 hazards, category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) hazards are influenced by Excess cold issues. Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) again have issues such as falls on the stairs, on the level and between levels, with damp and mould growth also figuring highly.

5.11.8 The following chart looks at the extent of Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by sub-area, with the South sub-area having the highest rate and the Rural sub-area the lowest rate.

Figure 5.9 Category 2 hazards by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.11.9 When looking at the costs of repair to Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by sub-area, there are 2,000 dwellings where the costs exceed £5,000 (16.3%) with the highest level being in the Wimborne sub-area (30%).

Table 5.3 Repair costs in Category 2 Hazard (bands D and E) dwellings by sub-area

Sub-area	Number where costs are £5,000 or less	Percentage of total	Number where costs are greater than £5,000	Percentage of total	Total
South	5,600	87.5%	800	12.5%	6,400
East	2,600	83.9%	500	16.1%	3,100
Rural	1,400	77.8%	400	22.2%	1,800
Wimborne	700	70.0%	300	30.0%	1,000
East Dorset	10,300	83.7%	2,000	16.3%	12,300

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

5.12 Key points

5.12.1 Of properties with a category 1 hazard, 56.2% possess a category 1 hazard due to 'excess cold', with 40.2% possessing a category 1 hazard due to 'falls on the level'.

5.12.2 31.5% of small terraced houses possess a category 1 hazard compared to 14.9% of semi detached houses.

5.12.3 26.3% of properties in the rural sub-area possess category 1 hazards.

5.12.4 It costs an average of £2,700 to remedy the category 1 hazards in a property in East Dorset.

5.12.5 Of properties with a category 2 hazard, 65.6% of them possess a category 2 hazard due to 'excess cold'.

6 State of Repair

6.1 Improving the stock

6.1.1 This chapter seeks to examine the extent of work required to rectify further defects in private sector housing. In the first instance, it examines failures of the Decent Homes Standard on disrepair issues (see Appendices). Beyond decent homes disrepair, it also looks at the wider issues of disrepair in the dwelling stock. In order to do this, three key questions must be considered:

- What is the cost of carrying out repairs and renewal?
- Where are the problems concentrated: what types of dwelling; which tenures; what ages of dwellings and what geographical areas?
- What are the financial circumstances of residents occupying these dwellings and how likely is it that they will be able to afford necessary repairs?

6.1.2 This chapter considers:

(i) What works are required to remedy those dwellings failing the Decent Homes Standard on the repair category

(ii) What works are required to all other dwellings that are decent but where more minor repair issues exist

6.2 Cost calculation

6.2.1 Costs derived from the house condition survey are calculated for each individual dwelling surveyed. Costs are calculated in four separate areas: external repairs, internal repairs, amenities costs and costs relating to common parts of flats (where common parts exist). A schedule of rates is used that lists the unit cost of all elements of the dwelling, recorded during the survey (for example: the cost of roofing slates per square metre or the cost of guttering per metre length). The schedule of rates is derived from national information on building costs.

6.2.2 For external repair, a spatial model of the building is created using the dimension information. The proportion of repair is multiplied by the overall quantity for a given element and then by the unit cost for that element. For internal repair to elements, such as plasterwork, flooring etc, the actual quantity of repair required is recorded. Amenities are recorded on the basis of whether they require no work, repair, replacement or installation. Common parts repairs are recorded on the basis of the specific quantity noted by the surveyor.

6.2.3 Once all costs have been calculated, they are assigned to a time frame. Where a dwelling is unfit, certain works relating to this unfitness are indicated as being urgent and these costs are isolated to form the 'just fit' costs, described in the previous chapter. The remaining urgent costs represent those works that should be carried out within the next year. All other costs are generated based on the age of element and renewal period of that element. These costs are banded into 5 year, 10 year and 30 year costs.

6.2.4 The term 'works' is used in relation not only to repair costs, but also to other activities in relation to housing condition. The term is used, as frequently the cost described does not solely relate to repair, but can relate to replacement of building elements or installation of elements and/or amenities (i.e. improvements).

6.3 Remedial repair works in non decent dwellings

6.3.1 The previous chapter examined the extent of unfitness and the extent of Category 1 Hazards, as well as the cost of remedying these. The cost to carry out repairs to building elements, which fail the Decent Homes Standard under the repair criterion, can be calculated. A detailed definition of what constitutes a failure under the repair criterion is given in the appendices of this report, but a brief summary is given below:

- Wall structure: external wall construction old and in need of major repair.
- Lintels: as for external wall structure.
- Brickwork (spalling): exterior wall finish requiring resurfacing or replace.
- Wall finish: other wall surface finishes in poor condition and old.
- Roof structure: major repair problems to roof structure.
- Roof covering: replacement of significant areas of roof covering required.
- Chimney: Major repair or rebuild of chimneys required.
- Windows: replacement of windows required.
- External doors: replacement of external doors required.
- Heating central heating gas boiler: boiler requires replacement.
- Heating other: other heating system is non functional.
- Electrical systems: electrical systems are old and non-compliant
- Minor works: two or more of – kitchens, bathrooms, central heating distribution

6.3.2 It should be noted that for all categories of repair, an element only fails if it is both old (beyond its design life) and in poor condition (as defined in the appendices).

6.3.3 The total cost to remedy all repair issues, covered under the Decent Homes Standard, is £7.8 million. Based upon the total number of dwellings requiring repairs under the standard (1,900) this equates to

an average repair cost of £4,180 per dwelling that fails the Decent Homes Standard on disrepair. The remedial cost is an average and in this case is based on a wide range of costs, from the limited (e.g. a replacement boiler) and the most extensive (e.g. a replacement roof).

6.3.4 The table below gives a breakdown of the total cost, within each repair category, and the average cost per dwelling.

Table 6.1 Cost to remedy repairs under the Decent Homes Standard

Category	Total cost to remedy *£million*	Average Cost *£*
Wall structure[1]	0.00	0
Wall surface[2]	0.58	5,200
Roof cost	0.15	6,520
Chimney cost	0.00	0
Windows cost	4.53	4,510
Doors cost	0.55	760
Boiler cost	0.25	1,800
Other heating cost	0.02	1,200
Electrics cost	1.62	2,850
Minor repairs	0.07	1,500
Total	**7.8**	**4,180**

1. Includes the cost of repair for lintels
2. Includes the cost of repair for spalling brickwork
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

6.3.5 The table above gives a good indication of the distribution of repairs. It is typically the case that works to windows, electrics and boilers form the predominant part of failures under the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard, and this mostly applies in East Dorset although boiler costs are lower than those for wall surface and doors. It should be noted, however, that these results are based on a sub-set of data from a sample survey and therefore should only be regarded as indicative.

6.4 Comprehensive repair works in non decent dwellings

6.4.1 In addition to the cost of works to bring dwellings up to the Decent Homes Standard where they fail due to poor state of repair, as with unfitness and Category 1 Hazards it is also possible to consider the comprehensive (10 year) cost of repairs in these dwellings.

Table 6.2 Repair costs in repair failure dwellings by tenure

Tenure	Remedial	Urgent[2]	5 year[2]	Comprehensive[2]
Owner occupied (£m)[1]	**5.40**	**7.13**	**12.91**	**16.13**
Average (£s)	*4,500*	*5,900*	*10,800*	*13,400*
Privately Rented (£m)[1]	**2.32**	**3.04**	**7.31**	**8.72**
Average (£s)	*3,900*	*5,100*	*12,300*	*14,600*
RSL (£m)[1]	**0.04**	**0.05**	**0.20**	**0.26**
Average (£s)	*700*	*800*	*3,200*	*4,100*
All tenures (£m)[1]	**7.77**	**10.23**	**20.43**	**25.11**
Average (£s)	*4,200*	*5,500*	*11,000*	*13,500*

1. Figures given in millions of pounds sterling
2. Figures are cumulative and therefore include the previous column
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

6.4.2 The average comprehensive cost of repair in dwellings that fail the Decent Homes Standard due to their state of repair at £13,500 is significantly higher than those for comprehensive works to a dwelling with a Category 1 Hazard (£8,750, Table 5.2).

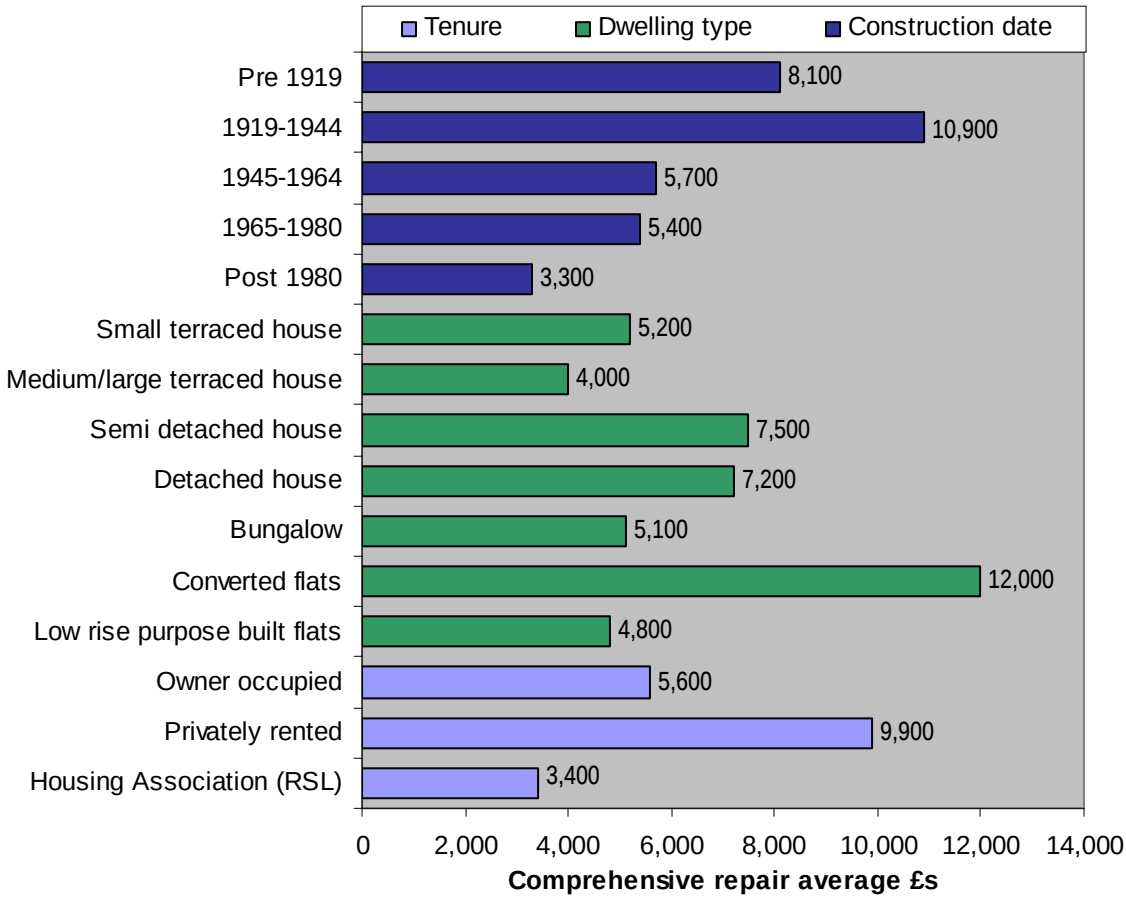
6.5 Overall repair costs

6.5.1 The total comprehensive cost, for all private sector dwellings in East Dorset, whether they meet the Decent Homes Standard or not, is £50.3 million, an average of £5,800 per dwelling. This average reflects the fact there is a very wide range of repair costs with many modern dwellings having only minor repair requirements compared with many unfit dwellings with major repair costs. Repair costs for the dwellings in poorest condition are considered further later in this chapter.

6.6 Repair costs and general characteristics

6.6.1 As with unfitness, repair costs vary depending on the age, type and tenure of dwellings. The following section gives a breakdown of comprehensive costs by a number of key variables.

Figure 6.1 Comprehensive repair cost by general characteristics



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

6.6.2 As with previous criteria, the repair by construction date deviates from the usual pattern of repair costs being higher in earlier construction periods in that the costs for interwar properties are the highest at £10,900. This is not uncommon in that many pre-1919 properties have undergone a comprehensive renovation at some stage in the past but this is less likely with interwar properties, where many of the original building elements may now be nearing the end of their anticipated life.

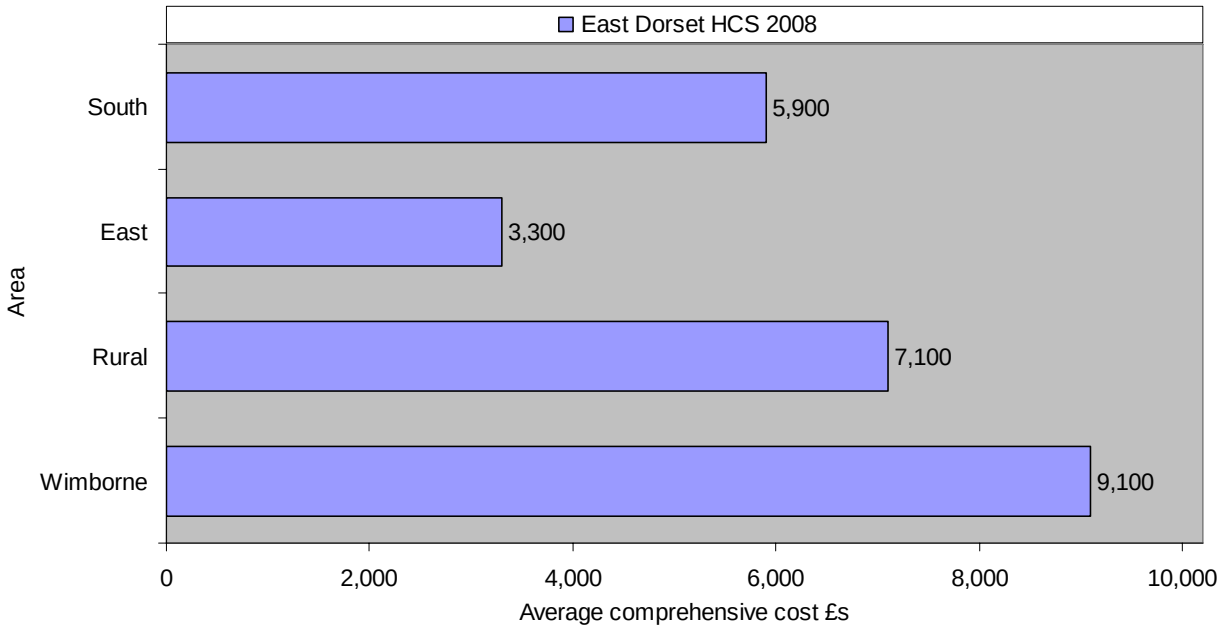
6.6.3 Converted flats have the highest average repair cost (£12,000) although due to them forming a very small proportion of the overall stock this should be treated with caution. The next highest average repair cost is for semi-detached houses at £7,500 followed by detached houses (£7,200). The lowest average cost is for medium/large terraced houses (£4,000).

6.6.4 Privately rented properties in East Dorset at £9,000 have higher average repair costs than those for owner occupied (£5,000) and RSL dwellings (£3,400).

6.7 Cost of repairs by sub-area

6.7.1 Having already examined the level of non decent dwellings and the level of Category 1 Hazards by sub-area, it may prove useful to examine the impact of condition issues on repair costs by sub-area. The following chart illustrates the different repair cost bands by sub-area.

Figure 6.2 Repair cost bands by sub-area



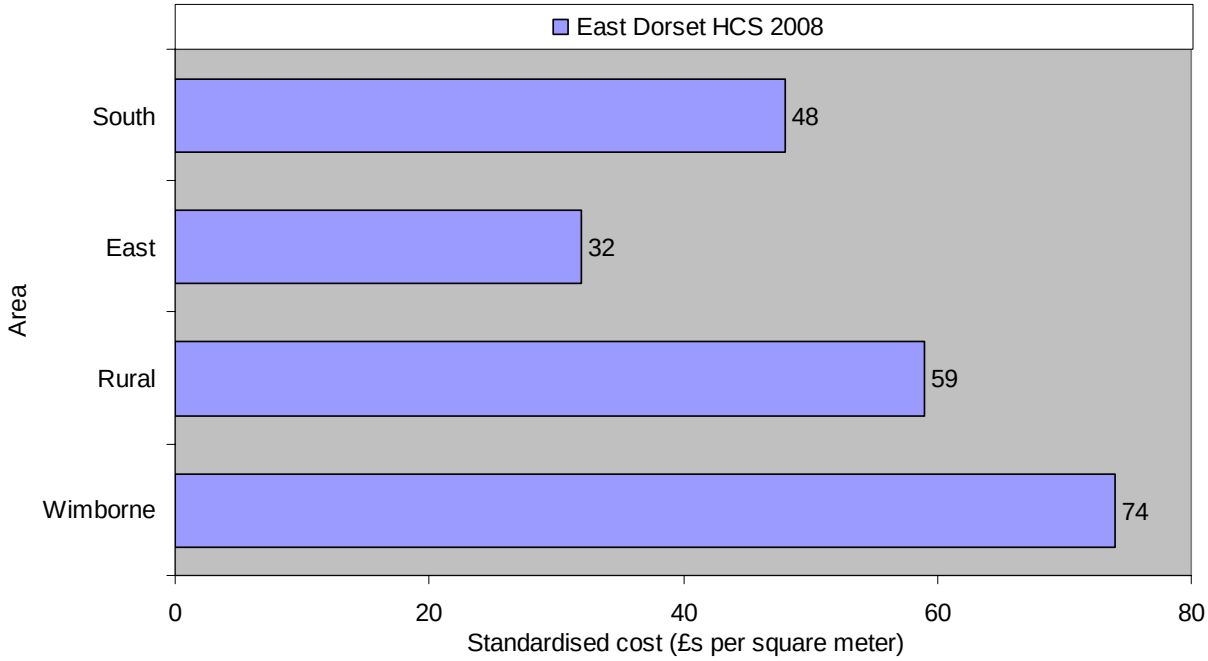
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

6.7.2 The highest repair costs are for the Wimborne sub-area at £9,100, followed by the Rural sub-area (£7,100). The lowest cost is recorded in the East sub-area (£3,300).

6.7.3 The English House Condition Survey (EHCS) uses a form of costs known as 'standardised costs', which are derived from comprehensive costs, divided by the floor area of the dwelling (as a useful indicator of size). This method is used to 'factor-out' the overall size of dwellings, as larger dwellings tend, inherently, to produce higher costs. If such a calculation is carried out on the dwelling stock of East Dorset District Council, the average standardised cost per dwelling is £53 per square metre of floor area.

6.7.4 The standardised costs by sub-area are shown in the chart below:

Figure 6.3 Standardised costs by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

6.7.5 As with the figures for general repair costs, the Wimborne and Rural sub-areas have the highest figures with the East sub-area having the lowest.

6.8 Key points

6.8.1 It costs an average of £4,180 to remedy disrepair (Decent Homes Standard Criterion B) in properties in East Dorset.

7 Modern Facilities

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 So far this report has considered Criterion A of the Decent Homes Standard: Category 1 Hazards (and former standard - unfitness) and Criterion B: dwellings failing due to disrepair issues. The third criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is that a dwelling should have adequate modern facilities, and this chapter deals with that issue.

7.1.2 Few dwellings within the private sector fail on this criterion at national level (2.2%). In East Dorset, the rate is lower than the national average with 400 (1.1%) dwellings failing for this reason. The low level of failure nationally, and in East Dorset, reflects the fact that a dwelling only fails if it lacks *three* or more of the following:

- A kitchen which is 20 years old or less
- A kitchen with adequate space and layout
- A bathroom that is 30 years old or less
- An appropriately located bathroom and WC
- Adequate noise insulation
- Adequate size and layout of common parts of flats

7.1.3 For example, if a dwelling had a kitchen and bathroom older than the specified date, it would not fail unless the kitchen had a poor layout or the bathroom was not properly located. Both nationally and within East Dorset failure under this criterion is infrequent.

7.1.4 As a result of the relatively small number of dwellings failing the Decent Homes Standard on this criterion, it is not possible to further subdivide those failures to examine their tenure distribution or other characteristics. However, this chapter will examine the general provision of facilities and in particular consider the potential for a greater level of failure in the future.

7.2 Key basic amenities

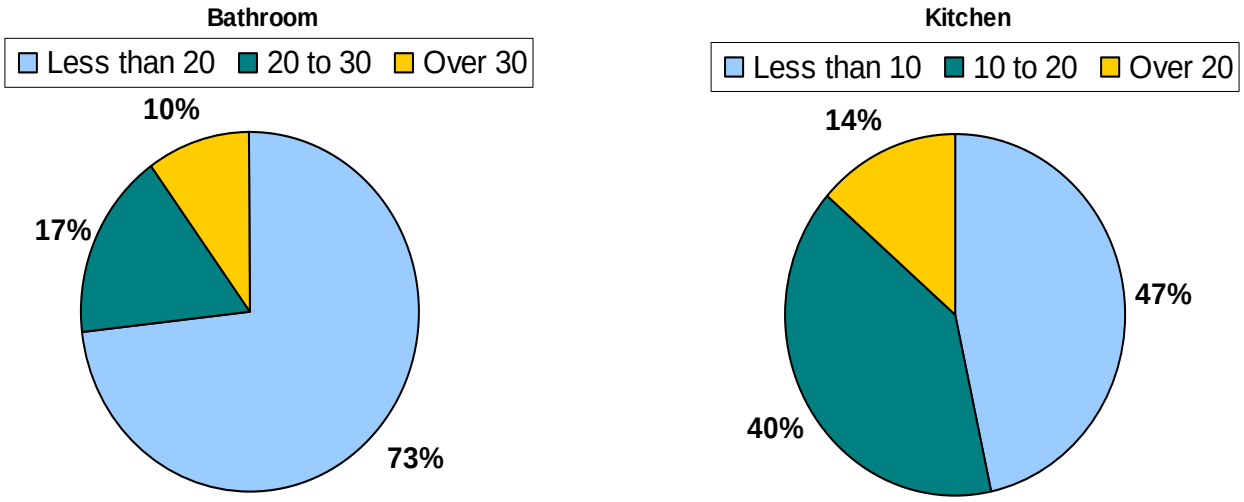
7.2.1 The provision of key basic amenities has long been one of the key drivers of housing policy, with the aim that all dwellings should have an internal WC, an adequate kitchen, an adequate bathroom, an electrical supply and the provision of hot and cold water.

7.2.2 In East Dorset, nearly 100% of dwellings have the provision of these basic five key amenities. There are only estimated to be 20 dwellings that lack one or more of these facilities.

7.3 Key amenities bathrooms and kitchens

7.3.1 Under the Decent Homes Standard the age of bathrooms and kitchens is of importance to the modern facilities criterion. The following charts examine the age of these two facilities in dwellings within East Dorset District Council.

Figure 7.1 Bathroom and Kitchen age



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

7.3.2 It is possible to see from the two charts that potential for failure under the facilities criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is fairly low with bathrooms as the great majority (73%) are less than 20 years old but greater with kitchens as 54% are either older than the age specified in the criterion or will become so in the next 10 years. For these dwellings to fail, however, it would be necessary that one of the other elements of this criterion be breached (such as inadequate noise insulation). It is unlikely therefore that failure to replace older kitchens and bathrooms will cause any significant increase in non decency.

7.4 Key points

7.4.1 400 Dwellings in East Dorset (1.1% of the stock) fail the Decent Homes Standard due to a lack of reasonably modern facilities.

8 Thermal Comfort and Energy Efficiency

8.1 Thermal comfort failures

8.1.1 There are sufficient dwellings that fail on the grounds of inadequate thermal comfort, to allow for an analysis of the reasons for these failures. Failure of the thermal comfort criterion, and consequently the work required to remedy that failure, is based on the combination of heating system type and insulation present within a dwelling. The following are the three requirements under the thermal comfort criterion of the Decent Homes Standard:

- For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are walls that can be insulated effectively) or at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is a loft space) is an effective package of insulation.
- For dwellings heated by electric storage heaters/ LPG/ programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are walls that can be insulated effectively).
- All other heating systems fail (i.e. all room heater systems are considered to fail the thermal comfort standard).

8.1.2 The following table illustrates the total estimated number of dwellings that fall within each of the bullet points described above, and the estimated cost to make each decent.

Table 8.1 Breakdown of thermal comfort failures

Area of failure	Dwellings	Total cost *£million*	Average cost *£*
Room heaters	1,200	4.3	3,620
Gas or Oil central heating	1,700	0.9	540
Electric storage heaters or LPG/Solid fuel central heating	2,800	3.0	1,070
Total	**5,700**	**8.2**	**1,450**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.1.3 All 1,200 dwellings that fail because room heaters are the primary heating provision will require an alternative heating system. Gas central heating has been assumed, though a substantial number may have to have oil or off-peak storage heating where no mains gas supply exists. (It is estimated that there is mains gas to just over 86% of

properties). A large number of these dwellings will also require either cavity wall insulation (where appropriate) and/or increased loft insulation.

8.1.4 For the 2,800 dwellings from the electric storage category, the majority require both loft and wall insulation, whilst the remainder require wall insulation, but no upgrade to existing loft insulation, or they have no loft.

8.1.5 The 1,700 dwellings that fail the remaining category can be remedied by the provision of loft or wall insulation, since this category only requires that one or other meet the specified level in order for the dwelling to be decent.

8.2 Energy efficiency and SAP ratings

8.2.1 The Standard Assessment Procedure or SAP is a government rating for energy efficiency. It is used in this report in conjunction with annual CO2 emissions figures, calculated on fuel consumption, and the measure of that fuel consumption in kilo Watt hours (kWh), to examine energy efficiency.

8.2.2 The SAP rating in this report is the energy rating for a dwelling and is based on the calculated annual energy cost for space and water heating. The calculation assumes a standard occupancy pattern, derived from the measured floor area so that the size of the dwelling does not strongly affect the result. It is expressed on a 0-100 scale. The higher the number the better the energy rating for that dwelling.

8.2.3 Originally SAP was produced with figures on a scale from 1 to 100, but in 2001 a new calculation was introduced with SAP ratings on a scale of 1 to 120. This revised SAP rating made minor alterations to take into account new dwellings with very high energy efficiency. The software used to calculate SAP ratings for this report uses SAP2005.

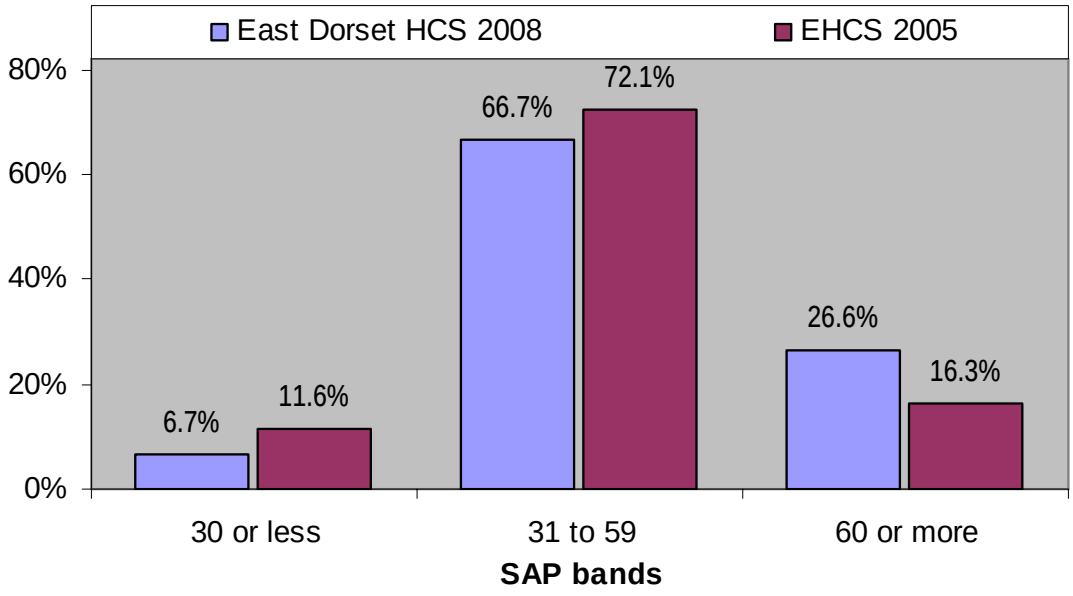
8.2.4 Further changes to the calculation of SAP ratings occurred with the introduction of SAP2005. This recalculation of SAP has now been introduced returning to the SAP scale of 1 to 100. As previously mentioned, this report uses SAP2005.

8.3 Distribution of SAP ratings

8.3.1 The average SAP rating for a (private sector) dwelling in East Dorset is 52. This compares to an average SAP rating of just under 46 nationally, based on the findings of the 2005 EHCS, which also used SAP2005.

8.3.2 Figure 9.1 shows the distribution of SAP ratings for private sector dwellings within East Dorset compared to the EHCS 2005.

Figure 8.1 Frequency distribution of SAP in East Dorset and England



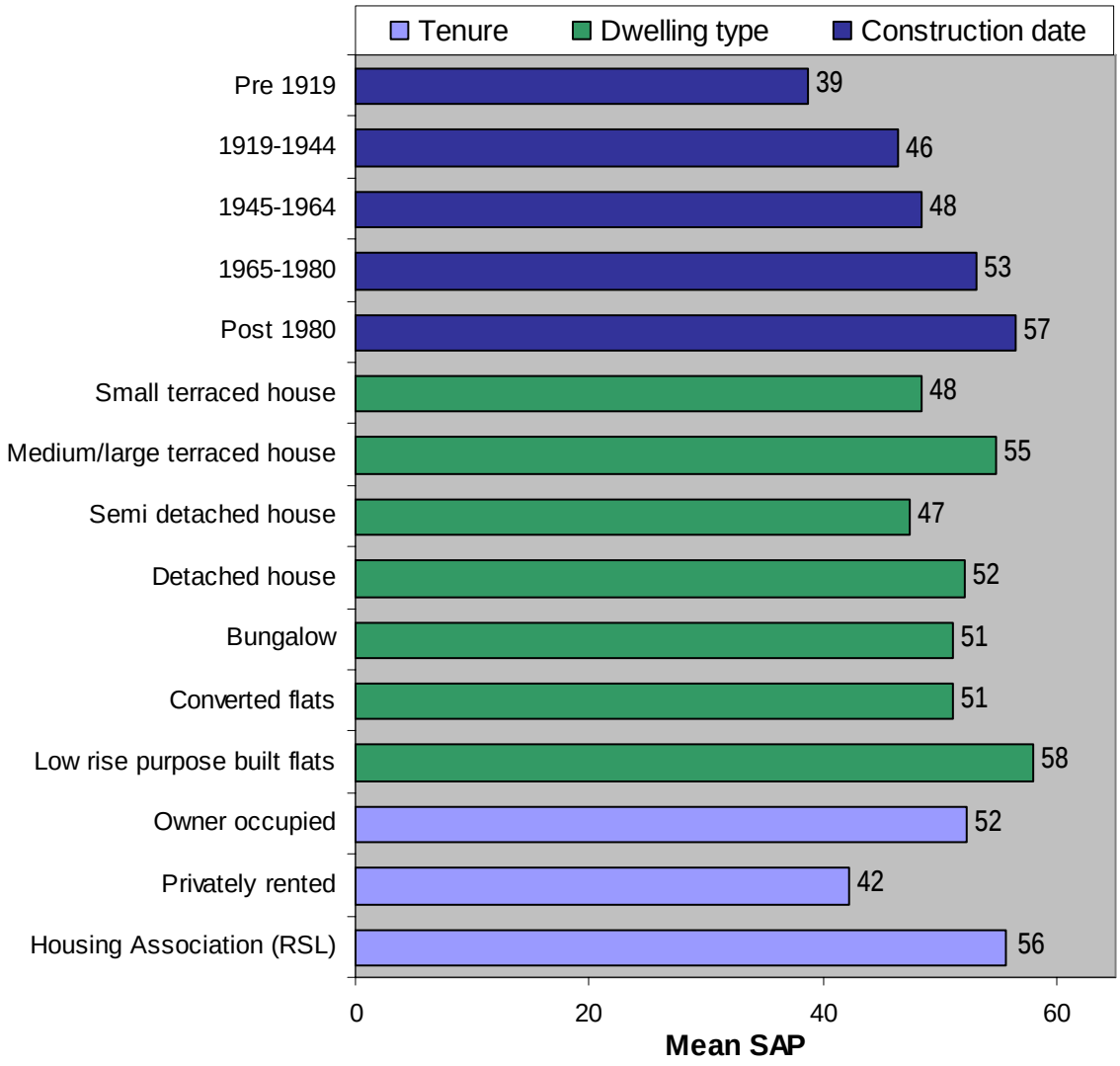
Source: 2008 House Condition Survey & 2005 EHCS

8.3.3 The majority of dwellings (66.7%) have a SAP rating between 31 and 59, compared with all England at 72.1%. The target SAP for all dwellings is a minimum of 65 described under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995. A SAP of less than 30 is considered unacceptably low and represents a difficult and expensive dwelling to heat. In East Dorset 2,570 dwellings (6.7%) have a SAP rating of less than 30, which is considerably lower than the 11.6% found in the EHCS 2005. For SAP ratings of 60 or above there is again a substantially difference with East Dorset having 26.6% of dwellings within this band compared to 16.3% nationally.

8.4 SAP by general characteristics

8.4.1 The physical characteristics of dwellings have a major effect on the efficiency of a dwelling. The number of exposed external walls and the construction materials and methods all affect the overall heat loss and therefore the energy efficiency. Different types and ages of dwellings will have different energy characteristics.

Figure 8.2 SAP by general characteristics



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

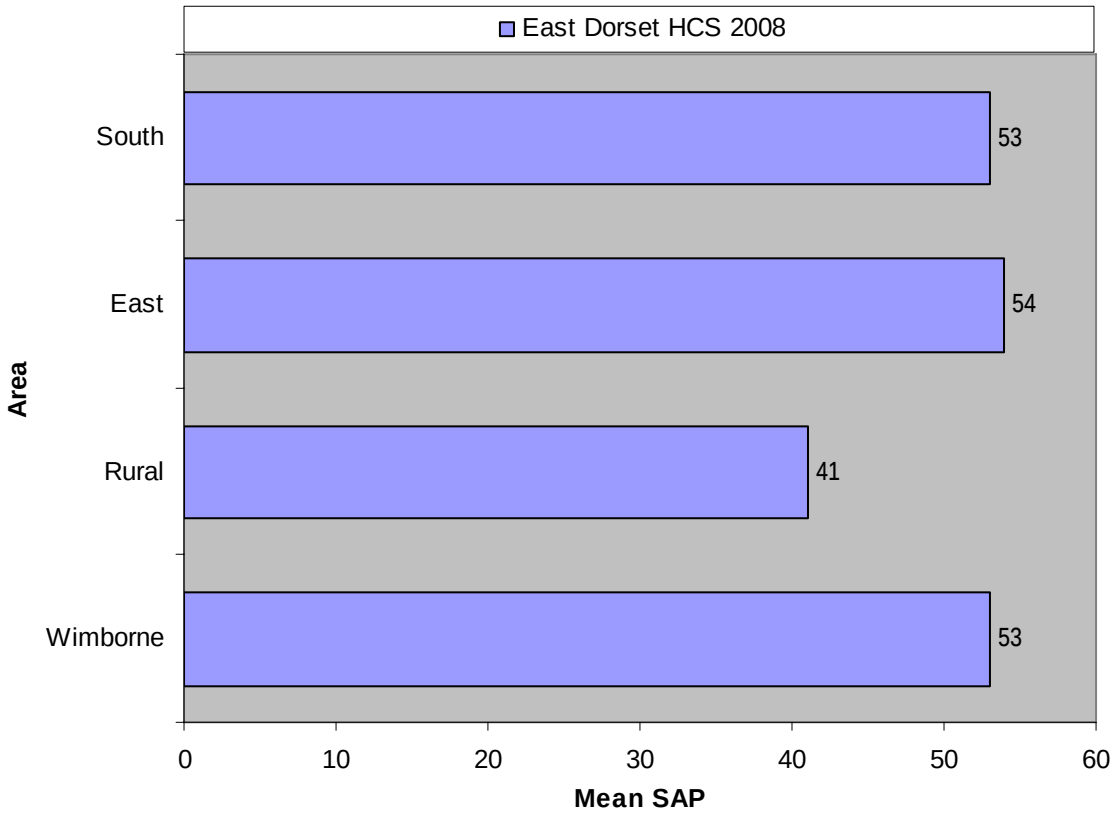
8.4.2 Increases in SAP are usually associated with a reduction in dwelling age; the most modern stock has the highest SAP. This pattern in seen in East Dorset; the lowest mean SAP is for pre-1919 properties at 39 and the highest in post 1980 properties at 57.

8.4.3 When examining SAP ratings by built form, semi detached houses have the lowest mean SAP rating (47), followed by small terraced houses (48).

8.4.4 The privately rented stock has the lowest average SAP rating at 42, followed by owner occupied (52) with housing association dwellings having the highest mean SAP at 56.

8.4.5 The following chart shows the distribution of mean SAP ratings by sub-area.

Figure 8.3 Mean SAP by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.4.6 The lowest mean SAP rating is for the Rural sub-area with all of the other sub-areas having comparable mean SAP rating, the East sub-area having the highest mean SAP at 54.

8.4.7 Tenure, dwelling type, age and area are helpful in establishing the efficiency of the stock, but insulation and heating provision need to be examined to give a full picture.

8.5 Carbon Dioxide emissions

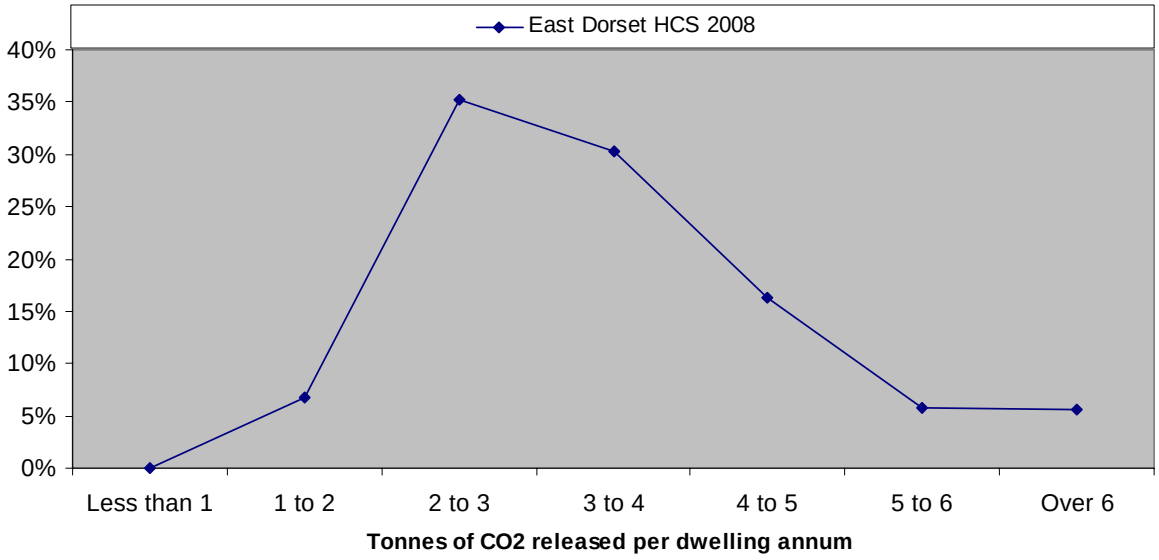
8.5.1 As part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review the Government announced a single set of indicators which would underpin the performance framework as set out in the Local Government White Paper "Strong and Prosperous Communities". To provide a more powerful and consistent incentive to LAs, to develop and effectively implement carbon reduction and fuel poverty strategies, included within the set of indicators were a per capita reduction in Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) emissions in the Local Authority area and the tackling of fuel poverty.

8.5.2 PSA Delivery Agreement 27 (Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change) states that "The overall framework for the Government's domestic action is set out in the draft Climate Change Bill for which Parliamentary approval will be sought" It is proposed that CO_2 reduction targets are set for a 26% to 32% reduction by 2020 and a 60% reduction by 2050 with these targets being introduced through primary legislation.

8.5.3 The CO_2 data provided as part of this survey indicates that emissions within the private sector stock of East Dorset are 137,200 tonnes per annum an average of 3.5 tonnes per annum per property or 1.6 tonnes per capita.

8.5.4 The following figure shows the range of dwelling CO_2 emissions released per annum. The majority of dwellings (81.8%) have emissions of between 2 and 5 tonnes per annum, with 11.3% having annual emissions above this, 5.6% having emissions above 6 tonnes per annum.

Figure 8.4 Annual dwelling CO2 emissions



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.5.5 Emissions per main fuel type are given below, with anthracite the highest at an average of 12.2 tonnes.

Table 8.2 Main fuel CO_2 emissions

Fuel main	CO_2 (tonnes)	Avg CO_2 Per property
Mains Gas	104,987	3.3
Bulk LPG	952	4.7
Bottle Gas	807.52	2.7
Heating Oil	10,899	5.2
House Coal	1,660	9.4
Smokeless Fuel	633	7.5
Anthracite	674.29	12.2
Wood Fuel	1069.4	7.5
On Peak Electricity	2,867	3.5
Off Peak Electricity	12,686	4.7

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.5.6 The following table examines the total CO_2 emissions by each of the survey sub-areas as well as the average CO_2.emissions per dwelling within each area.

Table 8.3 Areas CO_2 emissions

Area	CO_2 (tonnes)	Avg CO_2 Per property
South	80,171	3.3
East	24,994	3.3
Rural	21,494	5.5
Wimborne	10,576	3.4

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.5.7 The Rural area has the highest average level of carbon dioxide output per dwelling and is the only one with an average carbon dioxide output per dwelling of over 5 tonnes. It has the highest proportion of dwellings using room heaters as their primary heating source, which together with a high proportion of electric storage heating means that just under 22% of dwellings in the Rural sub-area are using energy inefficient fuels.

8.6 SAP and National Indicator 187

8.6.1 Following the 2007 comprehensive spending review guidance was issued on a change in measuring local authority performance through a revised set of indicators. There are 198 indicators covering every aspect of Councils' responsibilities, but of primary interest here is National Indicator 187. NI187 requires local authorities to measure the proportion of households on an income related benefit living in dwellings with SAP ratings below 35 and 65 and above; the intention being to decrease the former and increase the latter. The indicator refers to 'fuel poverty' but the measure is actually a surrogate for fuel

poverty (see 9.9). It is anticipated that Councils will measure progress using an annual postal survey.

8.6.2 The following table gives a breakdown of dwellings with SAP ratings below 35 and 65 and over, as well as combining this with information on income related benefit receipt. This information can be used as a baseline for NI187 against which future progress can be measured.

Table 8.4 SAP bands and NI187

East Dorset			
	Dwellings total	**Households with an income benefit recipient**	**Rate**
SAP less than 35	3,600	1400	38.9%
	9.3%	**14.4%**	
SAP 35 to 64	31,700	7,700	24.3%
	81.9%	79.4%	
SAP 65 and over	3,400	600	17.6%
	8.8%	**6.2%**	
	38,700	**9,700**	**25.1%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.6.3 The figures given in red are those required under NI187. They illustrate that 14.4% of households in receipt of an income related benefit live in a dwelling with a SAP rating below 35 and that 6.2% live in a dwelling with a SAP of 65 and over.

8.7 Energy efficiency improvement

8.7.1 The 1995 Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) aims to improve the energy efficiency of dwellings across the country. The Act is part of a broader government strategy to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and thereby reduce the impact of energy use on the environment. The provision of effective insulation and more efficient heating systems (e.g. condensing boilers) reduces the fuel burnt to provide space heating and domestic hot water. The Act places a duty on local authorities as follows:

"It shall be the duty of every energy conservation authority to prepare a report in accordance with this section.

(2) The report shall set out energy conservation measures that the authority considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in its area.

(3) The report shall include—

(a) an assessment of the cost of the energy conservation measures set out in it;

(b) an assessment of the extent to which carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere would be decreased as a result of those measures; and

(c) a statement of any policy of the authority for taking into account, in deciding whether to exercise any power in connection with those measures, the personal circumstances of any person.

Nothing in this subsection shall be taken as requiring the authority to set out in the report energy conservation measures to be taken in relation to any particular dwelling or building.

(4) The report may, if the energy conservation authority considers it desirable, include—

(a) an assessment of the extent of decreases in emissions into the atmosphere of oxides of nitrogen and sulphur dioxide which would result from the implementation of the measures set out in the report;

(b) an assessment of the number of jobs which would result from the implementation of those measures;

(c) an assessment of the average savings in fuel bills and in kilowatt hours of fuel used that might be expected to result from the measures by different types of household in different types of accommodation;

(d) such other matters as it considers appropriate."

8.7.2 The target local authorities were asked to achieve, was a 30% reduction in energy consumption over 15 years (1996 to 2011). As part of this strategy, local authorities were required to implement schemes that would encourage and assist with measures to reduce energy usage, to submit an annual return detailing the amount of energy being consumed by dwellings in their area and to indicate how much of a reduction in consumption has occurred. The energy audit component of the HCS will provide a useful evidence base to determine if measures have been successful and identify new areas that can be tackled in future.

8.7.3 The provision of different heating systems and insulation within the dwelling stock does allow scope for some dwellings to have additional insulation, improved heating, draught proofing etc. Such improvements can lead to a reduction in energy consumption with consequent reduction in the emission of gases such as carbon dioxide implicated in climate change.

8.7.4 However, it should be noted that improving energy efficiency does not necessarily equate to a reduction in energy consumption. In the majority of cases there will be a reduction, but, for example, where a household is in fuel poverty and improvements are made, energy consumption may well go up. In such dwellings the occupiers may well have been heating the dwelling to an inadequate level using expensive fuel. Use of cheaper fuels can create affordable warmth, but also lead to increased energy consumption.

8.8 The cost and extent of improvement

8.8.1 The following figures are based on modelling changes in energy efficiency, brought about by installing combinations of items listed below. These are based on measures that have been provided by many local authorities and are loosely based on the Warm Front scheme.

- Loft insulation to 270mm
- Cylinder insulation to 70mm Jacket (unless foam already)
- Double Glazing to all windows
- Cavity wall insulation
- Installation of a modern high efficiency gas boiler where none is present
- Full central heating where none is present

8.8.2 The computer model enters whatever combination of these measures is appropriate for a particular dwelling taking into account the provision of heating and insulation shown by the survey.

8.9 Future improvement

8.9.1 If all combinations of improvements listed above were carried out to all dwellings, the total cost would be £55.9 million, an average of £1,730 per dwelling, where improvements are required.

8.9.2 The total cost of improvements given above is distributed among 32,400 dwellings, 83.8% of the stock. The majority of these dwellings will have complied with Building Regulations current at the time they were built and realistically most of them will currently provide an adequate level of thermal efficiency. In most cases, however, there is still scope for improvement even if only minor.

8.9.3 The following analysis looks at how many dwellings could have each type of measure applied.

Table 8.5 All energy efficiency measures that could be carried out

Measure	Dwellings	Percent of stock
Loft insulation	5,400	14.0%
Wall insulation	900	2.3%
Double glazing	3,900	10.1%
Cylinder insulation	5,700	14.7%
New boiler	8,900	23.0%
New central heating	700	1.8%
Any measures	**32,400**	**83.8%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.9.4 The wide range of measures indicates that, in most cases, two or more improvements could be carried out. Generally loft insulation will be an improvement on existing insulation, rather than an installation where none exists. With cylinder insulation, most improvements would be the replacement of old cylinders with jackets, for new integral foam insulated cylinders. Installation of new central heating is only indicated where the dwelling currently relies solely on room heaters as the primary heating source.

8.10 Tackling fuel poverty

8.10.1 A key issue in reducing energy consumption is tackling fuel poverty. The occupiers of a dwelling are considered to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of their net household income would need to be spent on heating and hot water to give an adequate provision of warmth and hot water. Not only do dwellings where fuel poverty exists represent dwellings with poor energy efficiency, they are, by definition, occupied by residents with low incomes least likely to be able to afford improvements. In "Fuel Poverty in England: The Government's Plan for Action" published in 2004, the government set a target for the total eradication of fuel poverty by November 2016.

8.10.2 The occupiers of an estimated 4,200 (10.9%) dwellings in East Dorset are in fuel poverty compared to approximately 13.9% in England based on the fuel poverty projection issued in the Sixth Annual Report of the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group. These figures will potentially however, be affected by the significant rise in energy costs seen over recent months.

8.10.3 A lower proportion than the national average, the 4,200 dwellings represent a significant number of households that are in fuel poverty and will present issues in terms of both energy efficiency and occupier health. As commonly the case, the highest rate of fuel poverty is found in the privately rented sector where 20% of households are in fuel poverty. Intervention programmes such as Warm Front have been set up to tackle fuel poverty among vulnerable households in the private rented and owner occupied sectors, and provide grant packages to undertake energy efficiency measures for those eligible.

8.10.4 By the very nature of fuel poverty, it is almost always associated with those residents on the lowest incomes. 700 (17%) households were found to be in fuel poverty where household incomes were above £10,000 per annum, with the remaining 3,500 (83%) were found where household incomes are below £10,000 per annum. This means the rate of fuel poverty in the households with income below £10,000 is 44%.

8.10.5 Fuel poverty is usually associated with dwellings where one or more residents are in receipt of a means tested benefit as such benefits are indicative of low income. This is true in East Dorset where fuel poverty

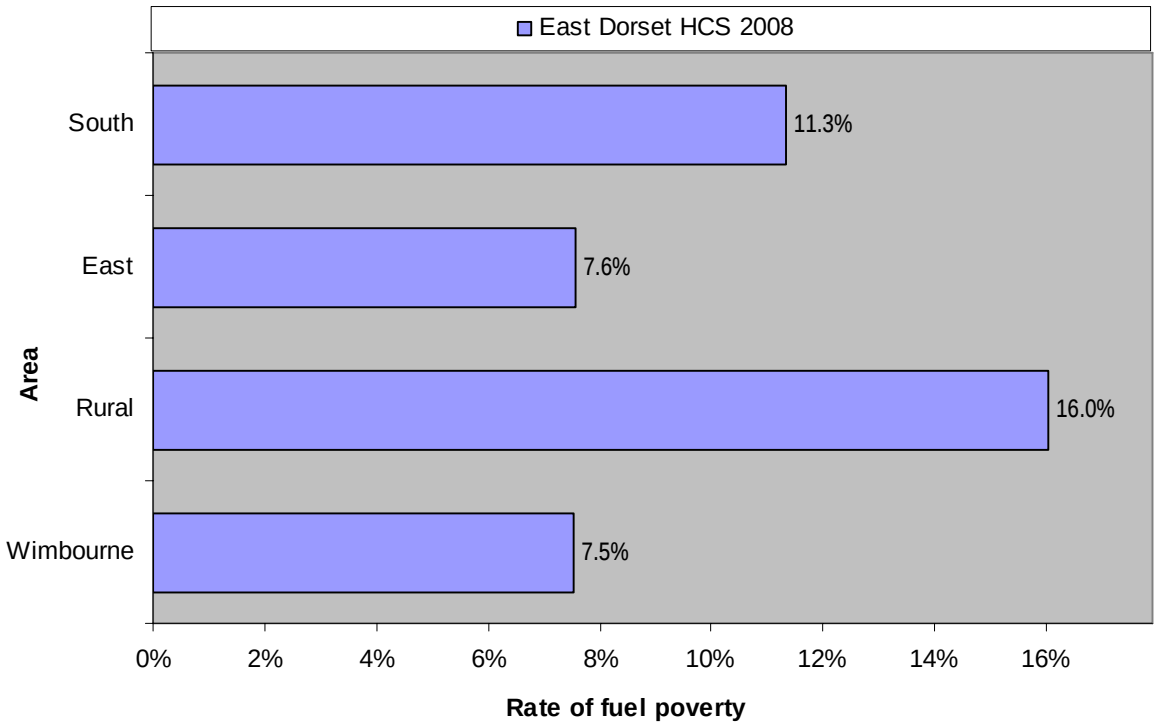
is found in 2,800 households (67%) where a benefit is received, compared with 1,400 (17%) of dwellings where occupiers do not receive benefit.

8.10.6 For owner-occupiers, assistance in the form of advice can be given, as well as grants and other partnership schemes with energy efficiency companies and other organisations. The total cost of energy efficiency improvements to dwellings in fuel poverty in the owner-occupied sector, is just under £9.1 million. This expenditure requirement is distributed between the 3,300 owner-occupied dwellings in fuel poverty where works are possible at an average cost per dwelling of £2,800. In the privately rented sector the overall cost is just under £3 million, an average of £5,200 in 570 fuel poor dwellings. Within the RSL stock the cost is just under £0.2 million, an average of £600 in 300 fuel poor dwellings.

8.11 Area focus on fuel poverty

8.11.1 The chart below shows the proportions of fuel poverty by sub-area. The highest proportion of fuel poverty is found in the Rural sub-area at 16% followed by the South sub-area at 11.3%. Since fuel poverty is strongly associated with income, these areas are liable to have a high proportion of low income households.

Figure 8.5 Fuel poverty by sub-area



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

8.12 Beyond fuel poverty

8.12.1 Tackling dwellings where fuel poverty exists helps those least able to afford either to heat their homes properly or to afford the improvement works necessary.

8.12.2 Beyond fuel poverty, however, the Authority has a duty under the Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) to help reduce energy consumption in dwellings within East Dorset.

8.13 Energy efficiency works to all other dwellings

8.13.1 The cost of carrying out all works to all dwellings where the residents are not in fuel poverty but where potentially improvements could be made is £23.4 million. This represents an average expenditure of approximately £1,320 per dwelling in 17,700 properties.

8.13.2 Targeting all these dwellings would not involve selecting any specific areas or types, as it involves the majority of the stock. Perhaps the best targets are likely to be those most in need of improvement, in particular those dwellings that are the least energy efficient at present.

8.13.3 There are 880 dwellings where the household is not in fuel poverty but where the mean SAP is less than 30. To carry out all improvement works required for these dwellings would cost just £1.7 million, with almost all of this cost being required for the owner-occupied stock. The mean cost per dwelling in the owner-occupied stock would be £1,920. The reason the average cost of improvements is higher is that many of these dwellings would require the installation of full central heating, insulation and other measures to bring their SAP above 30.

8.14 Achieving the 30% target

8.14.1 Given the work that has already been carried out on reducing energy consumption since 1996, the target of 30% is achievable. However households that have already improved energy efficiency are likely to be those more able, it is likely that those remaining will be more difficult to identify and therefore the targets will still be difficult to achieve.

8.14.2 To achieve a total reduction in energy consumption of 30% by 2011 will require a comprehensive range of measures to most dwellings where this is possible. However, as previously mentioned, households that have already improved energy efficiency are likely to be those more able and those remaining will be more difficult to identify and therefore the targets will still be difficult to achieve. It is therefore, likely to prove difficult to locate sufficient dwellings to carry out these works and any strategy will need considerable engagement with residents.

8.15 Key points

8.15.1 5,700 properties in East Dorset fail the thermal comfort criteria of the Decent Homes Standard

8.15.2 In East Dorset 2,570 dwellings (6.7%) have a SAP rating of less than 30.

8.15.3 5.6% of properties in East Dorset emit 6 tonnes or more of CO2.

8.15.4 14.4% of households in East Dorset in receipt of an income related benefit live in a dwelling with a SAP rating below 35.

8.15.5 There is an estimated 4,200 dwellings (10.9%) with occupants in fuel poverty in East Dorset compared to 13.9% in England generally.

8.15.6 83% of households in East Dorset in fuel poverty have incomes below £10,000 per annum.

8.15.7 In East Dorset the Rural sub-area has the highest incidence of fuel poverty at 16%.

9 Residents and dwelling conditions

9.1 Relationships between factors

9.1.1 The second and third chapters of this report examined the general characteristics of dwellings and the general characteristics of occupiers. Subsequent chapters then examined the condition of dwellings and their energy efficiency. Having established this picture for East Dorset District Council it is now worth considering what relationships can be found between these factors.

9.1.2 There are many causal links that can be considered, for example a low household income may lead to difficulty in affording repairs leading to a dwelling in poor condition. It may also mean a household has little choice in available dwellings. There may be a causal link between the condition of a dwelling and the health of the occupiers.

9.1.3 In statistical terms, defining causality can be difficult; in the example above, does low income lead to poor conditions or are people on low incomes forced to choose dwellings in poor condition? Realistically both are true to a degree. This chapter aims to look at combinations of physical, social and environmental factors and seeks to establish what relationships can be demonstrated.

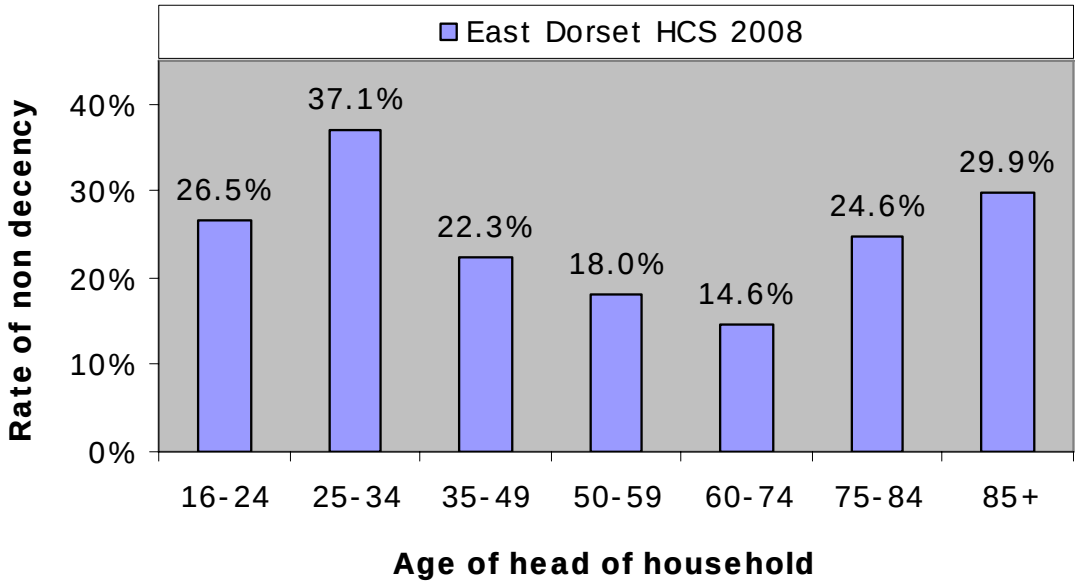
9.2 Age of Head of Household and condition

9.2.1 As part of the social survey a grid was filled in containing basic details for each of the residents in a dwelling, such as their age, working status, sex etc. It was left to residents to determine who was considered the head of the household, and therefore what the relationship between all other residents and the head was (e.g. spouse, child, parent lodger etc).

9.2.2 Age of head of household is a useful indicator as it generally gives an impression of the age of the household and its profile. It has also been found that dwelling conditions often vary according to the age of the head of household.

9.2.3 The following chart illustrates the relationship between age of head of household and levels of non decency. Within age groups, the highest rate of non decency is for households where the age of head of household is 25 to 34 (37.1%), with the next highest being for households where the head of household is aged 85 and over (29.9%). The earlier low and high income findings showed that the highest percentages of those on incomes below £10,000 were to be found in the younger and older age groups. Generally it is common to find the highest levels of non decency at each end of the age spectrum.

Figure 9.1 Non decency by age of head of household



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.2.4 The following table compares a selection of dwelling condition characteristics between the overall East Dorset position and that for the oldest and youngest heads of household.

Table 9.1 Age of head of household by dwelling condition

Group	Category 1 hazard	Unfit	In disrepair	Fuel poor
Over 65	10.1%	0.8%	6.5%	12.6%
Under 25	6.6%	6.6%	6.3%	0.0%
East Dorset average	**9.8%**	**4.1%**	**4.8%**	**10.9%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

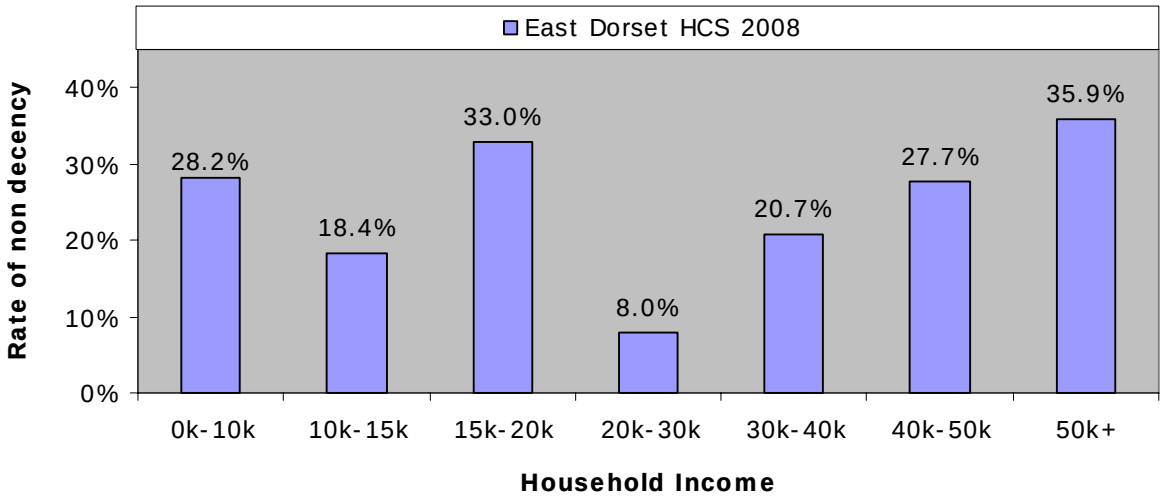
9.2.5 This table shows that for those over 65 three of the indicators (Category 1 hazards, disrepair and fuel poverty) are above the District average. With younger heads of household, two of the indicators (unfitness and disrepair) are above the District average, with the other indicators at a lower level.

9.3 Household income, benefit receipt and dwelling condition

9.3.1 The relationship between income and non decency can be analysed by combining household income figures with failures under the Decent Homes Standard. The largest proportion of dwellings found to be non decent are occupied by residents with an income below £15k (46.6%). Surprisingly, for those on an income of £50k and over, the rate is 35.9%. This is likely to reflect the fact that Category 1 failures are less

often linked to deficiencies in the fabric of the building than failures for fitness which were more likely to be linked to those on lower incomes.

Figure 9.2 Non decency by annual household income band



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.3.2 As with age of head of household it is possible to look at the condition of dwellings in relation to household income and receipt of benefit. The following table looks at the same dwelling condition issues as Table 9.1 above, but breaks these down in relation to the lowest household income band and to those households where a benefit is received.

Table 9.2 Income and benefit receipt by dwelling condition

Group	Category 1 Hazard	Unfit	In disrepair	Fuel poor
On Benefit	18.6%	5.7%	11.0%	20.1%
Income under 10k	16.3%	4.8%	9.9%	44.4%
East Dorset average	**9.8%**	**4.1%**	**4.8%**	**10.9%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.3.3 There is a significantly higher level than average of Category 1 Hazards both where household incomes are below £10,000 per annum and where households are in receipt of benefit.

9.3.4 Unfitness levels for both groups are elevated against the District average, with those on benefit having a slightly higher failure rate.

9.3.5 Levels of disrepair for both households on benefit and on incomes under £10k are more than double the average for East Dorset as a whole

9.3.6 There is a strong relationship between fuel poverty, low income and benefit receipt, which is to be expected given that fuel poverty as a

measure utilises income. What is interesting to note, however, is the major difference in the rates between low income and benefit receipt (44.4% and 20.1% respectively). This tends to suggest that systems to provide for the most vulnerable (benefit recipients) have had an effect in ensuring that they are less likely to be living in fuel poverty than low income occupiers in general.

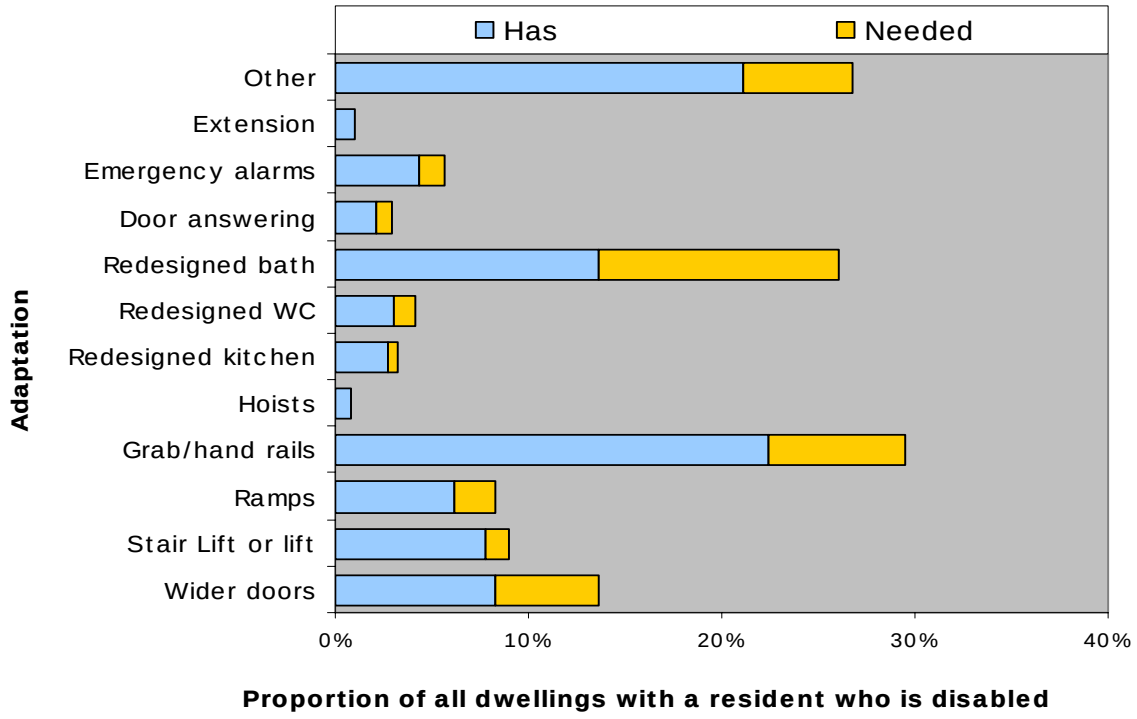
9.4 Residents with disabilities and residents in ill health

9.4.1 In chapter 3 it was indicated that there are approximately 5,600 households in East Dorset with one or more residents having a disability, representing 14.5% of the stock. Where residents indicated such disabilities, the surveyor also filled in a section of the form relating to the existence of adaptations to meet disabled occupier needs, but also any future requirement and potential for such adaptations.

9.4.2 The provision of adaptations for disabled residents is mandatory under the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) scheme, and local authorities must consider this when assigning budgets to housing provision. There are two factors that mitigate this demand: firstly, DFGs are subject to means testing and secondly, the Council must consult with Social Services for an assessment by an Occupational Therapist who will decide whether an adaptation is necessary and appropriate.

9.4.3 The following chart illustrates the proportion of dwellings, with residents who have disabilities that have and need adaptation. The chart is broken down by adaptation type.

Figure 9.3 Disabled adaptations present and required



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.4.4 The chart shows that the most abundant are the provision of grab/hand rails (present in 22%), other adaptations (21%) and redesigned bathroom (14%). The most needed are redesigned bathroom (12%) and grab/hand rails (7%), where dwellings are occupied by a resident with a disability. When looking at the ratio of existing provision to the perceived need for an adaptation, a redesigned bathroom has again got the highest rate followed by wider doorways.

9.4.5 The following table takes the figures for adaptations a step further and looks at the numbers of adaptations needed and the cost of carrying out those adaptations.

Table 9.3 Cost of adaptations for the disabled

Adaptations	Adaptations*	Adaptations Cost	Cost after means testing
Wider doors	300	£361,000	£0
Stair Lift or lift	70	£196,000	£44,000
Ramps	120	£289,000	£74,000
Grab/hand rails	400	£199,000	£117,000
Hoists	0	£0	£0
Redesigned kitchen	30	£167,000	£83,000
Redesigned WC	70	£164,000	£136,000
Redesigned bath	690	£3,473,000	£1,896,000
Door answering	50	£142,000	£71,000
Emergency alarms	80	£76,000	£53,000
Extension	0	£0	£0
Other	320	£159,000	£4,000
Total	**2,130**	**£5,226,000**	**£2,478,000**

**Figures are for numbers of adaptations, some dwellings may need multiple adaptations*

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.4.6 The total cost of all adaptations that could potentially be fitted to benefit residents with a disability is just over £5.2 million. When means testing has been applied this total reduces to just under £2.5 million, which reflects the fact that many residents with disabilities may be on average or above average incomes.

9.4.7 It should be considered that two factors will affect the £2.5 million figure in terms of DFGs. Firstly, the figure does not contain any reduction for occupiers that would not be considered after a visit by an occupational therapist, as this cannot easily be factored in. Secondly, many of the residents may not be aware of the need for an adaptation, may not want an adaptation or may not be aware that DFGs are available. The £2.5 million figure is an estimate of the amount that would need to be spent by the authority on adaptations, although this would be spread over a period of five years. The figure is, however, indicative only and could vary substantially if there are significant adaptations for children (applications for which are no longer subject to the test of resources), which would significantly increase the authorities

overall contribution. The figure does however; give some indication of the scope that future DFG budgets should be aware of.

9.4.8 The next table follows those for age of head of household and income by examining the relationship between a series of housing condition indicators and residents with a disability.

Table 9.4 Occupiers with a disability by dwelling condition

Group	Category 1 Hazard	Unfit	In disrepair	Fuel poor
Resident with disability	15.4%	0.0%	3.9%	23.1%
East Dorset average	**9.8%**	**4.1%**	**4.8%**	**10.9%**

Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

9.4.9 With category 1 hazards and fuel poverty, the rates are elevated significantly, particularly in the case of fuel poverty, for dwellings where a resident has a disability. No unfitness was recorded and the rate for disrepair is slightly lower.

9.5 Key points

9.5.1 29.9% of dwellings where head of household is over 85 are non decent

9.5.2 Households with an income below £15,000 per annum have the highest rate of non decency

9.5.3 It is estimated that 2,130 disabled adaptations are required to properties in East Dorset costing in the region of £2.5 million over 5 years.

10 Conclusions and Policy Implications

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 This chapter summarises the key findings from each chapter of this report in turn. It seeks to give a summary of findings rather than specific recommendations as these should be dealt with separately in the context of current private sector housing strategy.

10.2 Stock Profile

10.2.1 The age profile of the total private stock of 38,700 dwellings in East Dorset differs substantially from the average for England in that the stock profile contains a much lower proportions of dwellings built pre 1944, slightly lower levels of 1945 to 1964 stock, but with significantly higher proportions of stock built after 1964.

10.2.2 The building type profile in East Dorset again differs from the national pattern with much lower levels of small and medium/large terraced houses; semi detached houses and converted flats. Low rise purpose built flats (five or less storeys) have similar proportions. There are significantly higher proportions of bungalows and detached houses.

10.2.3 The tenure profile in East Dorset differs from the national average in that there is a much higher proportion of owner occupied dwellings (85% as opposed to 71% for England). The proportion of privately rented stock at 7% is appreciably lower than the national average of 11%. RSL properties have similar proportions at 7% compared to 8% nationally.

10.2.4 The estimated proportion of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) is just 30, which is only 0.8% of the stock compared with 2% across England. The survey found only 10 mandatory licensable HMOs (which are three or more storey HMOs with shared amenities and five or more residents). However, as this is so low a figure it should be treated with extreme caution and as this is a sample survey, the authority should take steps to confirm the numbers and location of any HMOs that may be subject to mandatory licensing.

10.2.5 It has been possible to estimate that there are 490 vacant dwellings, 1.3% of the private housing stock, which is well below the national average of 3.5%. Of these, only an estimated 240 are considered to be long term vacant properties (vacant for more than 6 months). This represents some 0.6% of the stock. This compares to the national average of 1.5%. Even so it still represents a wasted housing resource. Under the Housing Act 2004, local authorities have increased powers and responsibilities in relation to empty properties and action to

identify and deal with the 240 long-term vacant dwellings may be an issue that the Council should consider implementing.

10.3 Profile of Residents

10.3.1 The average income and benefit levels within East Dorset give a slightly conflicting picture. There is generally a higher proportion than the national average of households in the income bands between £15,000 and £39,999. Affordability will still be an issue affecting repair and improvement in the private sector dwelling stock of East Dorset as 20.4% of households have an annual income of £10,000 or less and 35.9% have a household income under £15,000. The average weekly income of owner occupiers is below the 2005 national average, whilst that of tenants in the privately rented and RSL sectors is above the national average. The proportion of households in receipt of benefit was estimated at 27%, well above the national average of 17%.

10.3.2 House prices are above the national average, and due to the level of average house prices, affordability of housing for younger residents and first time buyers is highly likely to be an issue because of low income levels. There may also be maintenance/adaptation issues with 'equity rich cash poor' older owner occupiers.

10.3.3 The majority of households (99.9%) described themselves as White British.

10.3.4 There are an estimated 5,600 households (14.5%) where there is a resident with a disability. The cost of necessary adaptations, after allowing for means testing, is estimated to be £2.5 million.

10.3.5 The overall levels of household income and benefit receipt do have a bearing on the affordability of repairs, meeting decent homes targets, vulnerability and fuel poverty.

10.4 The Decent Homes Standard

10.4.1 An estimated 8,700 dwellings in East Dorset (22.4% of the stock) are non decent. The majority of dwellings are non decent because of thermal comfort failure (14.7%) followed by category 1 Hazards (9.8%). 4.8% of the stock fails the disrepair criterion and only 1.1% because of lacking modern facilities and amenities.

10.4.2 In East Dorset non decent dwellings are most associated with 1919 to 1944 properties, the private rented sector, low rise purpose built flats and small terraced houses. There are also associations with occupiers on the lowest incomes and those in receipt of benefit. Non decency is also associated with heads of households aged 25 to 34 and 85 and over.

10.4.3 The highest non decency score by sub-area is recorded in the Rural sub-area (48.6%). The cost to remedy all the items that make

dwellings non decent is £29.4 million, an average of £3,800 per non decent property.

10.4.4 Up until the 1 April 2008, the government target for achieving decency standards in the private sector was that set by PSA7, where 65% of all dwellings occupied by vulnerable residents should be made decent by 2006/07. In practice, the most challenging target was the 70% to be met by 2010/11. As indicated previously, although the PSA7 target no longer exists, it is still a CLG Departmental Strategic Objective under DSO2, 2.8). It is highly likely therefore, that Regional Housing bodies will continue to apply targeting in respect of vulnerable households in decent homes when making capital allocations.

10.4.5 At present it is estimated that East Dorset met the 65% target but falls short of the 70% target by 120 dwellings. On a numerical and proportionate basis, Rural sub-area is the only one with a shortfall.

10.5 Housing Health and Safety Rating System

10.5.1 At present 3,800 (9.8%) dwellings are estimated to have at least one Category 1 Hazard. Category 1 Hazards are associated with 1919 to 1944 dwellings, the privately rented sector and small terraced houses. There is a clear association between Category 1 Hazards and low-income households, households in receipt of benefit, households with a disabled occupant and heads of household over 65.

10.5.2 The highest proportion of Category 1 Hazards by area was found in the Rural sub-area at 26.3% followed by the South sub-area at 9.1%.

10.5.3 The cost to remedy all Category 1 Hazards is £10.4 million, at an average of £2,700 per dwelling. If a more comprehensive standard were adopted (no further work required for at least 10 years) to dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard, rather than just remedying the hazard(s), the costs would be £26.3 million; an average of £8,750 per dwelling.

10.5.4 The main reason for the presence of a Category 1 Hazard is excess cold followed by falling on the level.

10.6 Repair Costs

10.6.1 Maintaining the repair condition of dwellings is a key requirement of the Decent Homes Standard.

10.6.2 The total requirement for repair in all dwellings that fail under the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is £7.8 million, an average of £4,180 per dwelling. The comprehensive cost of repair in the same dwellings totals £25.1 million, an average of £13,500 per dwelling. Due to the distribution of household income levels in East Dorset, a significant part of the demand for repairs is likely to come

from households where income is below £10,000 per annum and where vulnerable occupiers live.

10.6.3 In addition to making repairs to dwellings that fail the Decent Homes Standard, there are repair, and more particularly renewal, requirements on all dwellings. The total cost of comprehensive repairs, to include all private sector dwellings in East Dorset, is £50.3 million or an average of £5,800 per dwelling.

10.6.4 Repair costs by geographical area, either as an average per dwelling or when standardised to take account of dwelling size, are highest in the Wimborne sub-area.

10.7 Modern Facilities

10.7.1 400 dwellings, 1.1% of the private sector housing stock, fail the Decent Homes Standard because they provide inadequate modern facilities. This is below the national average of 2.2%. The nature of this criterion of the Decent Homes Standard means that this number is unlikely to increase significantly in the coming years.

10.7.2 The vast majority of dwellings in East Dorset (over 99%) have a full provision of basic amenities: an internal W.C, an adequate kitchen, an adequate bathroom, an electrical supply and the provision of hot and cold water. There is no evidence to suggest a potential problem with the supply of basic amenities in future.

10.8 Thermal Comfort and Energy Efficiency

10.8.1 Tackling fuel poverty is an important issue for the Authority as it aids those residents most in need, as well as improving thermal comfort (required under the Decent Homes Standard). It also potentially reduces the number of dwellings that are unfit or where a Category 1 Hazard exists. There are estimated to be 4,200 (10.9%) dwellings which contain households in fuel poverty within East Dorset. The national average is approximately 13.9%.

10.8.2 The greatest impact, in terms of reducing fuel poverty, can be achieved by focusing on making energy efficiency improvements to dwellings with: older heads of household; dwellings with benefit recipients; households on low incomes, households with disabled occupants and the privately rented stock. The Authority may wish to consider how to encourage landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their dwellings in the private rented sector.

10.8.3 In terms of tackling fuel poverty on a geographical basis, the survey indicates that the highest rate of fuel poverty was found in Rural sub-area (16%) followed by the South sub-area (11.3%).

10.8.4 The average energy efficiency level in East Dorset, using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure, is 52 (on a scale of 1 to 100). This is above the all England average of 46 from the 2005 EHCS.

10.8.5 Achieving targets for energy efficiency is possible, although it is likely to be to become increasingly difficult to maintain the previous rates of improvement. Achieving targets will need to involve all dwellings that can have improvements made and therefore private, as well as public, investment will need to be encouraged.

Appendix A - Index of tables and figures

A.1 The following is a list of tables throughout the report which are referenced to the relevant chapter number by the first digit of the table number.

A.2 The following is a list of figures throughout the report which are referenced to the relevant chapter number by the first digit of the table number.

Appendix B- Methodology

B.1 The survey used a stratified random sample of 1,600 dwellings from an address file supplied by East Dorset District Council. The sample was a stratified random sample to give representative findings across the authority and by four sub-areas. The address file supplied was divided between the four areas with the objective of gaining as many surveys in each as possible.

B.2 All addresses on the original address list were assigned an ID number and a random number generating computer algorithm was used to select the number of addresses specified within each sub area.

B.3 The survey incorporates the entire private sector stock, including registered social landlords (Housing Associations).

B.4 Each dwelling selected for survey was visited a minimum of three times where access failed and basic dwelling information was gathered including a simple assessment of condition if no survey was ultimately possible. To ensure the sample was not subject to a non-response bias, the condition of the dwellings where access was not achieved was systematically compared with those where the surveyors were successful. Where access was achieved, a full internal inspection was carried out including a detailed energy efficiency survey. In addition to this, where occupied, an interview survey was undertaken.

B.5 The basic unit of survey was the 'single self-contained dwelling'. This could comprise a single self-contained house or a self contained flat. Where more than one flat was present the external part of the building, encompassing the flat and any access-ways serving the flat were also inspected.

B.6 The house condition survey form is based on the survey schedule published by the ODPM in the 2000 guidelines (Local House Condition Surveys 2000 HMSO ISBN 0 11 752830 7).

B.7 The data was weighted using the CLASSIC Reports software. Two approaches to weighting the data have been used.

B.8 The first method is used for data such as building age, which has been gathered for all dwellings visited. In this case the weight applied to the individual dwellings is very simple to calculate, as it is the reciprocal of the sample fraction. Thus if 1 in 10 dwellings were selected the sample fraction is 1/10 and the weight applied to each is 10/1.

B.9 Where information on individual data items is not always present, i.e. when access fails, then a second approach to weighting the data is taken. This approach is described in detail in the following appendix, but a short description is offered here.

B.10 The simplest approach to weighting the data to take account of access failures is to increase the weight given to the dwellings where access is achieved by a proportion corresponding to the access failures. Thus if the sample fraction were 1/10 and 10 dwellings were in a sample the weight applied to any dwelling would be 10/1 which would give a stock total of 100. However, if access were only achieved in 5 dwellings the weight applied is the original 10/1 multiplied by the compensating factor, 10/5. Therefore 10/1 x 10/5 = 20. As there are only 5 dwellings with information the weight, when applied to five dwellings, still yields the same stock total of 100. The five dwellings with no data are ignored.

B.11 With an access rate above 50% there may be concern that the results will not be truly representative and that weighting the data in this manner might produce unreliable results. There is no evidence to suggest that the access rate has introduced any bias. When externally gathered information (which is present for all dwellings) is examined the stock that was inspected internally is present in similar proportions to those where access was not achieved suggesting no serious bias will have been introduced.

B.12 Only those dwellings where a full survey of internal and external elements, energy efficiency, fitness, housing health and safety and social questions were used in the production of data for this report. A total of 814 such surveys were produced.

B.13 The use of a sample survey to draw conclusions about the stock of the four areas as a whole introduces some uncertainty. Each figure produced is subject to sampling error, which means the true result will lie between two values, e.g. 5% and 6%. For ease of use, the data are presented as single figures rather than as ranges. A full explanation of these confidence limits is included in the following appendix.

Appendix C - Survey Sampling

Sample Design

C.1 The sample was drawn from the East Dorset District Council address file derived from Council Tax records. The total number of dwellings on the list was 38,688 including Housing Association dwellings. These totals constituted all addresses within the Local Authority boundaries. The Council Tax register contains a reference for each individual address, whether or not it is occupied. In addition, there will be a number of dwellings with multiple addresses, such as certain houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), and non-residential address within the register.

Stock total

C.2 The stock total is based initially on the address list; this constitutes the sample frame from which a proportion (the sample) is selected for survey. Any non-dwellings found by the surveyors are marked as such in the sample; these will then be weighted to represent all the non-dwellings that are likely to be in the sample frame. The remaining dwellings surveyed are purely dwellings eligible for survey. These remaining dwellings are then re-weighted according to the original sample fractions and produce a stock total.

C.3 In producing the stock total the amount by which the total is adjusted to compensate for non-dwellings is estimated, based on how many surveyors found. With a sample as large as the final achieved data-set of 814 dwellings however, the sampling error is likely to be very small and the true stock total is likely, therefore, to be very close to the 38,700 private sector and housing association dwellings reported. Sampling error is discussed later in this section.

Weighting the data

C.4 The original sample was drawn from East Dorset District Council Address file. The sample fractions used to create the sample from this list can be converted into weights. If applied to the basic sample these weights would produce a total equal to the original address list. However, before the weights are applied the system takes into account all non-residential and demolished dwellings. This revised sample total is then weighted to produce a total for the whole stock, which will be slightly lower than the original total from which the sample was drawn.

Dealing with non-response

C.5 Where access fails at a dwelling selected for survey the easiest strategy for a surveyor to adopt is to seek access at a neighbouring property. Unfortunately this approach results in large numbers of dwellings originally selected subsequently being excluded from the survey. These are the dwellings whose occupiers tend to be out all day, i.e. mainly the employed population. The converse of this is that larger numbers of dwellings are selected where the occupiers are at home most of the day, i.e. older persons, the unemployed and families with young children. This tends to bias the results of such surveys as these groups are often on the lowest incomes and where they are owner-occupiers they are not so able to invest in maintaining the fabric of their property.

C.6 The methods used in this survey were designed to minimise the effect of access failures. The essential features of this method are; the reduction of access failures to a minimum by repeated calls to dwellings and the use of first impression surveys to adjust the final weights to take account of variations in access rate.

C.7 Surveyors were instructed to call on at least three occasions and in many cases they called more often than this. At least one of these calls was to be outside of normal working hours, thus increasing the chance of finding someone at home.

C.8 Where access failed this normally resulted in a brief external assessment of the premises. Among the information gathered was the surveyor's first impression of condition. This is an appraisal of the likely condition of the dwelling based on the first impression the surveyor receives of the dwelling on arrival. It is not subsequently changed after this, whatever conditions are actually discovered. The first impression groups and descriptions are listed in table C.2.

Table C.2 First impression groups and description

First Impression Group	Short Description	Full description
1	**Seriously defective**	Exterior condition suggests that dwelling/module is probably unfit.
2	**Defective**	Dwelling/module has serious problems and is likely to be 'borderline fit'.
3	**Defective**	Dwelling/module has major problems but is unlikely to be unfit. Dwelling/module in need of fairly major/extensive repairs.
4	**Just Acceptable**	Dwelling/module is in generally poor condition with some faults but with no major problems. Dwelling/module in need of several minor repairs.
5	**Just acceptable**	Dwelling/module is in reasonable condition with a few minor repairs needed.
6	**Satisfactory**	Dwelling/module is in good condition with enhanced maintenance only required.
7	**Satisfactory**	Dwelling/module is in excellent condition and well maintained.

C.9 Where access fails no data is collected on the internal condition of the premises. During data analysis weights are assigned to each dwelling according to the size of sample fraction used to select the individual dwelling.

C.10 The final weights given to each dwelling are adjusted slightly to take into account any bias in the type of dwellings accessed. Adjustments to the weights (and only the weights) are made on the basis of the tenure, age and first impression scores from the front-sheet only surveys.

Sampling error

C.11 Results of sample surveys are, for convenience, usually reported as numbers or percentages when in fact the figure reported is at the middle of a range in which the true figure for the population will lie. It is usual to report these as the 95% confidence limits, i.e. the range either side of the reported figure within which one can be 95% confident that the true figure for the population will lie.

C.12 For this survey the estimate of dwellings with a category 1 hazard is 9.8% and the 95% confidence limits are + or – 2.0%. In other words one can say that 95% of all samples chosen in this way would give a result in the range between 7.8% and 11.8%.

Table C.3 95% per cent confidence limits for a range of possible results and sample sizes

	Sample size									
Expected result as per cent	**100**	**200**	**300**	**400**	**500**	**600**	**700**	**800**	**900**	**1,000**
10	5.9	4.2	3.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.1	2	1.9
20	7.8	5.5	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.2	3	2.8	2.6	2.5
30	9	6.4	5.2	4.5	4	3.7	3.4	3.2	3	2.8
40	9.6	6.8	5.5	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.2	3
50	9.8	6.9	5.7	4.9	4.4	4	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.1
60	9.6	6.8	5.5	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.2	3
70	9	6.4	5.2	4.5	4	3.7	3.4	3.2	3	2.8
80	7.8	5.5	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.2	3	2.8	2.6	2.5
90	5.9	4.2	3.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.1	2	1.9

Appendix D - Definition of a Non Decent Home

Measure of a decent home

D.1 A dwelling is defined as non decent if it fails any one of the following 4 criteria:

Table D.1 Categories for dwelling decency

A	It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing – at present that it should not have a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS
B	It is in a reasonable state of repair – has to have no old and defective major elements*
C	It has reasonably modern facilities and services – Adequate bathroom, kitchen, common areas of flats and is not subject to undue noise
D	Provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

** Described in more detail below*

D.2 Each of these criteria has a sub-set of criteria, which are used to define such things as 'providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort'. The exact details of these requirements are covered in the aforementioned ODPM guidance (see 4.1.2).

Applying the standard

D.3 The standard is specifically designed in order to be compatible with the kind of information collected as standard during a House Condition Survey (HCS). All of the variables required to calculate the standard are contained within a complete data set.

D.4 The four criteria used to determine the decent homes standard have specific parameters. The variables from the survey used for the criteria are described below:

Criterion A:

D.5 Criterion A is simply determined as whether or not a dwelling fails the current minimum standard for housing. This is now the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – specifically Category 1 hazards. All dwellings surveyed were marked on the basis of the HHSRS and if any one or more Category 1 hazards was identified the dwelling was deemed to fail under criterion A of the Decent Homes Standard.

Criterion B:

D.6 Criterion B falls into 2 parts: firstly, if any one of a number of key major building elements is both in need of replacement and old, then the dwelling is automatically non decent. Secondly, if any two of a number of key minor building elements are in need of replacement and old, then the dwelling is automatically non decent. The elements in question are as follows:

Table D.2 Major Elements (1 or more)

Element	Age to be considered old
Major Walls (Repair/Replace >10%)	80
Roofs (Replace 50% or more)	50 for houses 30 for flats
Chimney (1 or more needing partial rebuild)	50
Windows (Replace 2 or more windows)	40 for houses 30 for flats
Doors (Replace 1 or more doors)	40 for houses 30 for flats
Gas Boiler (Major Repair)	15
Gas Fire (Major Repair)	10
Electrics (Major Repair)	30

Table D.3 Minor Elements (2 or more)

Element	Age to be considered old
Kitchen (Major repair or replace 3+ items)	30
Bathroom (Replace 2+ items)	40
Central heating distribution (Major Repair)	40
Other heating (Major Repair)	30

Criterion C:

D.7 Criterion C requires the dwelling to have reasonably modern facilities. These are classified as the following:

Table D.4 Age categories for amenities

Amenity	Defined as
Reasonably modern kitchen	Less than 20 yrs
Kitchen with adequate space and layout	If too small or missing facilities
Reasonably modern bathroom	Less than 30 yrs
An appropriately located bathroom and W.C.	If unsuitably located etc.
Adequate noise insulation	Where external noise a problem
Adequate size and layout of common parts	Flats

D.8 You may notice that the age definition for kitchens and bathrooms differs from criterion B. This is because it was determined that a decent kitchen, for example, should generally be less than 20 years old but may have the odd item older than this. The same idea applies for bathrooms.

Criterion D:

D.9 The dwelling should provide an adequate degree of thermal comfort. It is currently taken that a dwelling, which is in fuel poverty, is considered to be non decent. A dwelling is in fuel poverty if the occupiers spend more than 10% of their net income (after Tax, N.I and housing cost e.g. mortgage or rent) on heating and hot water.

D.10 A number of Local authorities criticized this approach, as it requires a fully calculated SAP for each dwelling that is being examined. Whilst this is fine for a general statistical approach, such as this study, it does cause problems at the individual dwelling level for determining course of action.

D.11 The alternative, laid out in the new guidance, is to examine a dwelling's heating systems and insulation types. The following is an extract from the new guidance:

D.12 The revised definition requires a dwelling to have both:

Efficient heating; and

Effective insulation

Efficient heating is defined as any gas or oil programmable central heating or electric storage heaters or programmable LPG/solid fuel central heating or similarly efficient heating systems, which are developed in the future. Heating sources, which provide less efficient options, fail the decent homes standard.

Because of the differences in efficiency between gas/oil heating systems and other heating systems listed, the level of insulation that is appropriate also differs:

For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively) or at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is loft space) is an effective package of insulation;

For dwellings heated by electric storage radiators/LPG/programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are cavities that can be insulated effectively).

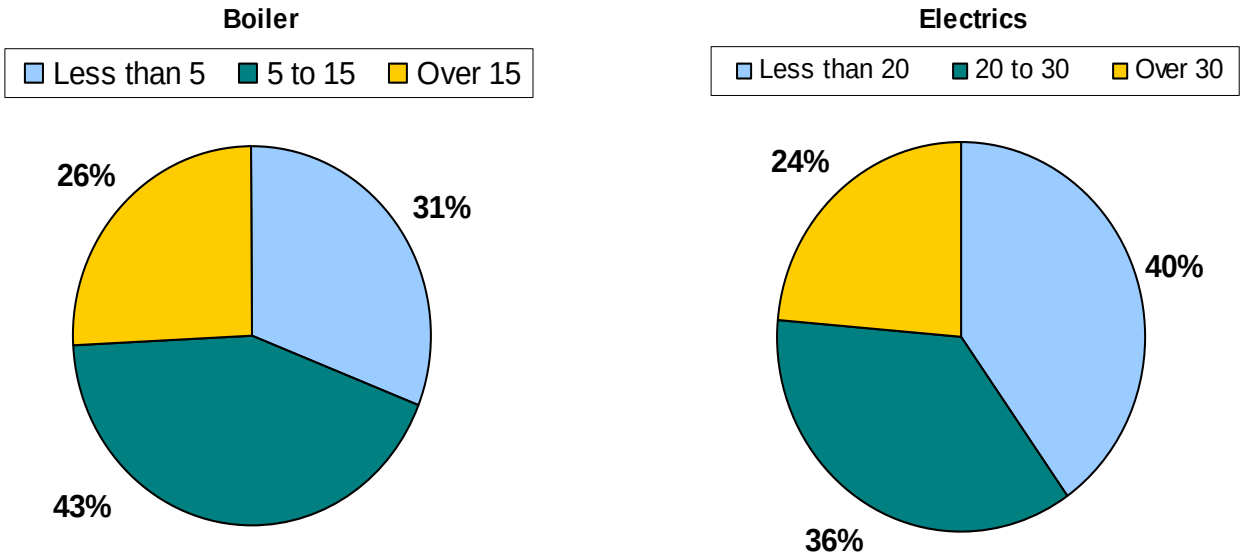
D.13 For the purposes of this study the above definition will be used in calculating the proportion of dwellings that are considered non decent.

Appendix E - Additional amenities

E.1 The following charts examine the position for electrical systems and boilers. Electrical systems over 30 years of age are considered as reaching a point where regular inspection and testing is advisable to ensure that they are not likely to present a hazard. Many boilers over the age of 15 will still be working satisfactorily but they will be reaching the end of their economic life and their energy efficiency is likely to be declining. Boilers installed now have much higher levels of efficiency in order to meet current Building Regulations.

E.2 69% of boilers and 60% of electrical systems are either older than the age specified in the criterion or will become so in the next 10 years.

Figure F.1 Electrics and boiler age



Source: 2008 House Condition Survey

E.3 The age bands used in these charts and those used in chapter 7 differ, dependent upon the design life of the amenity in question. The second band in each chart represents where the amenity will become older than its design life during the next ten years.