Issue 13

Published
July 2012

CAMBRIDGE HOUSING SUB-REGION

Housing market bulletin

Our housing market at March 2012

This edition of the Cambridge housing sub-region's Housing Market Bulletin updates you on many aspects of the housing market locally, regionally and nationally. The data in this Bulletin relates to March 2012.

This edition repeats information on the affordability of housing across the sub-region as requested by readers. You can find price comparisons of different tenure and size homes on page 15. This data gives context to the new Affordable Rent regime by looking at the average weekly cost of various housing tenures by district and property size.

Our Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is moving location. You can still find it at www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/shma, but it will also be available on a new site at www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing.

These Bulletins can still all be found at www.cambridge.gov.uk/crhb.

Tip: To follow links in this bulletin, you can click on the underlined text. This should take you to the information or the page you are seeking. If this does not work try holding down the "Ctrl" button and click.

Bulletin highlights...

- The number of sales and valuations across our housing sub-region has dropped back again in March 2012 to just 8,024. Of these, only 3,870 actual sales completed. These figures reflect both regional and national trends.
- Some average property prices have rallied to March 2012 for example in Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and South Cambridgeshire; while other districts saw a drop. The highest gain in the sub-region was Cambridge at +£22K, or +£286 per m^2.
- The average time taken to sell fell in four of our seven districts. In March 2012 it took an average of 9.5 weeks to sell across the sub-region, down from an average 10.2 weeks in December 2011.
- There was a 1% increase in the percentage of asking price being achieved across the whole sub-region, when comparing March 2011 to March 2012. Only one district, South Cambridgeshire, saw a drop in the price being achieved, all others saw a slight gain over the past 12 months.
- The number of viewings per sale now ranges from 9.5 in Forest Heath (up from 7.2 in December 2011) to 12.9 in both Huntingdonshire and Fenland.
- Average affordability ratios remain steady, ranging from 4.7 in Fenland to 9.23in Cambridge. In Cambridge, lower quartile prices are now 12.3 times lower quartile incomes.

Click here to find...

Maps

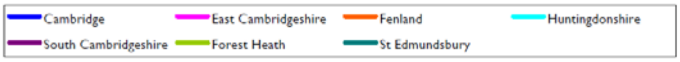
Our housing market

Map 1 shows the East of England, shaded in orange, with a blue outline. East of England data is used in this Bulletin to provide a comparison to the Cambridge housing sub-region. The seven districts in our housing sub-region, shown on Map 2 are:

- Cambridge
- Fenland
- Huntingdonshire
- St Edmundsbury
- East Cambridgeshire
- Forest Heath
- South Cambridgeshire

Five districts on this list fall within Cambridgeshire, while Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury fall within Suffolk.

Graphs in this edition of the Bulletin adopts a uniform colour scheme, to help differentiate. The scheme throughout is:



About Hometrack data

Hometrack's monthly survey

Hometrack collects data every month from estate agents and surveyors to monitor market trends, and publishes the results in their national house price survey.

The survey asks a standard set of questions of over 5,000 estate agents and valuers across England and Wales.

The surveys seek a minimum of two returns for each postcode district, and provide a large amount of data which is used to calculate

- time to sell in weeks (page 11)
- sales to asking price (page 12)
- viewings per sale (page 13)

We do not use house price data collected by the survey within the Intelligence System.

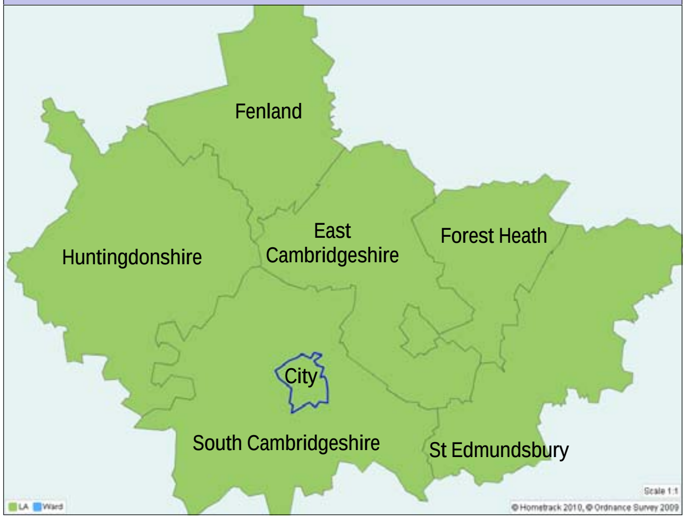
Hometrack house price data

Hometrack use data from two sources to generate house price data. These are: actual property sales from Land Registry and data from valuations for mortgage applications.

A much larger dataset can be created by joining these two data sources together. This database is unique to Hometrack. It includes information on property size (bedrooms and square feet) as well as property type. The volume of data enables us to present house price data by property at a range of geographies from region down to ward level. We are able to segment this by type of property and bedroom size for a range of data including lower quartile, average, 90th percentile and upper quartile. The key feature of the database is that it is a combination of property valued for mortgage lending purposes and actual sales. See pages 4 and 5 to compare Hometrack data for sales only, compared to sales and valuations.

Map 1: **The East of England**

Map 2: **The seven districts in our housing sub-region**



Map 3: **Geography of the Cambridge housing sub-region**

National trends from Hometrack:
Seasonal jump in demand but headline prices static

In brief...

- House prices rose by 0.1% in April, down on the 0.2% rise recorded in March 2012.
- A clear divide continues to grow between markets in and around London and the rest of the country. The strongest price rises in April were in London, up 0.3% with small gains (+0.1%) across the regions of southern England. Prices elsewhere were either static or falling.
- The time on the market (an indicator of the relative strength of the market) has fallen slightly across all regions in the last three months but still stands at less than six weeks in London and around 12 weeks across all regions away from the south.
- The impetus for price rises over the last two months has been higher demand. New buyer registrations over the last three months have grown almost 25%. The usual seasonal uplift in demand together with the added impetus from the recent stamp duty holiday have generated the uplift in recent market activity.
- But the impact of these short term drivers of housing demand is starting to dissipate. New buyer registrations grew by just 2.1% over April, half the level recorded in March (4.4%).
- Supply grew by 4.8% in April, up from 3.6% increase in March. In the last three months supply has grown by almost 19%. This follows a similar pattern to previous years when an improvement in demand and sales led to more properties coming to the market.
- If April's slowdown in demand and rising supply continues over the coming months, we will begin to see an impact on price changes.
- The balance of supply and demand recorded by the Hometrack survey leads prices by up to 3 months. While the balance has improved over the last three months, it remains (just) in negative territory. But with conflicting reports over the strength of the economy and renewed fears over the prospects for the Eurozone, buyer confidence could fall resulting in a continued slowdown in demand over the coming months and a flattening out of prices.

Table 1: **Summary**	**Feb-12**	**Mar-12**	**Apr-12**
Monthly price change (%)	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
% change in new buyers registering with agents	18.1%	4.4%	2.1%
% change in volume of property listing	15.0%	3.6%	4.8%
% change in sales agreed	35.7%	13.2%	10.1%
Average time on the market (weeks)	9.9 weeks	9.7 weeks	9.3 weeks
% of the asking price being achieved	92.9%	93.0%	93.1%
% postcode districts with price **increase** over month	7.7%	14.7%	13.7%
% postcode districts with price **decrease** over month	19.0%	9.2%	12.4%

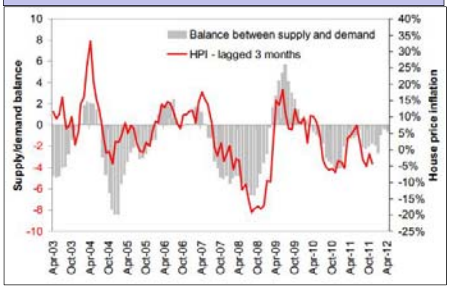
Graph 1: The proportion of the asking price achieved has moved up to 93.1%. Increases would indicate some recovery of prices.

The time on the market has registered another small decrease to 9.3 weeks with some major regional variations.

Graph 1: **Time on market and % asking price achieved**

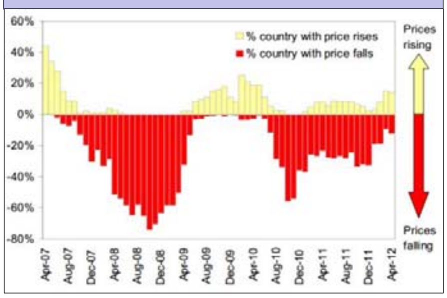
Graph 2: The balance between supply and demand leads underlying house price changes by three months. The improved balance over the first half of 2011 led an improvement in the underlying rate of growth. The balance is now in negative territory suggesting further price falls in the months ahead.

Graph 2: **Supply demand balance leads price changes by 3 months**



Graph 3 shows the proportion of postcodes registering higher and lower prices over time. The balance of change swung into negative territory over the autumn of 2010 but the extent of price changes has slowed as supply has tightened. Prices were down across just 12.4% of postcodes in April 2012.

Graph 3: **Proportion of country registering higher and lower prices**



By Richard Donnell, Director of Research, Hometrack

Source www.hometrack.co.uk

Number of sales and valuations

This page shows the number of sales and valuations used to generate most of the other data in this Bulletin. This page shows the number of sales and valuations in six month "chunks".

Graphs 4 and 5 show the number of sales and valuations for England and the East of England.

New to this edition of the Bulletin, Graph 6 shows number of sales and valuations for the whole of the Cambridge housing sub-region.

Graph 7 shows number of sales and valuations for each of the seven districts in our sub-region.

PLEASE NOTE the scale is different for each graph. So on Graph 4 it reaches 1,400,000 and Graph 7 reaches 6,000.

Table 2 shows the number of sales and valuations in six monthly chunks for each district, the housing sub-region, the East of England and England.

Comment

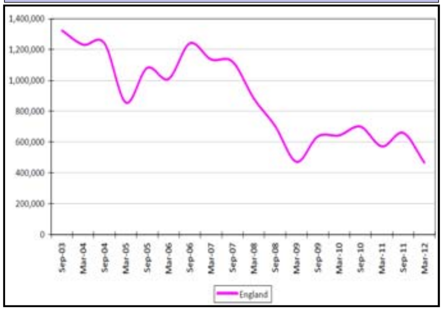
Graphs 4, 5 and 6 help to compare similarities and differences between the three main "areas" included in this Bulletin.

The three graphs show a similar shape trend line.

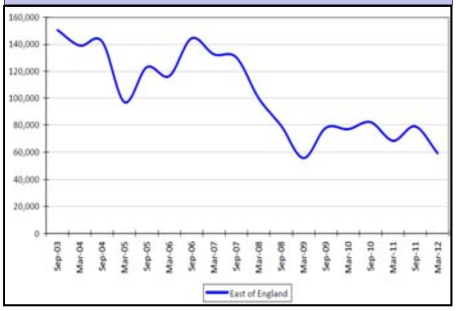
Graph 7 shows the number of sales and valuations for each of our seven districts, and reveals a good deal of variation from one district to another. Huntingdonshire consistently shows the highest numbers of sales and valuations, and its trend line follows that of the region and the country. By contrast, Forest Heath shows the lowest numbers of transactions and the "flattest" line of all our districts.

Source: Hometrack's Automated Valuation Model, Mar 2012 sales and valuations.

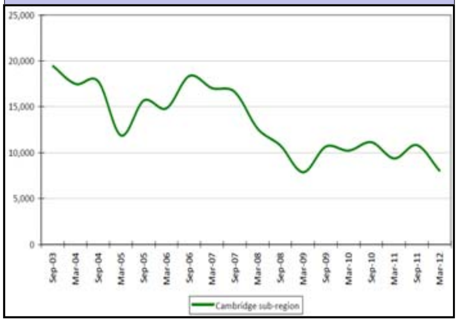
Graph 4: **Number of sales and valuations over time**, England



Graph 5: **Number of sales and valuations over time**, East of England



Graph 6: **Number of sales and valuations over time**, Cambridge sub-region



Graph 7: **Number of sales and valuations over time**, individual districts

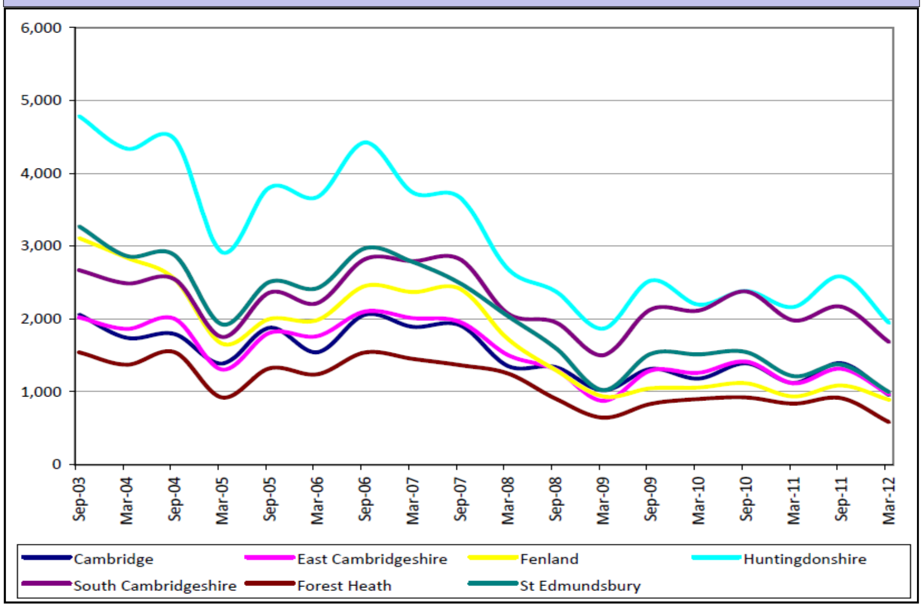


Table 2: **Number of sales and valuations**

	Sep-08	Mar-09	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
Cambridge	1,339	1,020	1,314	1,182	1,390	1,121	1,393	955
East Cambridgeshire	1,305	876	1,291	1,261	1,416	1,116	1,316	968
Fenland	1,299	937	1,049	1,058	1,117	936	1,086	891
Huntingdonshire	2,379	1,868	2,528	2,199	2,385	2,165	2,583	1,946
South Cambridgeshire	1,954	1,502	2,130	2,115	2,378	1,980	2,169	1,684
Forest Heath	906	645	834	900	922	838	912	584
St Edmundsbury	1,602	1,024	1,521	1,514	1,546	1,215	1,371	996
Total for sub-region	10,784	7,872	10,667	10,229	11,154	9,371	10,830	8,024
East of England	79,582	55,485	77,977	77,056	82,244	68,418	79,068	58,959
England	703,556	472,263	636,988	644,131	700,828	571,613	659,540	466,016

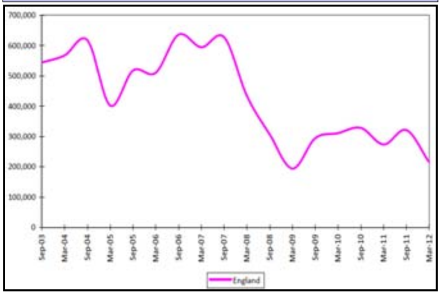
Number of actual sales

This page shows the number of sales actually completing. It excludes valuation data (shown on page 4). This data is not used for averages in the rest of Bulletin, but is useful to understand turnover in our housing market. Sales and valuation data is used for averages elsewhere, ensuring a robust sample.
Graphs 8, 9 and 10 show the number of sales across England, the East of England region and the Cambridge sub-region.
Graph 11 shows numbers of sales for our seven individual districts.
Table 3 shows the number of sales completing between September 2008 and March 2012.

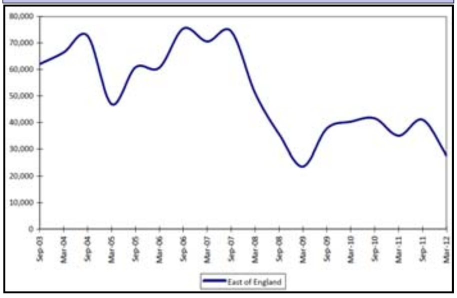
Comment

This information shows a significant reduction in the number of sales completing at all geographical levels to March 2009, rallying to September 2009, then "up and down" to September 2011. Since then all sales completing have dropped to a low point, only slightly higher than March 2009 levels; lower in Cambridge and Forest Heath.
Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire continue to see the largest number of actual sales, though much reduced since September 2011.
Forest Heath the lowest number at 298. Comparing actual sales to sales + valuations, the percentage across our sub-region rose from 41% in July, to 45% in September and reached 50% in

Graph 8: **Number of actual sales over time**, England

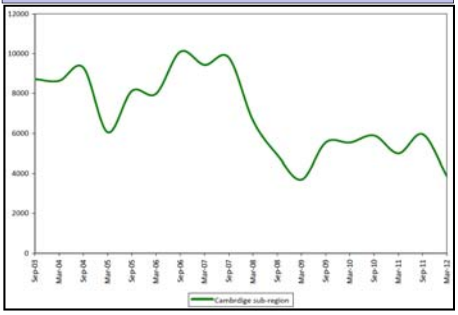


Graph 9: **Number of actual sales over time**, East of England



December 2011. It has now dropped back slightly to 48% - still higher than both the region and the country.
PLEASE NOTE when comparing actual sales to sales + valuations that valuation data includes remortgages and mortgage valuations for homes that never make it to sale stage, so it's not a exact like-for-like comparison.
Source: Hometrack's Automated Valuation Model, March 2012 transactions, including Land Registry data.

Graph 10: **Number of actual sales over time**, Cambridge sub-region



Graph 11: **Number of actual sales over time**, individual districts

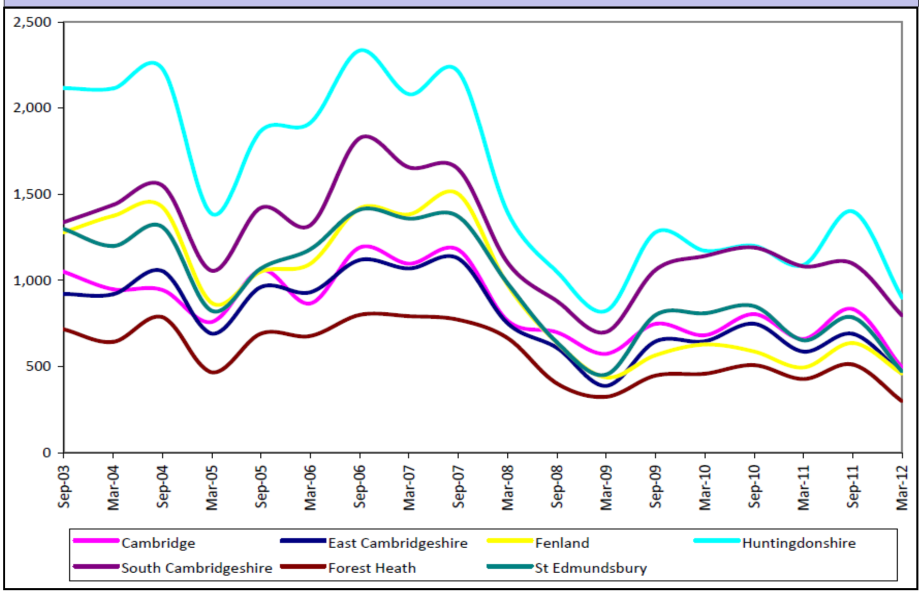


Table 3: **Number of actual sales completing**

	Sep-08	Mar-09	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12	Actual sales as a % of sales and valuations
Cambridge	698	573	747	681	804	660	833	493	52%
East Cambridgeshire	608	387	645	646	748	586	689	458	47%
Fenland	639	437	565	627	587	494	636	458	51%
Huntingdonshire	1,050	823	1,278	1,172	1,200	1,089	1,400	898	46%
South Cambridgeshire	880	700	1,060	1,141	1,190	1,081	1,097	795	47%
Forest Heath	401	324	447	458	508	427	511	298	51%
St Edmundsbury	640	453	798	809	850	652	785	470	47%
Cambridge sub-region	4,916	3,697	5,540	5,534	5,887	4,989	5,951	3,870	48%
East of England	35,596	23,549	37,702	40,282	41,528	34,969	41,006	27,692	47%
England	306,818	194,039	294,517	311,264	328,548	273,759	321,317	215,582	46%

Percentage stock turnover

This page shows the volume of residential sales across each district in our housing sub-region as a proportion of total private housing stock. The data comes from the Land Registry and the Office for National Statistics.

The number of sales relates to the "year to date" since January each year. The stock figure comes from the Census 2001, and will remain steady until updated with 2011 Census results.

So in March 2012 due to a time lag and due to post-Christmas sales, the proportion of stock turning over looks particularly low. This figure will creep up as the year passes. The figure shown for 2012 is turnover year to date.

This page puts page 5 into context. For example, Huntingdonshire shows a high number of sales completing on page 5, but it is useful to compare that high number of sales to the number of homes found in Huntingdonshire district. This page helps with a like-for-like comparison between areas, by comparing the number of sales completing to housing stock.

Map 4 shows the turnover of homes as a percentage of private stock by district.

Map 5 shows the same data at a more detailed ward level.

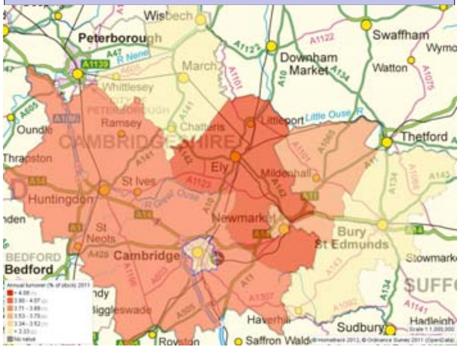
Table 4 shows the proportion of privately owned homes sold each year, expressed as a percentage of the number of private sector properties (that is, owner occupied and private rented homes) in that area.

Comment

The percentage turnover is low as not many sales have completed since January. Map 5 compares turnover rates in more detail, which shows an interesting % turnover pattern and highlights variations by ward.

Source: Census 2001 and HM Land Registry latest data relating to the each year - in this case January 2012 to March 2012.

Map 4: **% turnover of homes** by district



Map 5: **% turnover of homes** by ward

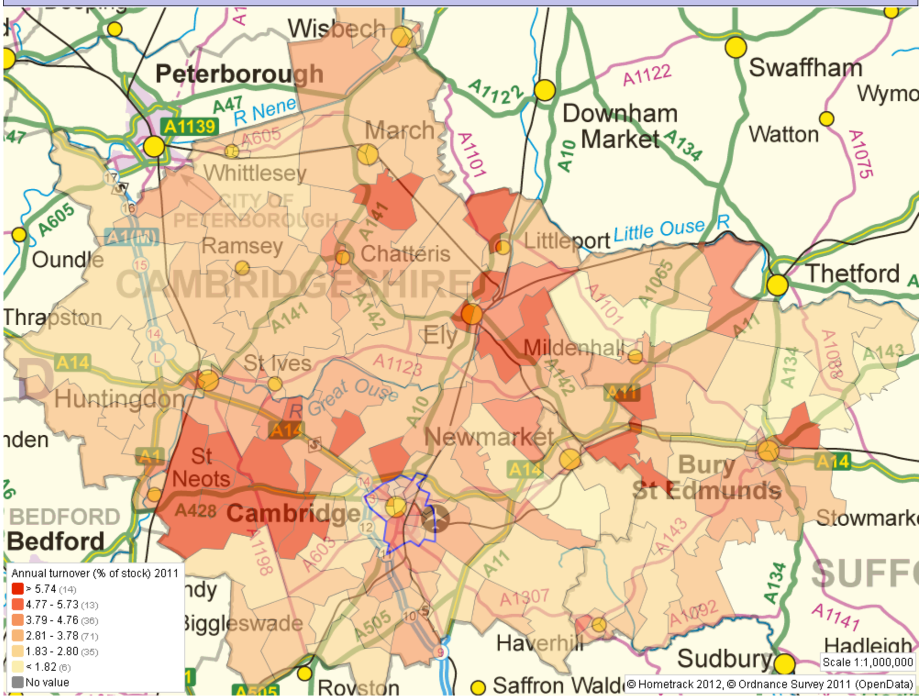
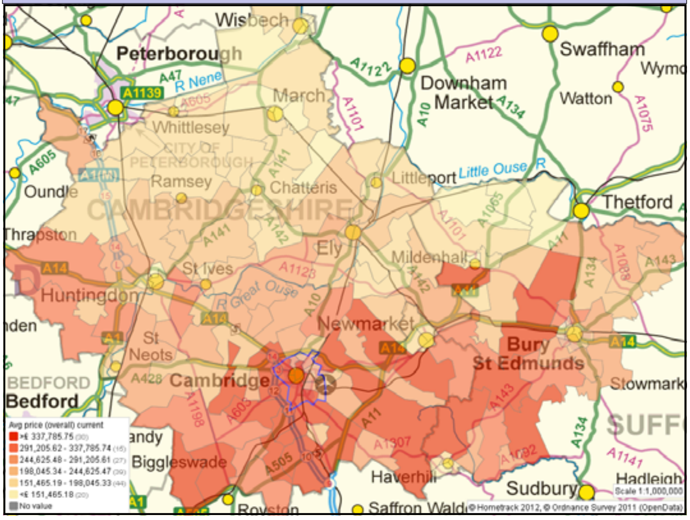


Table 4: **Percentage turnover of homes** (rounded to 1 decimal place)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cambridge	4.8%	3.1%	3.0%	3.4%	3.4%	0.3%
East Cambridgeshire	6.7%	3.6%	4.0%	4.3%	4.2%	0.4%
Fenland	7.6%	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%	3.3%	0.3%
Huntingdonshire	6.1%	3.1%	3.7%	3.5%	3.9%	0.3%
South Cambridgeshire	5.7%	3.2%	3.8%	4.3%	4.0%	0.4%
Forest Heath	6.2%	3.5%	3.5%	3.8%	3.8%	0.3%
St Edmundsbury	6.0%	3.0%	3.6%	3.6%	3.3%	0.3%
Cambridge sub-region (average)	6.2%	3.2%	3.5%	3.7%	3.7%	0.3%
East of England	5.9%	2.9%	3.2%	3.3%	3.3%	0.3%

Average property prices

Map 6: **Average prices**, Cambridge housing sub-region shown by ward



Map 6 shows average prices for homes across the Cambridge housing sub-region at ward level. The average prices on this page are based on a combination of sales prices and valuation data averaged over the past six months.

Graph 12 shows average prices for England, the East of England and the Cambridge housing sub-region between September 2003 and March 2012. The sub-regional average is new for this Bulletin, and aims to help comparison between our area and the rest of the country.

Graph 13 shows average property prices for each district in the sub-region.

Table 13 shows average property prices between September 2008 and March 2012,and compares March '11 to march '12.

Comment

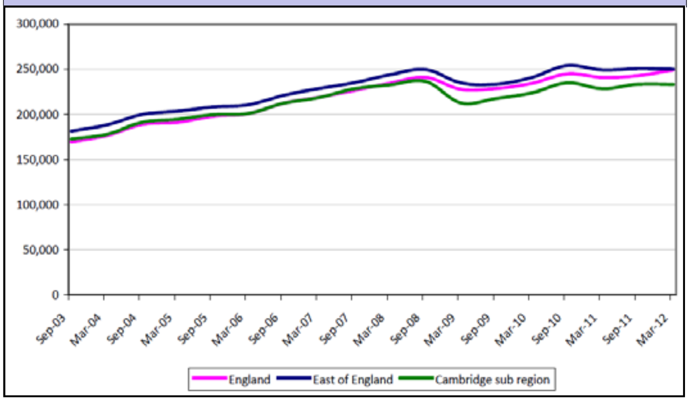
As seen in previous editions of this Bulletin, average prices are generally higher to the south of the housing sub-region than to the north.

Graphs 12 and 13 show average prices steadily rising to around September 2008, followed by a drop to March 2009 and varying degrees of recovery leading to March 2012.

For individual districts comparing March 2011 to March 2012 prices, there is some variation in price change. In four of our seven districts there has been an increase in average prices (between +£731 and +£22,193) but this needs to be compared to the number of sales completing, as in all seven districts the number of sales completing has fallen (see page 4). Forest Heath, Huntingdonshire and St Edmundsbury saw a drop in average prices of between -£263 and -£6,673. The sub-regional average price is lower than the region and England, though the average has increased compared to March 2011 averages for all three areas.

Source: Hometrack's Automated Valuation Model, data March 2012.

Graph 12: **Average prices** England, East of England, Cambridge sub-region



Graph 13: **Average prices**, individual districts

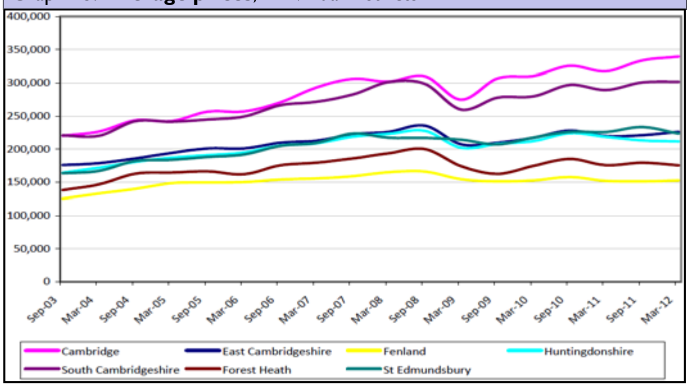


Table 13: **Average prices from sales and valuations (£)**

	Sep-08	Mar-09	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12	Change Mar-11 to Mar-12
Cambridge	310,050	274,886	306,644	310,456	325,404	317,317	333,665	339,510	+ 22,193
East Cambridgeshire	235,548	207,463	209,506	217,253	228,256	219,744	221,099	226,017	+ 6,273
Fenland	166,065	154,440	150,958	152,696	157,747	151,819	151,007	152,550	+ 731
Huntingdonshire	227,702	202,027	207,889	212,262	224,058	218,459	213,246	211,786	- 6,673
South Cambridgeshire	298,682	259,862	277,820	279,820	297,201	289,494	300,765	301,981	+ 12,487
Forest Heath	200,114	174,244	162,599	174,745	185,104	175,660	179,581	175,397	- 263
St Edmundsbury	216,899	214,289	207,037	217,485	226,209	225,822	233,448	223,589	- 2,233
Average for sub-region	236,437	212,459	217,493	223,531	234,854	228,331	233,259	232,976	4,645
East of England	249,560	234,861	233,370	240,689	253,958	249,041	250,600	249,993	952
England	240,841	227,663	228,657	234,285	244,711	241,008	242,642	249,068	8,060

Number of sales by type and district

This page breaks down the sales and valuations data provided on page 4, by district and property type.

Tables 5 to 11 show the number of sales and valuations broken down into 1 bed flat, 2 bed flat, 2 bed house, 3 bed house and 4 bed house, between September 2009 and march 2012. Table 12 shows the same for the East of England, and an overall regional total, for comparison.

Graph 10 shows the number of homes selling by type across the whole housing sub-region and Graph 11 shows the proportion rather than numbers by type, to highlight any significant change in the types of homes selling over time.

Comment

Graph 10 reflects the trend shown on page 4 with the overall number of sales completing falling to March 2009, rallying to September 2010 then falling away to March 2012.

Graph 11 presents the percentage of sales by property type. As in previous Bulletins, this shows a continuing spread of the types of homes selling.

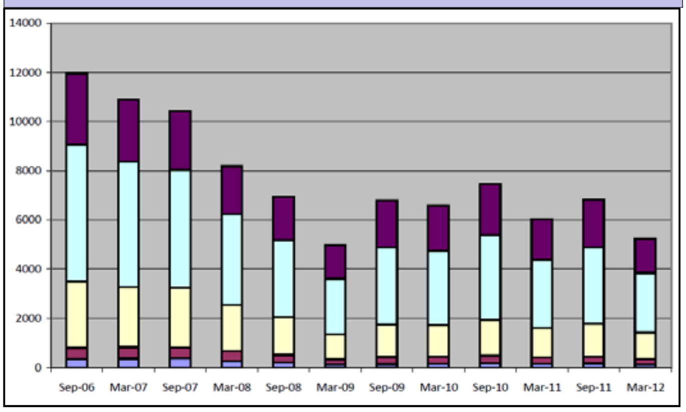
For comparison, the pattern across the whole of the East of England is that 10% of sales are 1 and 2 bed flats, 19% are 2 bed houses, 47% 3 bed houses and 24% 4 bed houses.

Source: Hometrack's automated valuation model, data at March 2012.

Key to graphs

- 4 bed (House)
- 3 bed (House)
- 2 bed (House)
- 2 bed (Flat)
- 1 bed (Flat)

Graph 10: **Number of sales by type**, Cambridge housing sub-region



Graph 11: **Proportion of sales by type**, Cambridge housing sub-region

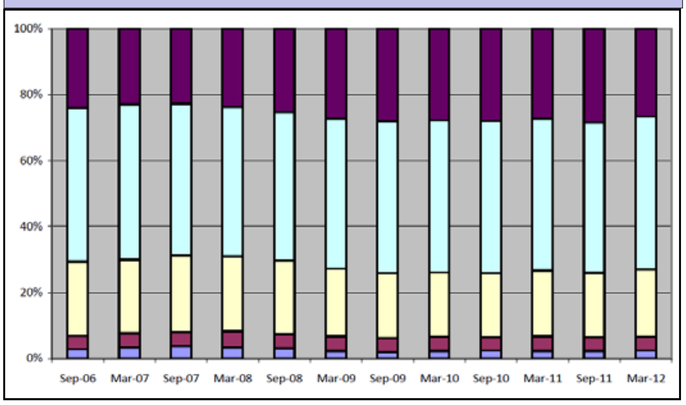


Table 5: **Cambridge**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	62	55	86	46	70	44
2 bed flat	123	96	112	115	110	82
2 bed house	133	123	161	111	152	100
3 bed house	339	346	382	324	336	245
4 bed house	135	131	145	99	153	81

Table 6: **East Cambridgeshire**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	7	11	9	6	7	9
2 bed flat	23	29	21	16	22	12
2 bed house	144	180	185	154	149	142
3 bed house	408	382	470	342	389	299
4 bed house	239	235	280	202	250	185

Table 7: **Fenland**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	6	2	3	9	3	4
2 bed flat	2	6	4	6	8	10
2 bed house	161	155	150	145	158	141
3 bed house	328	292	371	301	315	274
4 bed house	134	140	164	128	155	118

Table 8: **Huntingdonshire**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	22	28	24	26	29	30
2 bed flat	56	44	57	31	39	34
2 bed house	278	226	271	235	276	207
3 bed house	727	699	726	681	771	629
4 bed house	583	481	580	479	588	433

Table 9: **South Cambridgeshire**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	15	23	20	23	19	15
2 bed flat	31	57	66	55	55	48
2 bed house	265	233	269	219	249	187
3 bed house	579	547	676	517	593	462
4 bed house	459	433	564	399	470	359

Table 10: **Forest Heath**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	11	5	8	9	6	5
2 bed flat	28	28	19	30	26	15
2 bed house	159	175	191	170	195	129
3 bed house	238	243	239	203	273	186
4 bed house	106	124	104	125	120	66

Table 11: **St Edmundsbury**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	11	25	26	18	20	19
2 bed flat	22	26	25	15	22	18
2 bed house	200	190	222	168	161	169
3 bed house	504	523	578	396	425	337
4 bed house	254	282	253	213	210	158

Table 12: **East of England**

	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12
1 bed flat	1,679	1,829	2,002	1,613	1,734	1,398
2 bed flat	3,244	3,609	3,677	3,049	3,350	2,592
2 bed house	10,062	9,669	10,582	8,579	10,036	7,491
3 bed house	24,883	24,207	26,524	21,659	24,317	18,915
4 bed house	12,134	12,064	13,224	10,776	12,337	9,118
Total	**52,002**	**51,378**	**56,009**	**45,676**	**51,774**	**39,514**

Average prices by type and district

This page provides more detailed graphs for each district, comparing sale prices between September 2006 and March 2012.
This page uses both sales and valuation data. Please see page 4 for more context.

Comment

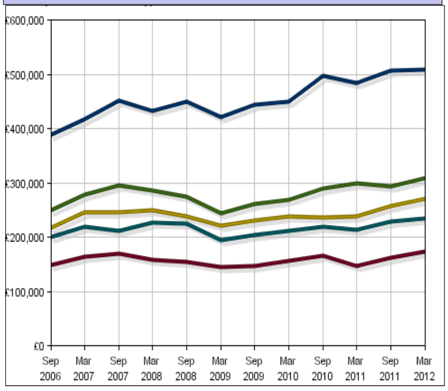
- When comparing these graphs it is worth pointing out that each district reaches a different "maximum" average property value. So the City's left-hand axis scale stretches up to £600,000 while Fenland only reaches £250,000.
- Graph 21 shows the data for the whole of the East of England, for comparison. This shows a smoother trend line than individual districts, due to the large number of sales across the whole region.
- Cambridge sees a continuing rise in average prices for 4 bed houses, as well as for other property types.
- East Cambridgeshire sees a slight increase in average prices for all sizes and types.
- Fenland sees an increase in average prices for 4 beds and 1 bed flats. Others hold steady.
- Huntingdonshire prices hold steady overall.
- South Cambridgeshire sees an increase in average prices for 1 bed flats and 2 bed houses.
- Forest Heath sees an increase in average prices for 1 bed flats and 4 bed houses with a decrease for 2 bed flats, others hold steady.
- St Edmundsbury sees a drop in 4 bed and 1 bed flat prices, others steady.

Source: Hometrack's Automated Valuation Model, March 2012.

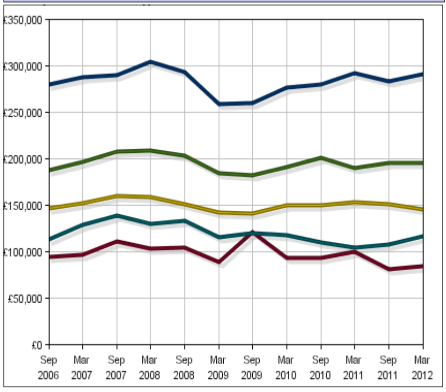
Key:

1 bed Prices (Flat) | 2 bed Prices (Flat) | 2 bed Prices (House) | 3 bed Prices (House) | 4 bed Prices (House)

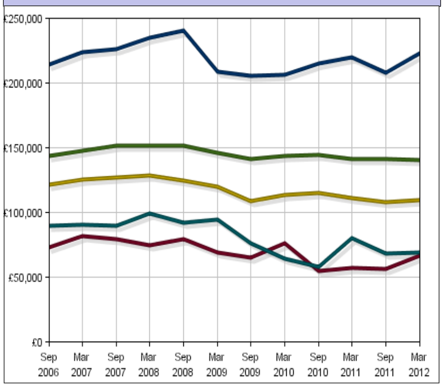
Graph 14: **Cambridge**



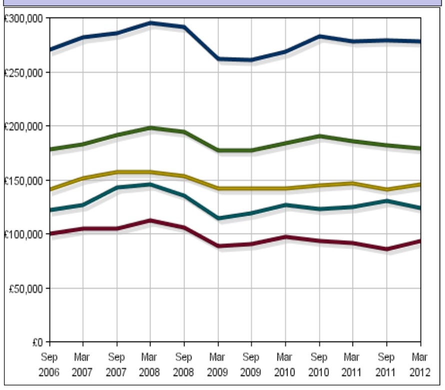
Graph 15: **East Cambridgeshire**



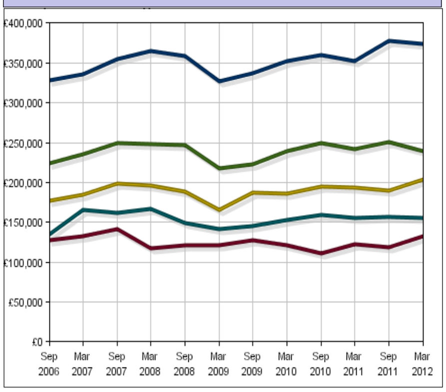
Graph 16: **Fenland**



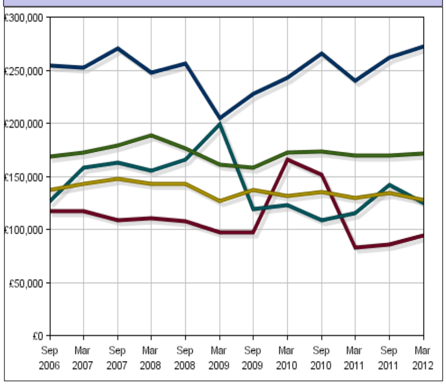
Graph 17: **Huntingdonshire**



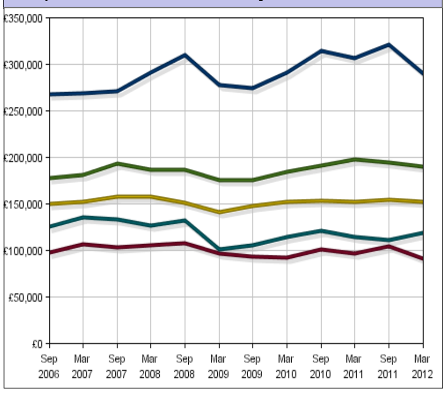
Graph 18: **South Cambridgeshire**



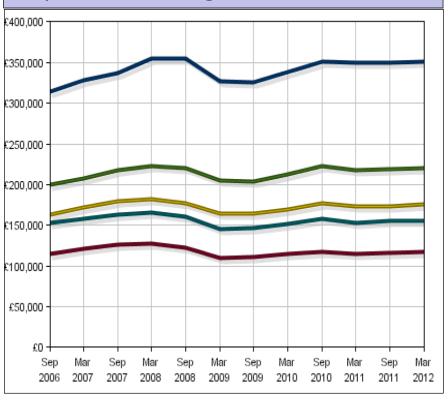
Graph 19: **Forest Heath**



Graph 20: **St Edmundsbury**



Graph 21: **East of England**



Average price per metre square (m^2)

Using price per metre^2
By comparing prices per unit of floor area, we can make benchmarking and comparison easier. It's a bit like comparing price per kg of different vegetables. Price per metre square and price per square foot are popular measures which housing developers use in their calculations.

Map 7 shows average price per metre square (m^2) of all properties selling, at ward level. This is based on sales and valuation data. As there may not be a large number of transactions within these small areas, the average prices achieved between April 2011 and March 2012 are used to ensure a robust sample.

Graph 22 shows changes in average price per m^2 across our seven districts between September 2003 and March 2012. Graph 23 shows the same data for England and the East of England. Table 14 shows average prices per metre^2 between September 2008 and March 2012, and the change form March 2011 to March 2012.

Comment

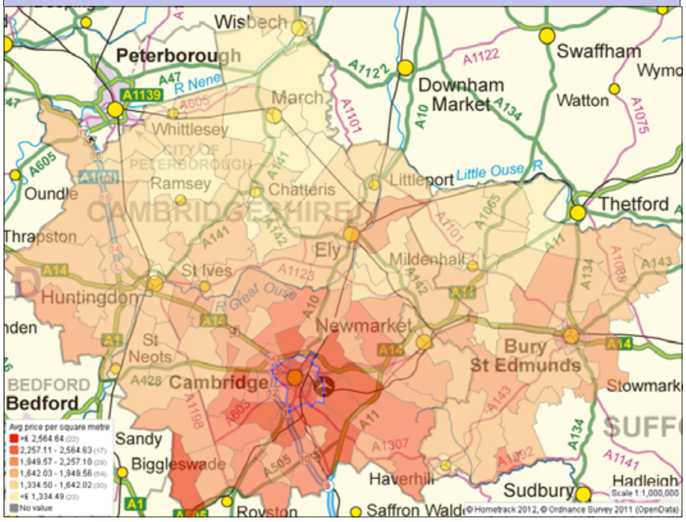
Price per m^2 varies across the sub-region, with a broad pattern of higher prices to the south and lower prices to the north, with the highest prices per m^2 around Cambridge. Graph 22 sees each district following a similar pattern in prices per m^2 over time, dropping to March 2009 and recovering somewhat to March 2012. Graph 23 shows a similar trend and close alignment between the England and the East of England trend lines.

Comparing March 2011 to March 2012, four districts saw an increase in average price per m^2 while three show a drop. The biggest "gainers" was Cambridge at +£286, others saw much smaller rises (form +£7 to +£45). Fenland, Huntingdonshire and St Edmundsbury all saw small decreases (-£6 to –£22 per m^2).

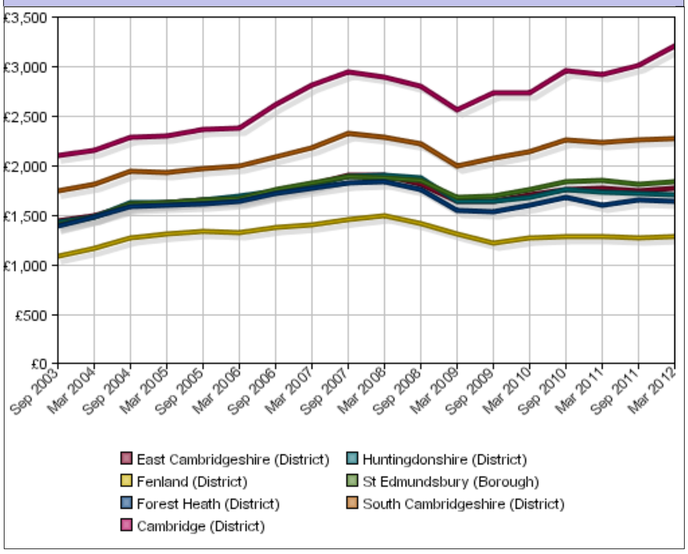
Over the same period our housing sub-region experienced an average increase of +£47 while both England and the East of England saw a gain of +£88 and +£14. respectively.

Source: Hometrack's Automated Valuation Model, latest data March 2012.

Map 7: **Average price per m^2** for each district, shown by ward



Graph 22: **Average price per m^2**, individual districts



Graph 23: **Average price per m^2**, England and East of England

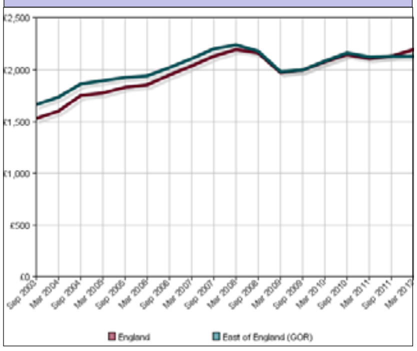


Table 14: **Average price per m^2 (£)**

	Sep-08	Mar-09	Sep-09	Mar-10	Sep-10	Mar-11	Sep-11	Mar-12	Change Mar 11 to Mar 12
Cambridge	2,807	2,570	2,747	2,744	2,971	2,931	3,016	3,217	+ 286
East Cambridgeshire	1,822	1,638	1,639	1,712	1,765	1,770	1,749	1,777	+ 7
Fenland	1,422	1,312	1,221	1,272	1,282	1,288	1,276	1,282	- 6
Huntingdonshire	1,877	1,640	1,639	1,689	1,759	1,734	1,728	1,713	- 21
South Cambridgeshire	2,227	2,001	2,084	2,149	2,263	2,239	2,267	2,284	+ 45
Forest Heath	1,764	1,557	1,539	1,610	1,684	1,606	1,651	1,643	+ 37
St Edmundsbury	1,862	1,683	1,698	1,766	1,839	1,859	1,815	1,837	- 22
Average for sub-region	1,969	1,772	1,795	1,849	1,938	1,918	1,929	1,965	+ 47
East of England	2,177	1,984	1,999	2,082	2,162	2,121	2,134	2,135	+ 14
England	2,165	1,971	1,994	2,075	2,145	2,106	2,130	2,194	+ 88

Time taken to sell

Time to sell measures the time from the home going on the market to an offer being accepted.
Please bear in mind this page only reports on completed sales. Homes which take a long time to sell will be reported only once the sale completes.

Data on this page comes from Hometrack's monthly market survey (see page 2). Map 8 shows the average time to sell by district. Graph 24 shows the change in average time to sell for England and the East of England, from April '10 to March '12. Graph 25 shows the same for each district in our sub-region. Table 15 shows the average time taken to sell, at three monthly intervals, to help compare district, regional and England averages.

Comment

Map 8 shows homes talking longer to sell in Huntingdonshire and Fenland, with homes in St Edmundsbury selling quickest.

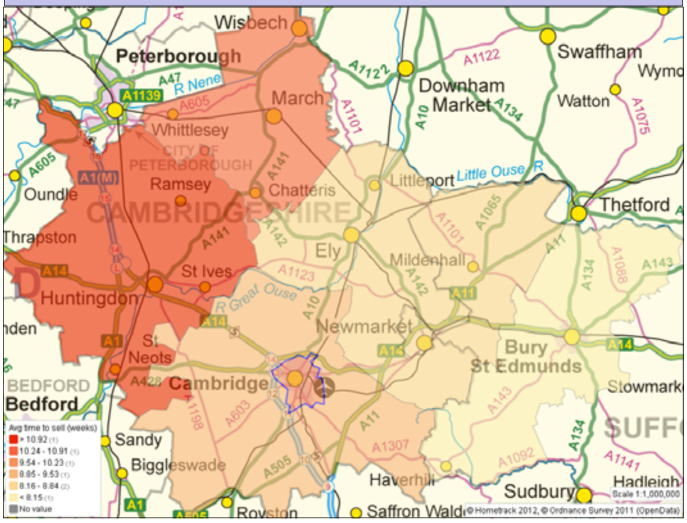
Graph 24 shows a steadier pattern over time than is shown on Graph 25 for individual districts. However both the regional and the national lines rise between October 2011 and Jan 2012, falling away between January and March 2012.

Graph 25 shows Huntingdonshire with the slowest times to sell, followed by Fenland. Sales are quickest (shown by the lower lines on Graph 25) in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire up until October 2011, when they time suddenly increased to a level similar to many other districts across the sub-region. Table 15 shows that between March 2011 and March 2012 Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire saw increases in the time taken to sell; by +3.9 weeks and +2.3 weeks respectively. East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury all saw a slight drop in the time taken to sell, varying from –0.2 to –1.6 weeks. Huntingdonshire saw no change between March 2011 and March 2012 when we look just at those two dates.

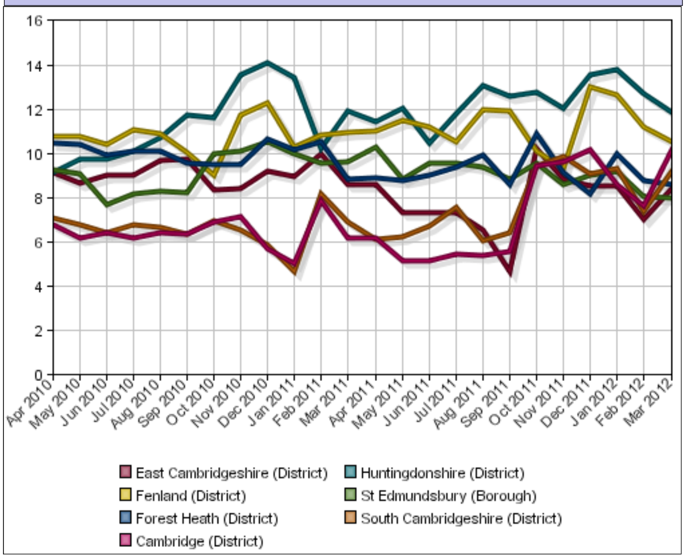
The average time to sell across the whole sub-region rose by +0.5 weeks. Average time to sell across the East of England increased by +0.8 weeks, but for the whole of England fell by a tiny, amount (-0.1 weeks).

Source: Hometrack's monthly survey of estate agents, March 2012.

Map 8: **Time properties take to sell** (weeks), individual districts



Graph 25: **Time taken to sell** (weeks), individual districts



Graph 24: **Time properties take to sell**, England and East of England

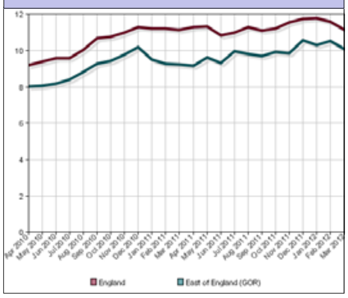


Table 15: **Average time taken to sell** (in weeks)

	Jun-10	Sep-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jun-11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Change Mar 11 to Mar 12
Cambridge	6.5	6.4	5.7	6.2	5.2	5.6	10.2	10.1	+ 3.9
East Cambridgeshire	9	9.8	9.2	8.6	7.3	4.7	8.5	8.4	- 0.2
Fenland	10.4	10.1	12.3	11	11.2	11.9	13	10.5	- 0.5
Huntingdonshire	9.7	11.7	14.1	11.9	10.5	12.6	13.5	11.9	0
South Cambridgeshire	6.4	6.4	5.9	6.9	6.8	6.5	9.1	9.2	+ 2.3
Forest Heath	10	9.6	10.7	8.8	9	8.6	8.2	8.6	- 0.2
St Edmundsbury	7.7	8.2	10.6	9.6	9.5	8.8	9	8	- 1.6
Average for sub-region	8.5	8.9	9.8	9.0	8.5	8.4	10.2	9.5	+ 0.5
East of England	8.2	9.3	10.2	9.3	9.3	9.7	10.6	10.1	+ 0.8
England	9.6	10.7	11.3	11.2	10.9	11.1	11.8	11.1	- 0.1

Comparing sales price to asking price

Sales compared to asking price. It is important to remember when considering these changes that they might partly be due to sellers setting more realistic asking prices, so they encourage offers closer to the lower asking price. Sometimes these negotiations occur late in a transaction and may not be clearly reflected on this page.

Data on this page comes from Hometrack's monthly market survey (see page 2).

Map 9 shows the percentage of asking prices actually achieved, when a sale completes. This gives a measure of the health of the housing market, assuming that in a well balanced housing market, a higher proportion of the asking price is achieved.

Graph 26 shows the same percentage comparison for each district, between April 2010 and March 2012. Graph 27 shows the trend for England and the East of England.

Table 16 shows the average percentage achieved at three monthly intervals, to help compare district, regional and England averages.

Comment

In March 2012 the highest proportion of asking prices achieved were seen in East Cambridgeshire at 96.9%, followed by Cambridge at 96.6%. The district showing the lowest levels being achieved was Huntingdonshire at 93.9%.

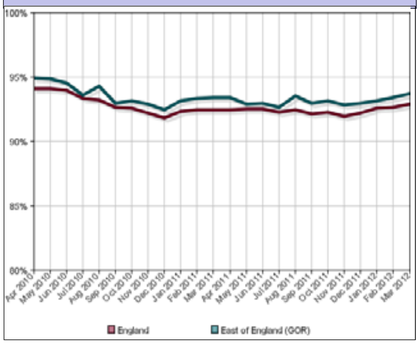
The only slight decrease when comparing March 2011 to March 2012 was seen in South Cambridgeshire at –0.1%. The biggest increases were seen in East Cambridgeshire (+1.9%) and Fenland (+1.5%).

The level of change over these 12 months varied across the sub-region, with an average increase across the seven districts of 1%.

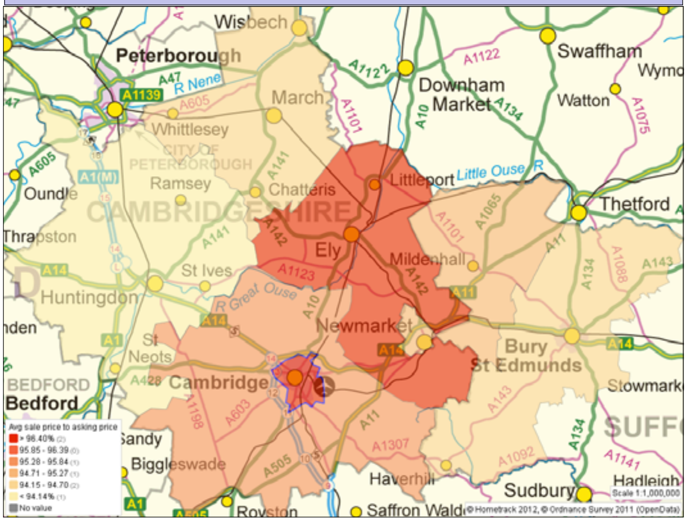
The East of England saw a smaller increase of 0.3% while the % asking price being achieved rose by 0.4% on average across England.

Source: Hometrack's monthly survey of estate agents, March 2012.

Graph 27: **Change in % asking price achieved**, England and East of England



Map 9: **% of asking price achieved**, Cambridge housing sub-region (district)



Graph 26: **Change in % asking price achieved**, individual districts

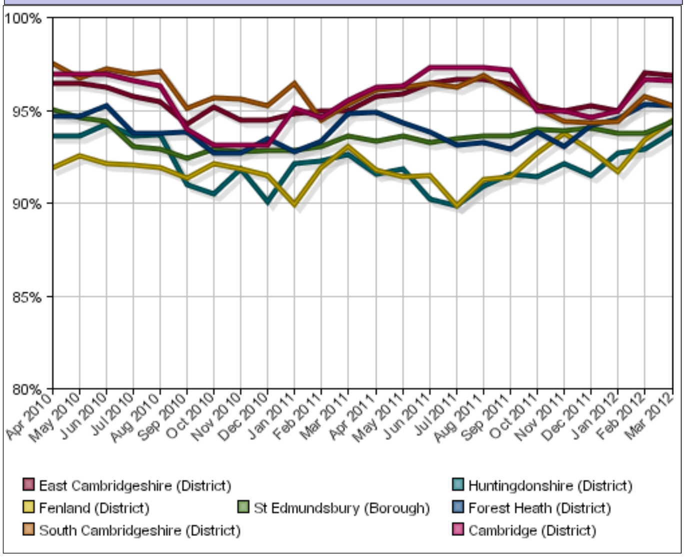


Table 16: **Percentage of asking price achieved at sale** (rounded to 1 decimal place)

	Jun-10	Sep-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jun-11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Change Mar 11 to Mar 12
Cambridge	97.0%	94.0%	93.1%	95.6%	97.3%	97.2%	94.7%	96.6%	+ 1.1%
East Cambridgeshire	96.3%	94.3%	94.5%	95.0%	96.5%	96.4%	95.3%	96.9%	+ 1.9%
Fenland	92.1%	91.4%	91.5%	93.1%	91.5%	91.5%	92.8%	94.5%	+ 1.5%
Huntingdonshire	94.3%	91.0%	90.1%	92.7%	90.2%	91.6%	91.6%	93.9%	+ 1.2%
South Cambridgeshire	97.3%	95.2%	95.3%	95.4%	96.5%	96.1%	94.4%	95.3%	- 0.1%
Forest Heath	95.3%	93.9%	93.5%	94.9%	93.8%	92.9%	94.2%	95.3%	+ 0.4%
St Edmundsbury	94.4%	92.4%	92.9%	93.7%	93.3%	93.6%	94.1%	94.4%	+ 0.8%
Average for sub-region	95.2%	93.2%	93.0%	94.3%	94.2%	94.2%	93.9%	95.3%	+ 1.0%
East of England	94.6%	93.0%	92.5%	93.5%	93.0%	93.0%	93.0%	93.8%	+ 0.3%
England	94.0%	92.7%	91.8%	92.5%	92.6%	92.2%	92.3%	92.9%	+ 0.4%

Number of viewings per sale

Data on this page comes from Hometrack's monthly market survey (see page 2). Map 10 shows the average number of viewings between a property in the district going onto the market and going "under offer", as at March 2012. This is a useful indicator of the health of the housing market, assuming that in a healthy market, less viewings are needed before a sale is achieved, and reflects the overall 'enthusiasm' of the market.

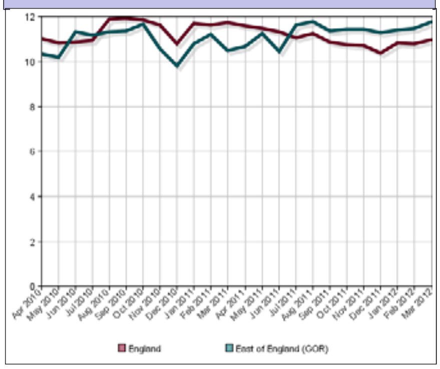
Graph 28 shows the number of viewings per sale for each of our seven districts, and changes between April 2010 and March 2012. Graph 29 shows the same for England and the East of England. Table 17 shows the average number of viewings per sale every 3 months between June 2010 and March 2012, along with the change from March 2011 and March 2012.

Comment

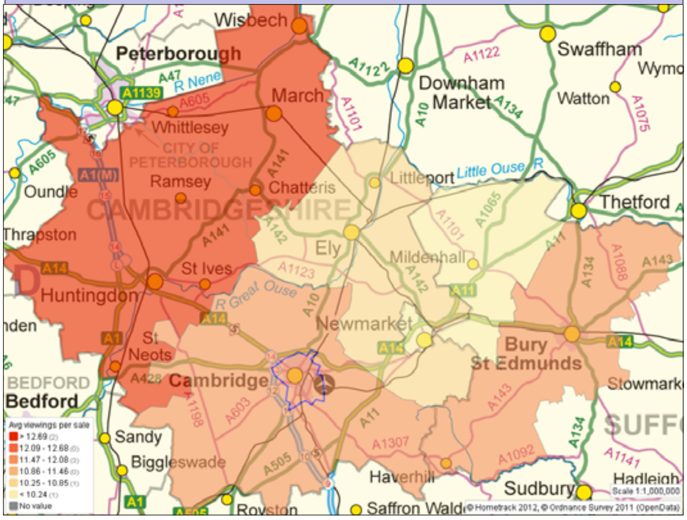
To March 2012, Huntingdonshire and Fenland saw equally high numbers of viewings per sale at 12.9 followed by Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and St Edmundsbury all at 11.5. Forest Heath saw the lowest number of views per sale at 9.5. Graph 28 shows that over time, the pattern is quite erratic though perhaps the variation is reduced in recent months. At March 2012 an average of 11.5 viewings were needed per sale (an increase on December's average of 10.8) across the housing sub-region. This is slightly lower than the East of England average (11.8) and slightly higher than England at 11. Comparing March 2011 and March 2012, the average number of views per sale increased by 0.8 for our sub-region while the region saw 1.3 more and England 0.8 less.

Source: Hometrack's monthly survey of estate agents, March 2012.

Graph 29: **Change in viewings per sale**, England and East of England



Map 10: **Average viewings per sale**, individual districts



Graph 28: **Change in viewings per sale**, individual districts

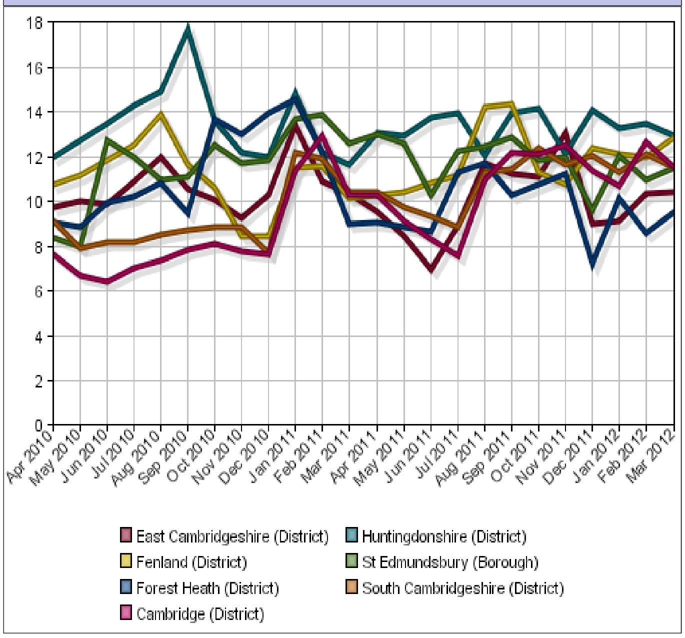


Table 17: **Average number of viewings per sale**

	Jun-10	Sep-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jun-11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Change Mar 11 to Mar 12
Cambridge	6.4	7.9	7.6	10.3	8.3	12.2	11.4	11.5	+ 1.2
East Cambridgeshire	9.9	10.6	10.3	10.4	7	11.2	9	10.4	0
Fenland	11.9	11.6	8.4	10.1	10.8	14.4	12.4	12.9	+ 2.8
Huntingdonshire	13.5	17.7	12	11.7	13.8	13.9	14.1	12.9	+ 1.2
South Cambridgeshire	8.2	8.8	7.7	10.4	9.3	11.5	12.1	11.5	+ 1.1
Forest Heath	9.9	9.5	13.9	9	8.6	10.3	7.2	9.5	+ 0.5
St Edmundsbury	12.7	11.1	11.9	12.6	10.3	12.9	9.6	11.5	- 1.1
Average for sub-region	10.4	11.0	10.3	10.6	9.7	12.3	10.8	11.5	+ 0.8
East of England	11.3	11.4	9.8	10.5	10.5	11.4	11.3	11.8	+ 1.3
England	10.9	11.9	10.8	11.8	11.4	10.9	10.4	11	- 0.8

Affordability ratios

This page is based on Hometrack's house price data (including sales and valuations) and CACI data on household incomes. The ratios show, on average, how many "times" someone's income the local house prices represent. One common rule of thumb is that house prices of 3 to 3.5 times income are considered affordable. On the maps, the higher the ratio, the darker the shading, and the less affordable the area. This page aims to help compare trends across the sub-region over time.

Map 11 shows relative affordability using the ratio of average (mean) house prices to average income. Map 12 shows affordability using the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile incomes. Both maps use data averaged from April 2011 to March 2012.

Table 18 shows the ratio of lower quartile incomes to lower quartile house prices, reflecting the lower end of the market. Table 19 shows the average ratios for the seven districts in the sub-region between June 2009 and March 2012, and the average for the dates shown. These averages are all calculated using data for the previous 12 months, so for example the February 2010 column relies on data gathered between March 2009 and February 2010.

Comment

Generally homes are less affordable in the south of our housing sub-region, as shown on both maps. Although the average affordability multiplier for the housing sub-region was 6.1 at March 2012, this masks a wide variety of affordability ratios for each district: from 9.3 in Cambridge down to 4.7 in Fenland.

Table 18 shows that lower quartile house prices (which is used as an indicator of entry-level prices) take a significantly higher proportion of lower quartile incomes to afford.

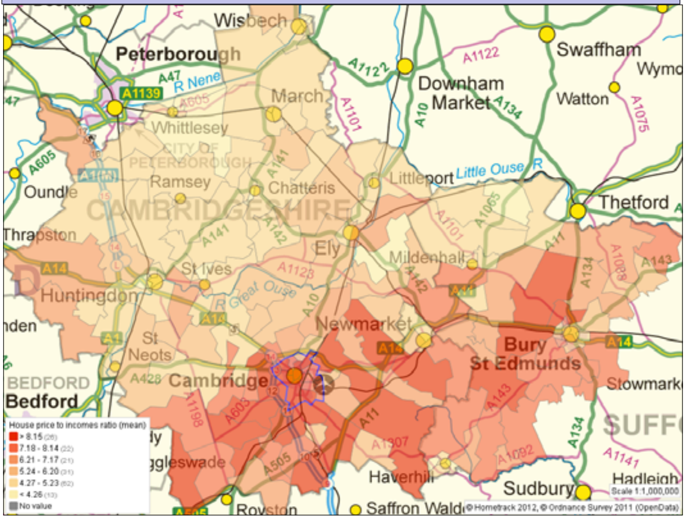
So in Cambridge, a lower quartile home would cost on average 12.3 times a lower quartile income, a rise of 0.2 since December 2011 and a huge proportion of income.

Relatively, the most affordable entry-level ratios are found in Fenland and Huntingdonshire, at 6.3 times income.

Comparing Table 18 and Table 19, lower quartile ratios have worsened more over the past 12 months than average ratios.

Source: House prices from Hometrack automated valuation model, incomes from CACI paycheck. Latest data March 2012.

Map 11: **Mean house price to income ratio**, shown by ward



Map 12: **Lower quartile house price to income ratio**, shown by ward

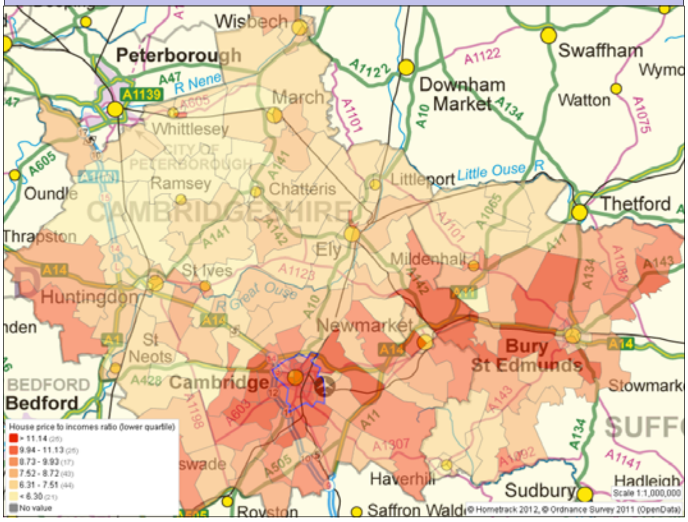


Table 18: **Lower quartile price : income** (rounded)

	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jul-11	Sept-11	Dec-11	Mar-12
Cambridge City	9.6	9.6	12.0	11.9	12.1	12.3
East Cambridgeshire	6.7	6.6	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.6
Fenland	5.7	5.7	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.3
Huntingdonshire	6.0	6.0	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.3
South Cambridgeshire	7.5	7.5	8.4	8.4	8.7	8.7
Forest Heath	6.1	6.1	7.1	7.1	7.0	7.1
St Edmundsbury	6.7	6.8	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.2

Table 19: **Average house price : income** (rounded)

	Jun-09	Sept-09	Feb-10	Mar-10	Jun-10	Sept-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jul-11	Sept-11	Dec-11	Mar-12
Cambridge	7.9	8.1	8.7	8.7	8.8	8.9	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.1	9.2	9.3
East Cambridgeshire	5.7	5.5	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.1	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.7
Fenland	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7
Huntingdonshire	5.2	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.0
South Cambridgeshire	6.6	6.5	6.9	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.2	6.8	6.8	7.0	6.9
Forest Heath	5.3	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2
St Edmundsbury	5.8	5.8	6.0	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.4	6.5	6.2	6.3	6.3	6.2
Average for sub-region	5.9	5.8	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.4	6.4	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.1

Affordability: comparing tenures

Table 20 compares the weekly cost of property by size across different tenures, and has been included in the Bulletin as readers suggested this data was a useful.

Maps 13, 14 and 15 show median private rents for each district, for 1, 2 and 3 beds, at ward level. Grey shading denotes not enough data to be reliable at ward level. The values are provided in Table 20, labelled "median private rent" at whole-district level.

Most of the data in Table 20 is gathered over a 12 month period. In this update the period covers April 2011 to March 2012. The exceptions are local authority and housing association rents, as noted under "sources" below. Values are not always available, depending on the number homes being sold or rented within each tenure and district. For example there is no data on valuations or sales of new build 1 bedroom homes for sale in East Cambridgeshire in March 2012 available from Hometrack for this table.

Comment

To aid comparison using Table 20, for each bedroom size the tenure with the highest weekly cost is highlighted in lilac and the lowest in minty green. This highlights some interesting comparisons:

- Forest Heath sees unusually high median private rents, attributable to the effect of the USAF on the rented market locally.
- New build homes are usually more expensive than resales.
- Housing association and local authority rents often provide the lowest weekly cost, where they are available.
- In East Cambridgeshire and Fenland, a 40% share through HomeBuy could be the cheapest housing option for 1 and 2 beds.

We hope this page helps provide some context for our "Affordable Rent" programme locally.

Source: Latest data released March 2012. Source as follows: **Local authority rent** TSA CORE, April 2010 to March 2011. **Housing Association rent**: RSR data from HCA, Jan 2011 to Dec 2011. **Intermediate Rent**: 80% of the median rent. **Private rent**; Weekly cost of median rent for advertised properties in the local area. **Buying**: Hometrack. **HomeBuy**: The weekly cost of buying a 40% share through HomeBuy derived from median house prices from Hometrack. Excludes ground rent/service charge. **New build from** Hometrack where the property was sold or valued in the same year it was built.

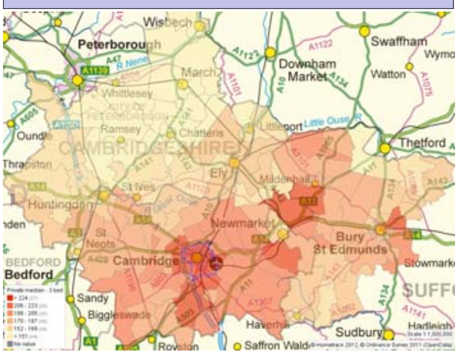
Table 20: Comparing weekly cost by tenure, district and size (rounded)

	Local Authority rent	Housing Association rent	Intermediate rent @ 80% median rent	Median private rent	Buying a lower quartile resale	Buying an average resale	Buying 40% share through HomeBuy	Buying a lower quartile new build	Buying an average new build
Cambridge									
1 bed	60	77	138	173	150	181	125	182	216
2 bed	73	88	175	219	185	232	162	209	332
3 bed	87	99	202	253	254	301	205	276	276
East Cambridgeshire									
1 bed	-	75	92	115	81	93	64	-	-
2 bed	-	90	110	138	104	122	88	139	144
3 bed	-	100	138	173	169	199	138	182	202
Fenland									
1 bed	-	65	75	94	53	77	53	-	-
2 bed	-	72	97	121	70	77	53	-	-
3 bed	-	78	115	144	133	149	104	166	179
Huntingdonshire									
1 bed	-	66	86	107	79	98	70	107	116
2 bed	-	77	110	137	112	136	95	133	155
3 bed	-	85	129	161	157	185	129	204	221
South Cambridgeshire									
1 bed	66	74	117	146	121	146	101	-	-
2 bed	76	89	138	173	147	163	114	198	199
3 bed	82	99	165	206	216	249	171	217	257
Forest Heath									
1 bed	-	63	88	110	93	94	65	100	100
2 bed	-	73	110	138	88	116	80	116	133
3 bed	-	82	158	198	150	177	124	181	196
St Edmundsbury									
1 bed	-	63	97	121	88	113	79	160	160
2 bed	-	74	115	144	117	126	87	182	182
3 bed	-	81	146	183	162	193	133	211	243

Map 13: **One bed** median private rents

Map 14: **Two bed** median private rents

Map 15: **Three bed** median private rents



Contact us:

Sue Beecroft

Housing Co-ordinator

c/o Cambridge City Council

Tel

07715 200 730

E-mail

sue.beecroft@cambridge.gov.uk

About Hometrack

Hometrack is a privately owned, independent property analytics business. The company is widely regarded not just for its products and services, but also for its in-house expertise and the breadth and depth of its proprietary data.

Hometrack has a unique view of the housing market with a client base which spans the entire property market. Its intelligence systems and analytics reports are used by 90% of UK mortgage lenders, the top house builders, over a third of local authorities and government agencies, by some of the country's largest housing associations and institutional investors.

Hometrack's Housing Intelligence System (HIS) is an online market intelligence system designed to inform decision making and strategy. It gives instant access to a wide range of data and analysis at both a regional and local area level. In short it provides clients with the most comprehensive evidence base available giving them a clear picture of supply, demand, pricing and affordability across all tenures.

Hometrack's HIS is constantly updated.

Hometrack's in-house market experts are widely regarded and are frequently quoted in the leading printed and broadcast press. Hometrack regularly publish insight papers and speak at key industry events. To read the latest commentary and analysis visit http://www.hometrack.co.uk/our-insight/commentary-and-analysis or to meet us at one of our events log on to http://www.hometrack.co.uk/our-insight/upcoming-events

For more information please contact:
Selina Clark
Hometrack Data Systems Ltd
Tel: 0845 013 2395
E-mail: sclark@hometrack.co.uk

About Edition 13

This is the thirteenth edition of the Cambridge sub-region's housing market bulletin.

The Bulletin aims to show market changes, particularly for our sub-region and how it compares to the rest of the East of England, and to England as a whole.

The Bulletin acts as a supplement to our Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which is available at: www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/shma

How to find old and new Bulletins

From 1 October 2011 Bulletins have been available on Cambridge City Council's website, accessible at www.cambridge.gov.uk/crhb

In the left side menu you can click on

- CRHB meetings and minutes, or
- CRHB publications and documents

If you click on "publications and documents" a list of all the Housing Market Bulletins will appear towards the bottom of the page, including this one.

The other option (CRHB meetings and minutes) takes you to Sub-Regional Housing Board meeting papers, terms of reference and minutes.

Please do get in touch if you have any queries on this.

Don't forget...

As always, we'd love to hear your views on the Bulletin. If you have any suggestions to make, please get in touch using Sue's contact details on the left.

Plan for future Bulletins

Data relates to...	Hometrack release...	Bulletin edition & planned publication...
End June 2012	August 2012	Edition 14 September 2012
End September 2012	November 2012	Edition 15 December 2012
End December 2012	February 2013	Edition 16 March 2013
End March 2013	May 2013	Edition 17 July 2013
End June 2013	August 2013	Edition 18 September 2013

hometrack

Cambridge sub-regional housing board