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Information



### July's Market Overview

June brought no shortage of headlines: a heat dome, a Prime Minister resigning, and even the small matter of a World Cup; but whilst sales markets can fluctuate with the whims of the public mood, the lettings market tends to continue on relentlessly - and this is what we have seen. People always need somewhere to live, and June was no exception.

Overall, the market has stabilised well following the implementation of Phase One of the Renters' Rights Act on 1 May. Landlords and tenants alike appear to be settling into the new normal.

But there has been further change this month, and you'd be forgiven if you missed it. It landed the day after Keir Starmer resigned on the steps of Number 10. Let's take a look at the lettings landscape in detail.



**Chris Whitaker**  
Managing Director

#### 3. Harm categories now described in plain-English

The old harm classes (I-IV) are now described as extreme, severe, serious, and moderate, making it easier for council officers to explain concerns and for tenants to understand them.

#### 4. Baseline indicators

Perhaps the most practical change: published "baseline indicators" now help determine whether a property contains a hazard. If a baseline isn't met, a hazard exists, and it's then down to the assessor to determine severity and whether the council must act.

#### 5. New financial penalties

From 23 June 2026, local authorities can issue civil penalties of up to £7,000 for landlords who fail to take reasonably practicable steps to address a Category 1 hazard - on top of existing powers like improvement notices and prohibition orders. The government estimates that around 10% of private rented homes have at least one Category 1 hazard, so exposure is wider than many landlords assume.

There's a bigger picture for landlords to consider. These changes lay the groundwork for the forthcoming Decent Homes Standard, expected for the private rented sector by 2035, and for extending Awaab's Law to the private rented sector much sooner, which will introduce binding deadlines for repairs.

Here at Martin & Co in Plymouth, we are ahead of this change and already adapting our approach to inspections. If you want to talk through how this affects your property or portfolio, please get in touch with the team here - we would be very happy to talk things through in more detail.

### What is HHSRS, and how has it changed? What Plymouth landlords need to know

On Tuesday, 23rd June, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) changed for the first time in twenty years.

In many ways, HHSRS has been simplified. The government's aim wasn't to raise the bar for landlords, but to make the system clearer and more consistent. In practice, however, though it might be simpler on the surface, if landlords and their managing agents aren't mindful, it could feel a lot sharper underneath; the changes carry a sharper bite than before. Here's what landlords need to know:

#### 1. Fewer hazard categories (but not less to worry about)

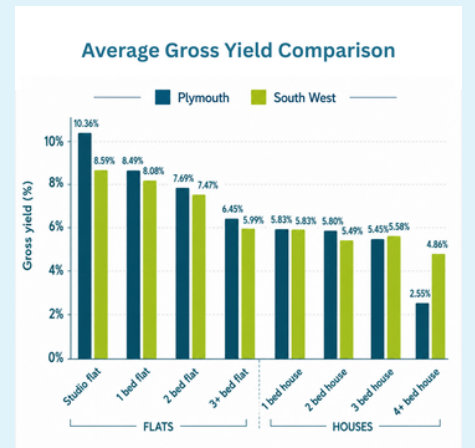
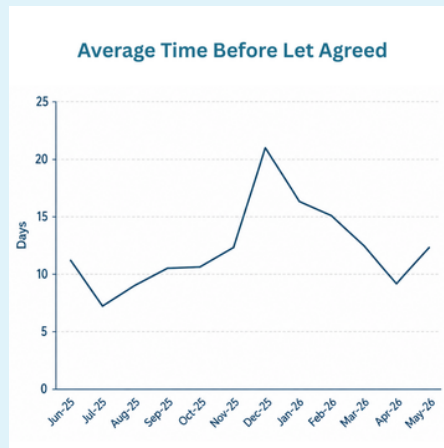
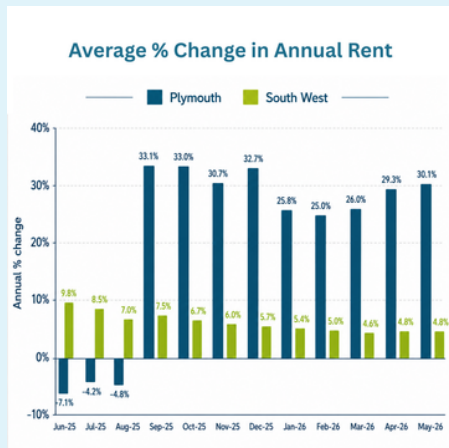
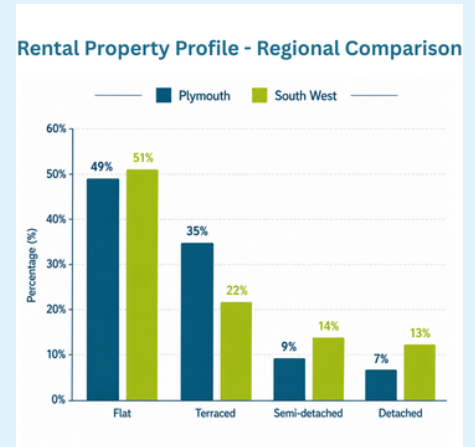
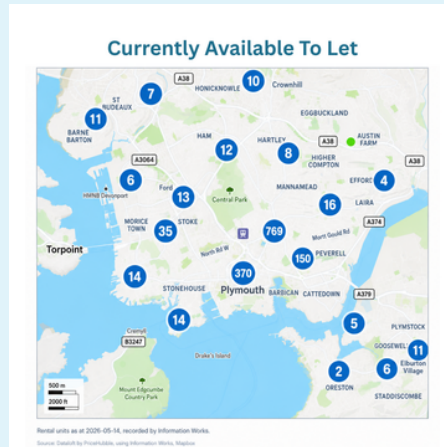
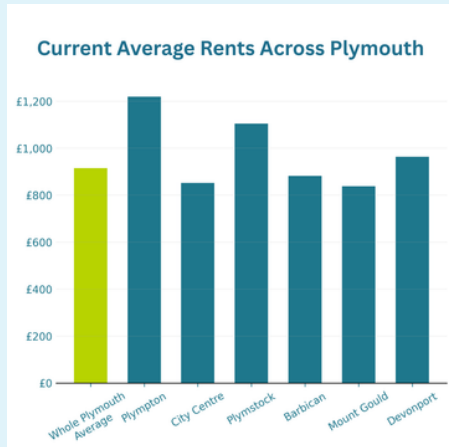
The number of hazards has dropped from 29 to 21, consolidated under four broad headings. Simplification on paper, but councils are assessing the same underlying risks.

#### 2. A simpler scoring system

The old ten-band scoring system (A-J) has been replaced with three tiers: Low, Medium, and High. High is the equivalent of the old Category 1 hazard, earned on a score of 1000+, just as it was previously; Medium covers 100-999; Low is anything below. The threshold for serious enforcement action hasn't changed.

### Plymouth Rental Market News

July 2026



#### Local Factsoids

- 1.2%** Public green spaces
- 19.9%** Homes near Ofsted Outstanding primary
- 87.7%** Homes within 200 metres of bus or train
- 2,766** Number of residents per restaurant

Source: This report has been made by The Property Pen for Martin&Co Plymouth. The data in this report comes from HM Land Registry, Office for National Statistics and DataLof by Pricehubble. This property market report is for informational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for conducting your own research when making a property purchase decision. Please consult with a qualified professional to ensure all factors are considered in your investment choices.



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