



# The Housing Crisis in Waterford

February 2026

**42%**

OF PEOPLE ON SOCIAL HOUSING WAITING LIST LIVE WITH PARENTS OR FRIENDS

FROM  
**JAN-SEP 2025**  
ONLY  
**50**

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSES BUILT IN WATERFORD



IN 2024

**OVER 1,419**

HOUSEHOLDS ON WATERFORD SOCIAL HOUSING WAITING LIST

AVERAGE RENT IN WATERFORD CITY IS CURRENTLY  
**€1,235**  
PER MONTH

CITY RENTS HAVE INCREASED BY

**55%**

IN THE LAST SIX YEARS

AVERAGE RENT IN WATERFORD COUNTY IS JUST UNDER  
**€1,200**  
PER MONTH

COUNTY RENTS HAVE INCREASED BY

**53%**

IN THE LAST SIX YEARS

**BUDGET 2026**

INTRODUCED OVER

**€500,000,000**

IN TAX BREAKS TO DEVELOPERS



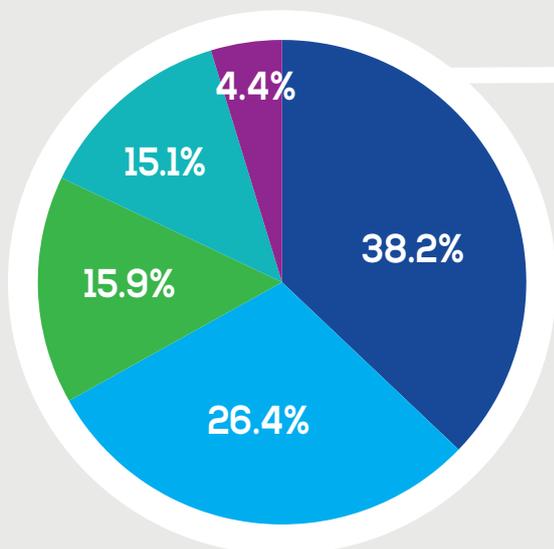
# Tenure

**16%** IN WATERFORD OF HOUSEHOLDS RENT FROM A PRIVATE LANDLORD

WHILE **15%** RENT FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY/VOLUNTARY BODY.

THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE TENANTS RISES TO **22%** IN WATERFORD CITY

WITH ANOTHER **21%** RENTING FROM THE LOCAL AUTHORITY/VOLUNTARY BODY – FOR A TOTAL OF **43%** RENTING WHILE **52%** OWN THEIR HOME.

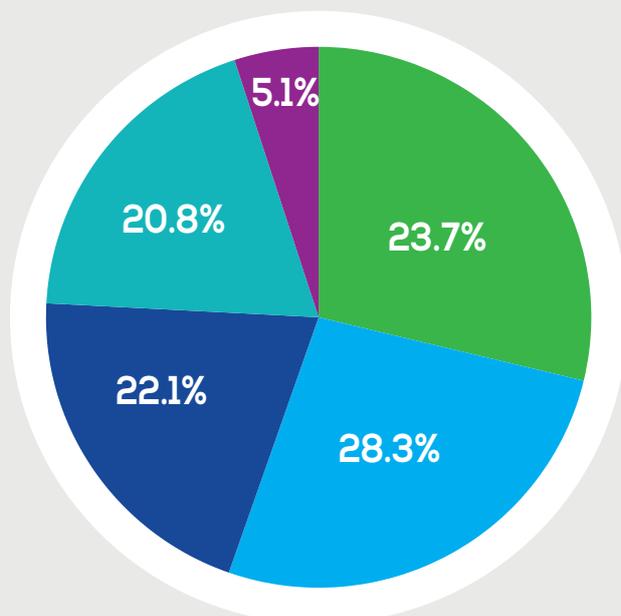


## Waterford County: Type of Tenure 2022 (%)

- Owned with Mortgage
- Owned Outright
- Private Rent
- Local Authority/Voluntary Body
- Other

## Waterford City and Suburbs: Type of Tenure 2022 (%)

- Owned with Mortgage
- Owned Outright
- Private Rent
- Local Authority/Voluntary Body
- Other

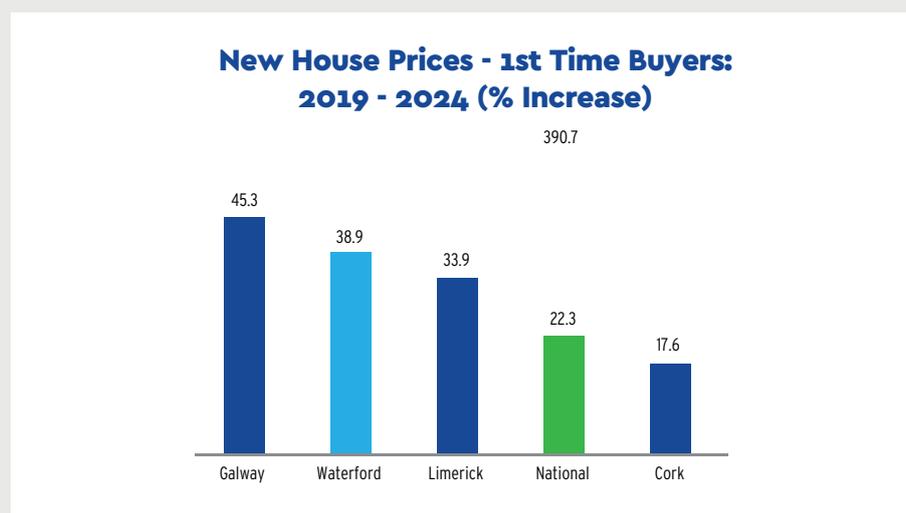
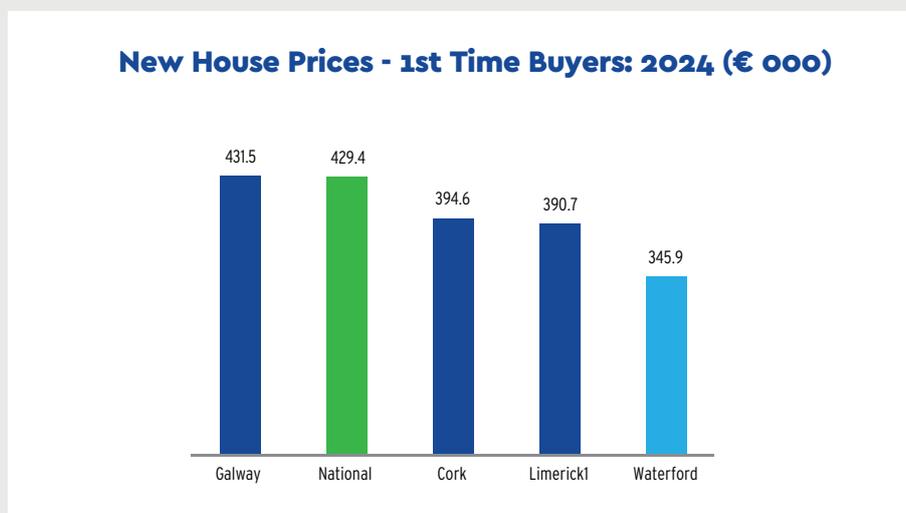


Data Source: CSO 2022 Census

**AVERAGE WATERFORD NEW HOUSE PRICES FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS WAS THE LOWEST AMONG THE LARGE CITIES OUTSIDE DUBLIN AND BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.**

**HOWEVER, IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS WATERFORD HOUSE PRICES HAVE RISEN FASTER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AND FASTER THAN LIMERICK AND CORK.**

*The following data is taken from the CSO's Residential Dwelling Property Transactions.*



**NEW HOUSE PRICES IN WATERFORD** are nearly 7 times the average annual wage – thus locking out most workers from home ownership.

# Rents

THE AVERAGE RENT IN WATERFORD COUNTY IS JUST UNDER

**€1,200** PER MONTH.

THE AVERAGE COUNTY-WIDE RENT HAS INCREASED BY A MASSIVE **53%** OVER THE LAST SIX YEARS – SINCE JUST BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

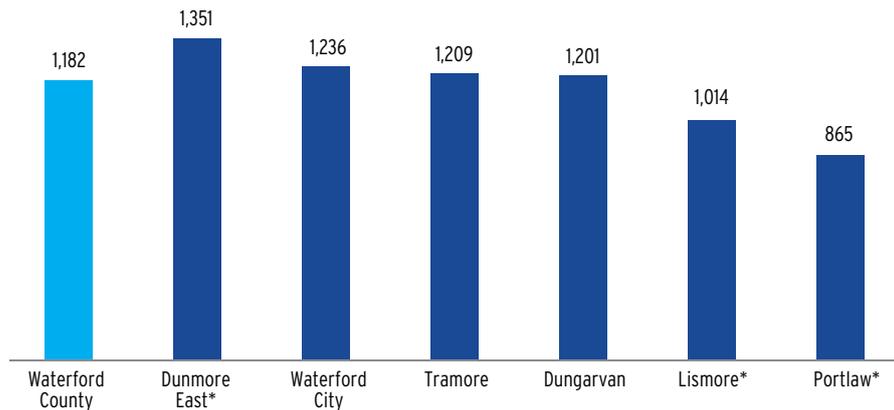
IN WATERFORD CITY, THE AVERAGE RENT IS

**€1,235** PER MONTH.

CITY RENTS HAVE INCREASED BY **55%** OVER THE LAST SIX YEARS.

**In just the last year, county-wide rents have increased by 9% while rents in the city climbed sharply by 11%. Hourly wages, on the other hand, grew by only 3.5%.**

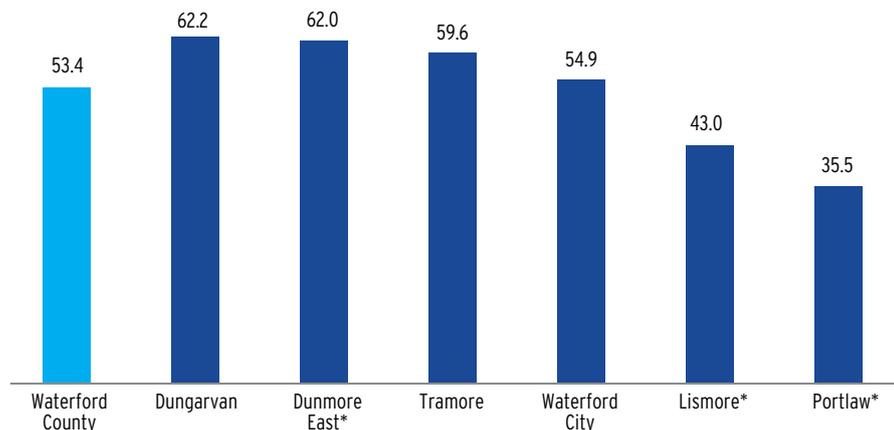
## Average monthly rents for Waterford and main cities/towns in 2025 (2nd Quarter): €



\* Data for Dunmore East, Lismore and Portlaw only goes up to the 4th quarter of 2023.

Rents in all cities exceed €1,000 per month with the exception of Portlaw.

## Increase in average monthly rents 2019 - 2025 (%):



\* Data for Dunmore East, Lismore and Portlaw only goes up to the 4th quarter of 2023.

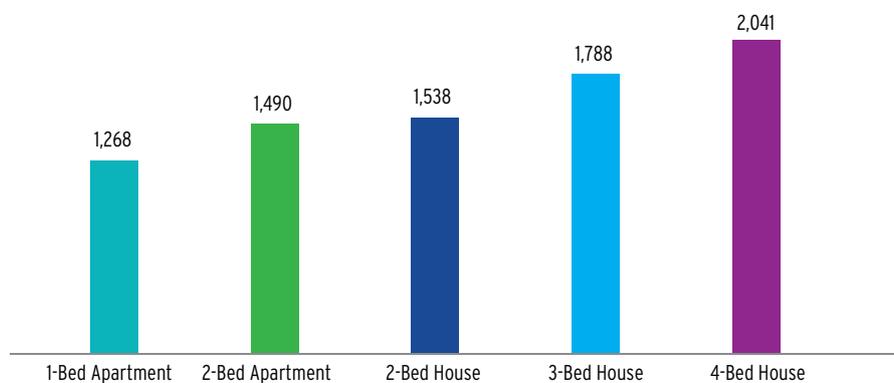
# Overall Waterford rents increased by **53%**

Dunmore East and Tramore saw the highest increase - at over 60%.

**These growth rates in rents are more than double the increase in wages in that same period since 2019.**

These are just the average rent prices for all accommodation regardless of type (e.g. apartment, semi-detached, etc.). Daft.ie tracks the rents of new accommodation in Waterford City coming on to the market.

## Waterford City Monthly Rents for New Accommodation: 2025 (€)



## Rents for a one-bedroom apartment grew by **17%**

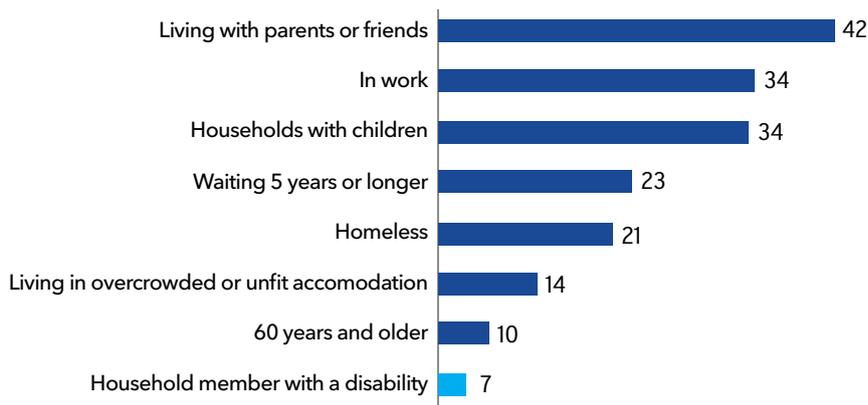
**17%**

the highest in any major urban area (Dublin, Cork, Limerick or Galway)

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 42% of those on the Social Housing Waiting List live with parents or friends
- 34% are in employment
- 34% have children
- Nearly 25% have been waiting for 5 years or longer

### Main Needs for Social Housing Support: 2024 (% of Total)



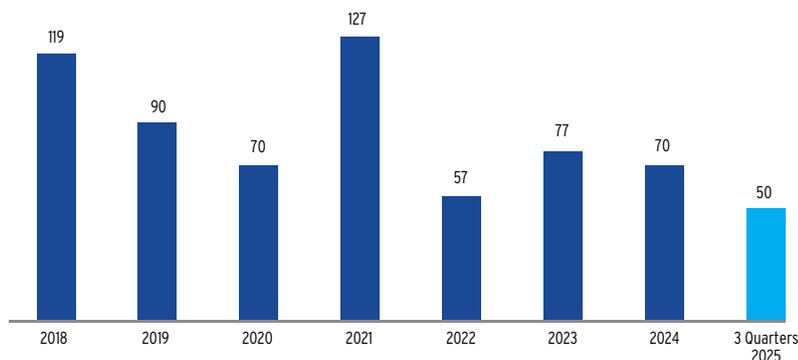
In 2018, there were 1,117 households on the Waterford Social Housing Waiting List. This has increased to 1,419 in 2024 – an increase of 27%.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

*Those formerly on the waiting list and taking up accommodation in the private sector on Housing Assistance Payment are deemed not to have a housing need – even through the private accommodation may not be suitable or may be a short-term lease. Therefore, the waiting list numbers may not reflect the true level of housing need in Waterford.*

It is debateable to what extent the local authority house building programme in Waterford is sufficient to meet the needs of those on the waiting list, never mind the population that is in housing need.

### Waterford City and County Local Authority number of new builds: 2018 - 2025

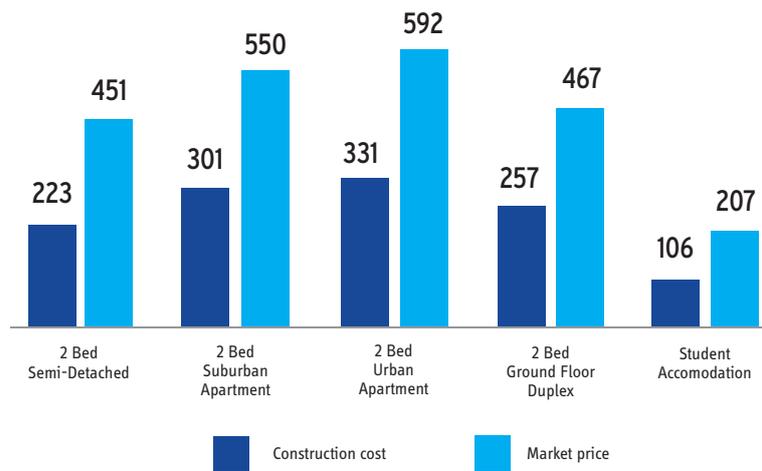


**The average annual number of houses built by the Waterford local authority was 87 between 2018 and 2024. In the first three quarters of 2025, only 50 houses were built.**

Of particular concern is that the availability of accommodation in the private sector is shrinking. Housing Assistance Payment provides support for tenants in the private sector who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford the rents. However, the Simon Community has found that there is no accommodation in Waterford City centre that is eligible for Housing Assistance Payments. Households are caught in the trap of low-levels of social housing build and reduced number of private sector accommodation that they can afford.

It doesn't get much attention but data from the Government itself shows that the cost of constructing a house is **half of the market price**.

**Department of Housing – Construction Costs and Market Prices in Dublin 2024 (€000)**



We can build and sell houses on public land for half the market price. This holds true for house purchasing and housing for rents. Yet, instead of working from this foundation, the Government has doubled down on subsidising developers. **Budget 2026 introduced over half a billion euros in tax breaks to developers.** This is despite the fact that two of the largest developers in the State generated over €200 million in profits in 2024, an increase of 60% over the previous year.

**SIPTU believes that an alternative strategy based on an affordability model, rather than a developer-led model holds the key to overcoming the housing crisis.**

- The overriding principle is that affordable homes should track construction costs, not market prices – whether for purchase or rent.
- Affordable housing is a public good – a good which can only be vindicated through substantial and sustained public interventions. High house prices and high rents are not inevitable.

**Ultimately, it is a political choice.**

**In November 2025 there were 112 homeless adults. This is a marginal increase on the year before but a significant increase of 30% – over the period just prior to Covid-19.**

