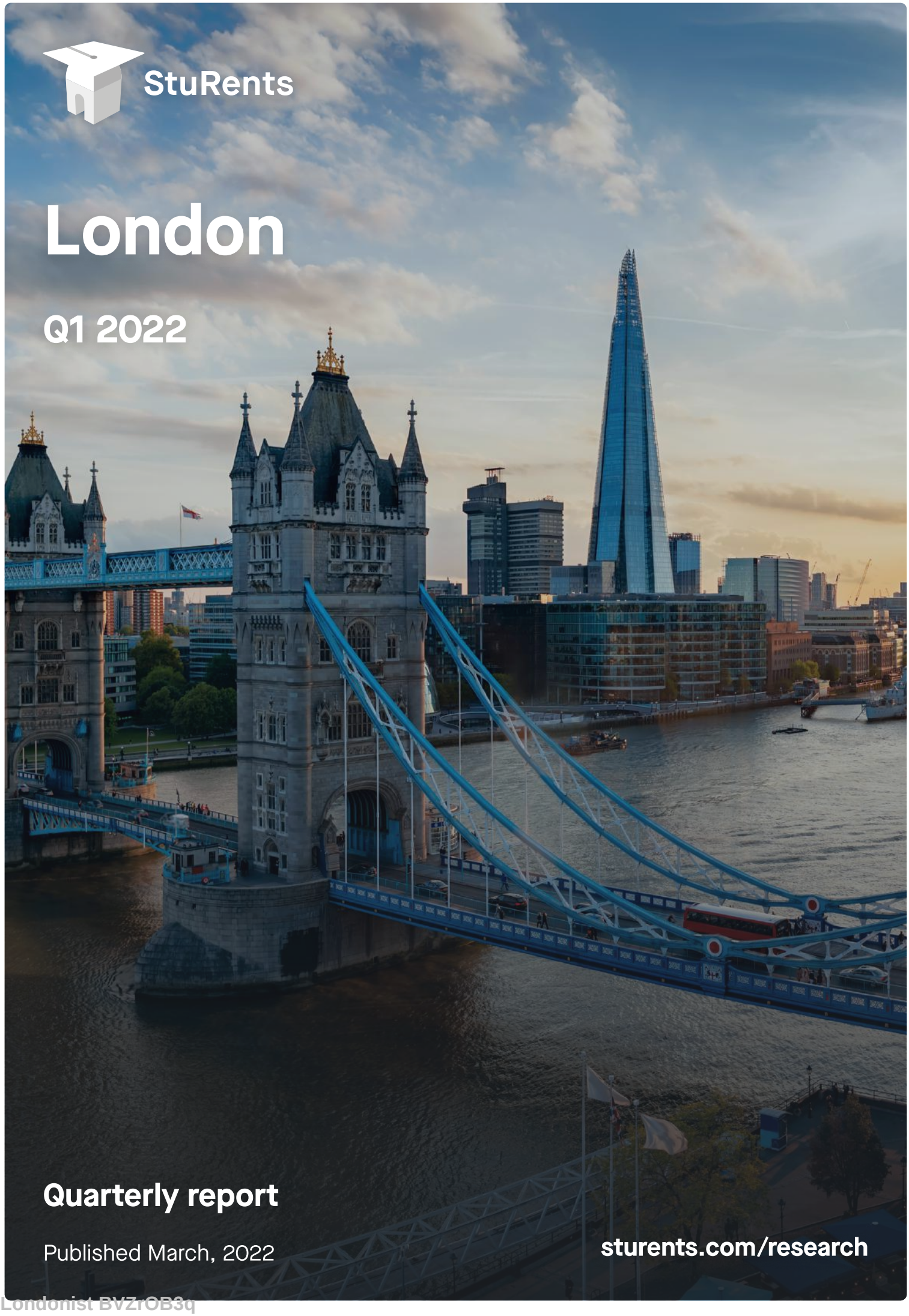


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London | Q1-2022 Quarterly Update

Market Overview | In 2021 acceptances on a like-for-like basis fell by 3.6% to 81,450. However, those from UK students continued to increase, growing by 3.5%.

Market Demand | During Q1-2021 (Oct-Dec), 1-bed flats and studios were the most popular option, equating to 38.3% of demand on the platform. In comparison, clusters and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) consisting of at least 3 beds, captured 42.7% of searches performed. Over the last 12 months, 1-bed flats and studios achieved a search share of 39.6%, making it the preferred choice.

Market Supply | The supply of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) in London could increase by 1.7% in 2022, with more than 1,400 beds due to be delivered. In 2023 an additional 2,443 units could hit the market, leading to year-on-year growth of 2.7%. PBSA could then expand by a further 5.4% in 2024, whilst more than 5,500 beds could be delivered in 2025 and onwards.

Supply Pipeline | In Q1-2022 (Oct-Dec) four new developments were put forward, including a substantial 713-bed scheme in Talgarth Road. The total supply pipeline in London's inner boroughs now stands at 14,844 beds, with more than 7,300 units still awaiting approval.

Market News | Latest Updates

Work Underway for Huge PBSA Scheme in London Bridge

Greystar Real Estate Partners, an international real estate developer, alongside one of Canada's largest pension investment managers, PSP Investments, have announced works are now underway on a new PBSA scheme near London Bridge Station. The scheme, named Chapter London Bridge, is scheduled for opening in the 2025 academic year. (Published 2nd Feb 2022)

£388m Deal for Liverpool-Based Developer Downing

Confirmation was made today by Liverpool-based developer and property manager, Downing Corporate, that a deal has been agreed with Greystar Real Estate. Greystar will purchase five of Downing's properties from across their student and build to rent portfolio for £388m. The purchased properties include four student accommodations which together comprise a total of 1,807 beds: River Street Tower in Manchester; Holbrook and Pound Field in London; and City Point in Coventry. (Published 26th Jan 2022)

LSE Student Accommodation gets £129m Injection

Pension Insurance Corporation plc, a specialist UK insurer of defined benefit pension funds, has invested £129 million with the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) to fund the development of a 676-bed student residence in Southwark, London. (Published 18th Jan 2022)

StuRents Limited
30 Stamford Street
London | SE1 9LQ
Research@StuRents.com
0330 500 1136

About StuRents

StuRents Limited is a leading services provider for the UK student accommodation sector, operating the UK's largest marketing platform for student accommodation search, StuRents.com. The platform lists in excess of 750,000 rooms in over 100 towns and cities with a higher education presence throughout the UK. For tenants, StuRents provides an online shop window to efficiently find and contract student properties. For property managers, StuRents provides an end to end tenancy-management engine to facilitate a range of operational needs, such as online contract signing and rent collection, to referencing and deposit protection. StuRents' focus on leading by technology has resulted in the platform becoming one of the market's key data providers, serving insight on supply and demand dynamics to behavioural analysis within the seasonal student house-finding process.

Report Coverage

StuRents estimates that 40-50% of private sector accommodation in London is listed on StuRents.com. Q1-2022 relates to the period between Oct-Dec 2021 and coincides with the yearly academic cycle ending in Sept.

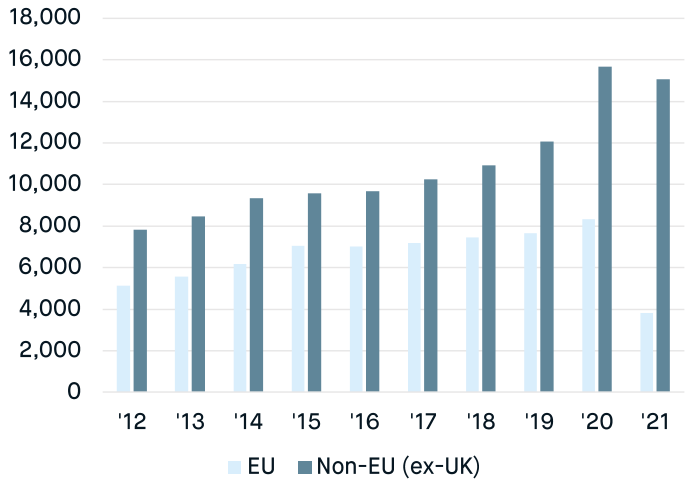
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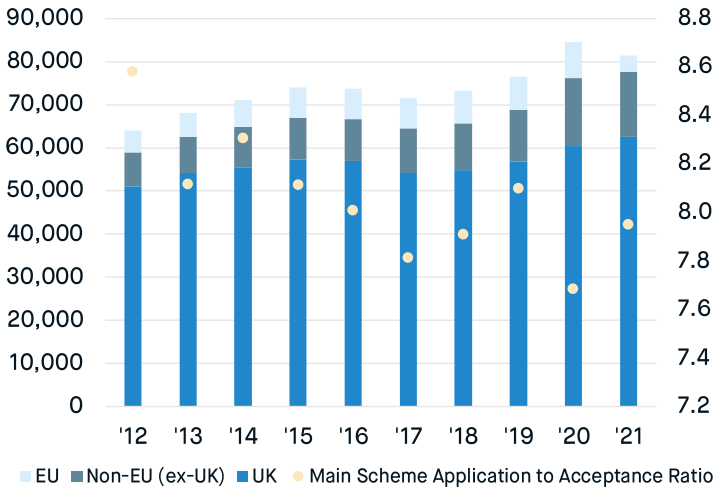
London | Market Overview

Figure 1 | Aggregated Acceptances by Domicile



Source: UCAS (www.ucas.com)

Figure 2 | Acceptances (LHS) & Application Ratio (RHS)



Source: UCAS (www.ucas.com)

"Acceptances from non-EU students fell by 3.8% in 2021."

Domicile Share | Acceptances from EU (excluding UK) students declined by 54.3% (-4,530) in 2021 to 3,810. Between 2012-2021 acceptances from this group fell by 25.8%, representing 1,325 fewer students.

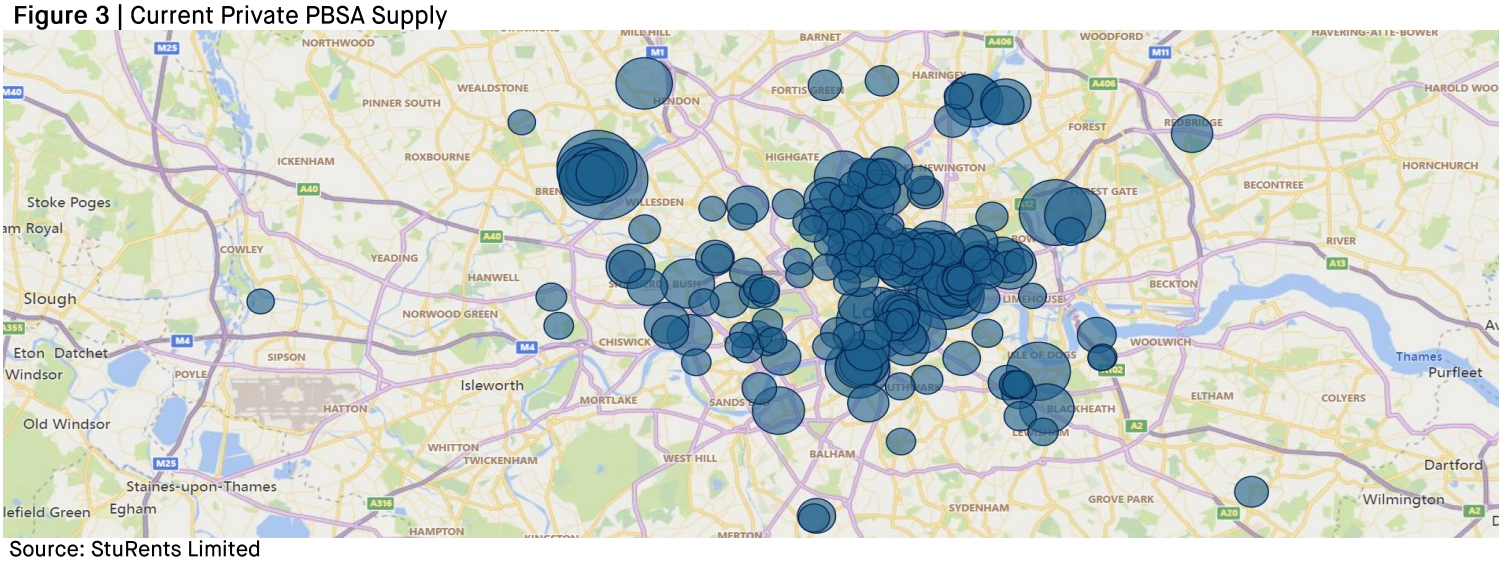
Acceptances from non-EU students shrunk by 3.8% (-590) in 2021 to 15,075. This represents the first year-on-year fall since 2016. However, despite the decline, there were still 92.9% more acceptances in 2021 compared to 2012, representing an additional 7,260 students. Whilst EU numbers have been impacted by Brexit, time will tell as to whether non-EU numbers will recover as we emerge from the worst effects of the pandemic.

"Acceptances from UK domiciled students continued to grow in 2021 ."

Acceptance Share | In 2021, total acceptances on a like-for-like basis declined by 3.6% to 81,450. This follows on from growth of 10.4% reported in the previous year. Positively, acceptances from UK students rose by 3.5% (+2,100), highlighting the continued attractiveness of London as a study destination. Between 2012-2021 acceptances from UK students increased by 12.5% (+11,480). Meanwhile, over the same period, total acceptances grew by 27.2%.

The main scheme application to main scheme acceptance ratio increased to 7.95 in 2021, up from 7.68 recorded in the previous year.

Figure 3 | Current Private PBSA Supply



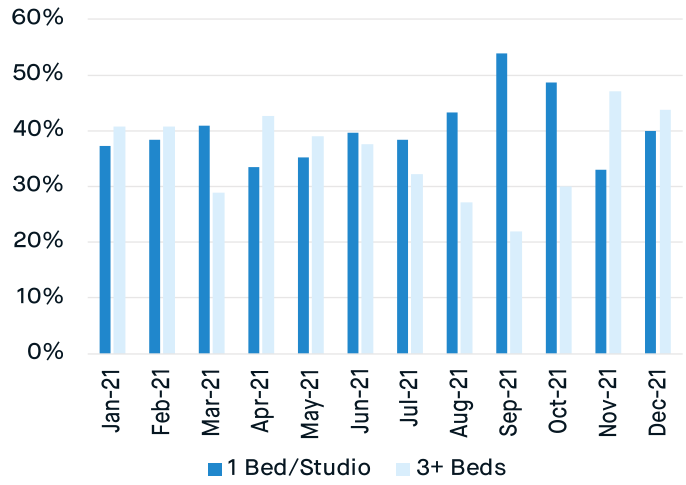
Source: StuRents Limited

Private PBSA | By mapping operational private PBSA, market participants can better understand the density and locations of existing schemes. This information can be combined with data highlighted in Figure 10 to understand how this could change.

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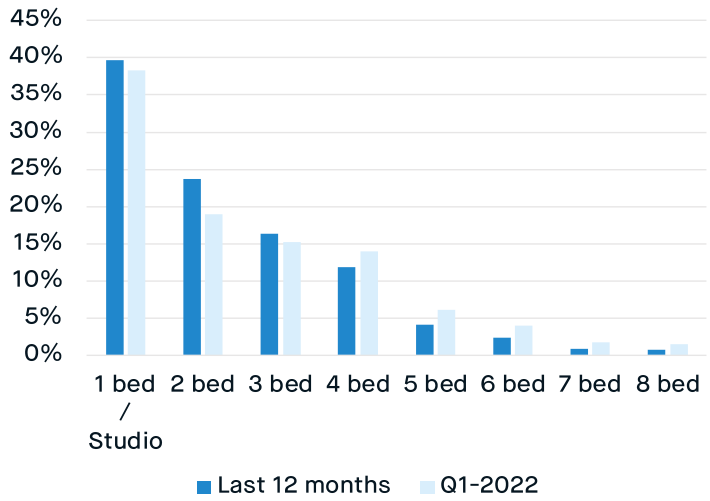
London | Market Demand

Figure 4 | Seasonality: Search Share by Size



Source: StuRents Limited

Figure 5 | Search Share by Size



Source: StuRents Limited

"In contrast to the national trend, demand for 1-bed flats and studios remained strong in the last quarter."

Bed Seasonality | In contrast to the national trend, demand for 1-bed flats and studios remained strong throughout Q1-2022 (Oct-Dec). In Oct-21 this size equated to 48.7% of searches performed on the platform, before declining to 33.0% in Nov-21.

Meanwhile, clusters and HMOs with 3 or more beds captured a greater proportion of demand in Nov-21 and Dec-21 compared to previous months, capturing 47.0% and 43.7% of demand respectively.

Figure 4 suggests demand for 1-bed flats and studios will remain relatively constant over the next three months.

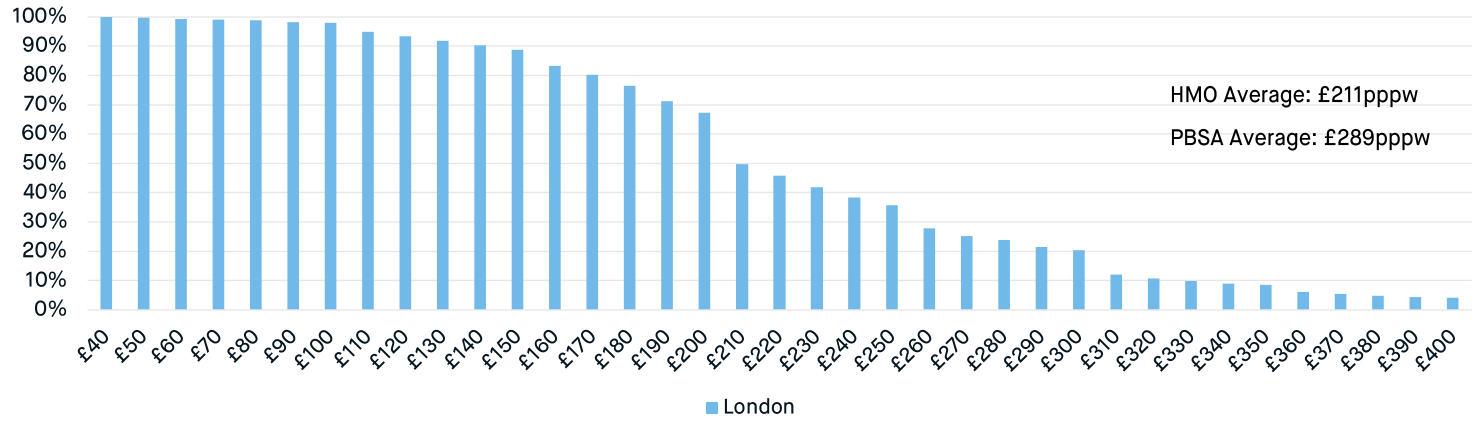
"During Q1-2022 (Oct-Dec) 1-bed flats and studios were the preferred choice."

Bed Demand All Sizes | During Q1-2022 (Oct-Dec) 1-bed flats and studios were the preferred choice, capturing 38.3% of searches performed on StuRents.com. 2 beds reported a search share of 19.0%, down slightly from last quarter.

Clusters and HMOs consisting of 3 beds or more captured 42.7% of demand in the last quarter, however, most of this was attributed to 3 and 4 beds.

Over the last 12 months, demand was skewed towards smaller sizes, with 39.6% of searches attributed to 1-bed flats and studios. The second most popular choice was 2 beds, which achieved a search share of 23.7%.

Figure 6 | Student Accommodation Affordability in £PPPW



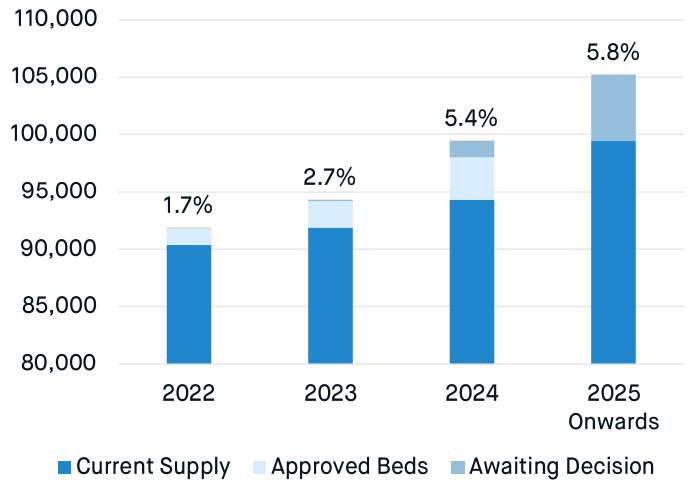
Source: StuRents Limited

Student Accommodation Affordability | The chart above shows student budgets in London based on searches on StuRents.com over the past 12 months. The chart illustrates the percentage of students that can afford each respective price category. Where prices are quoted pppw, bills (such as inclusive gas or electricity) have been removed.

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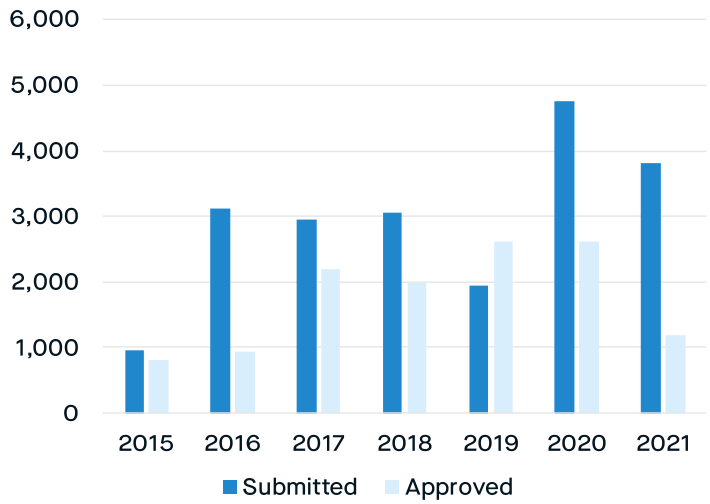
London | Market Supply

Figure 7 | PBSA Forward Supply Schedule



Source: StuRents Limited, All inner London borough councils

Figure 8 | Planning Applications (Beds)



Source: StuRents Limited, All inner London borough councils

"Whilst thousands of beds could be delivered each year, growth will remain limited in percentage terms."

Forward Supply Schedule | PBSA in London is forecast to increase by just 1.7% this year, even though more than 1,400 beds could be delivered.

In 2023 a further 2,443 units could hit the market. If all these beds come to fruition, PBSA would grow by 2.7% year-on-year. The pace of growth could increase again in 2024, with a further 5,135 beds earmarked for delivery.

Whilst 5,774 units could become operational in 2025 and onwards, all these beds are still awaiting a decision. Therefore, the final rate of growth could differ from current expectations.

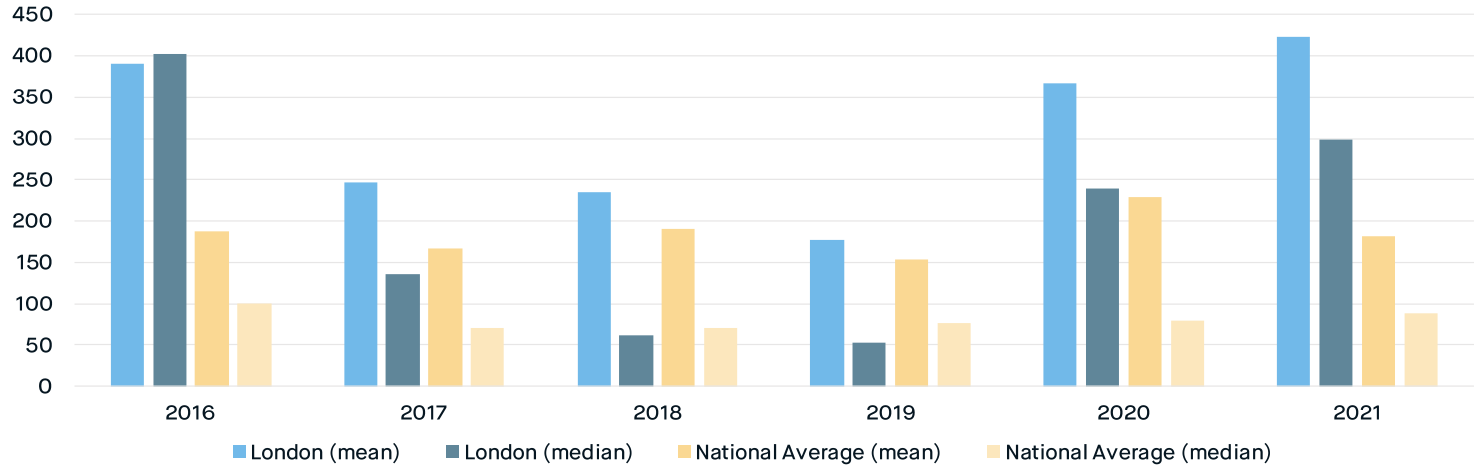
"Planning application activity remained high in 2021, with almost 4,000 beds submitted."

Planning Applications | In 2021 planning applications totalling almost 4,000 beds were put forward. Although the figure remains high, this represents a slight decrease compared to the 4,767 units lodged in the previous year.

Meanwhile, a total of 1,189 beds were approved in 2021, down from the figure of 2,623 recorded in 2020.

Figure 9 highlights the average (mean & median) size of planning applications for PBSA, submitted between 2016-2021 at a national level and in London. The chart highlights that the average (mean) application size in London jumped in 2021 to more than 420, whilst nationally the figure stood at 181 beds.

Figure 9 | Mean & Median Size of Submitted PBSA Planning Applications



Source: StuRents Limited, All inner London borough councils

Average Development Size | Analysis of historical planning applications allows market participants to understand how average development size may vary over time, versus the national average.

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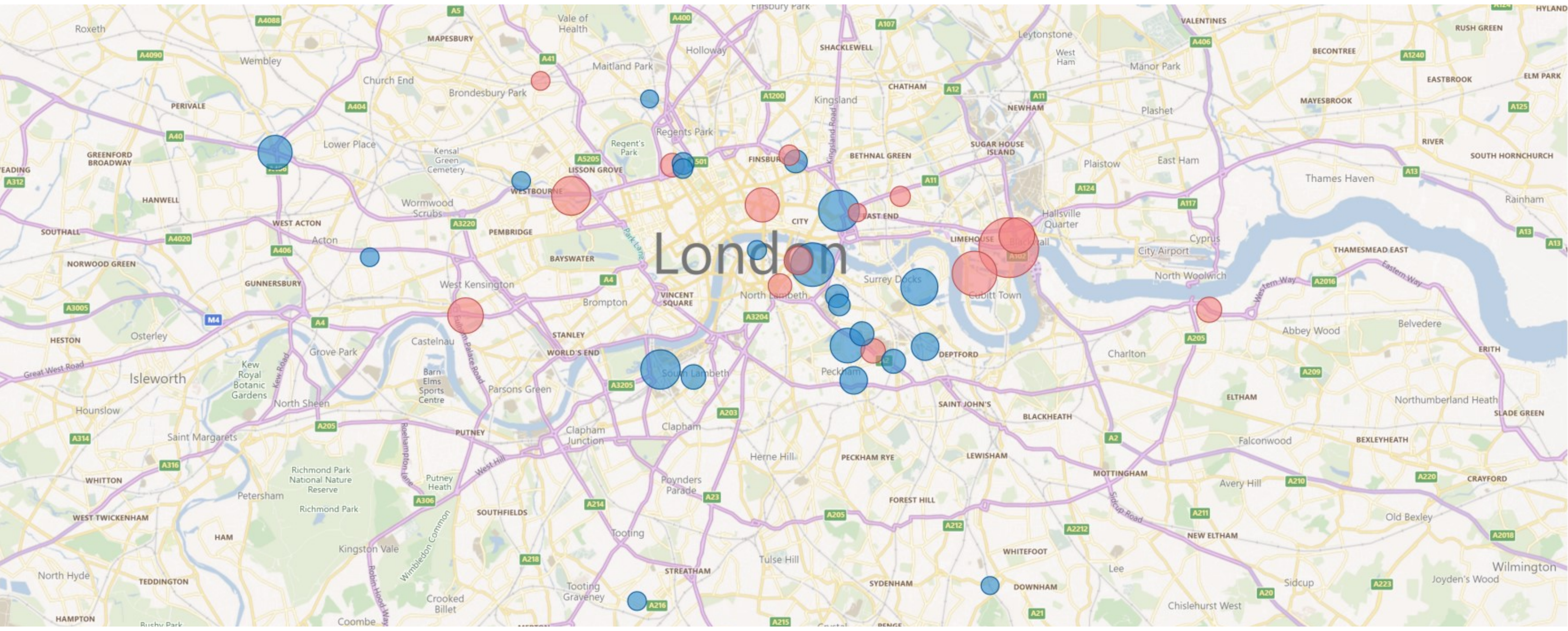
London | Supply Pipeline

"There was a significant volume of planning application activity in the last quarter, with several large new schemes put forward."

Current Applications | During Q1-2022 (Oct-Dec) four new developments were proposed. The most significant was a 713-bed scheme in Talgarth Road that contains a mix of studios, clusters, twodios and threedios. Elsewhere, 298 beds were lodged in Beresford Street, 233 in Avonmouth Street and 95 in Redmands Road.

In Q1-2022 a 393-bed mixed-use scheme was approved, as was a 212-bed scheme in Bath Street. The total supply pipeline in London now stands at 14,844 beds, with more than 7,300 units still awaiting a decision.

Figure 10 | Supply Pipeline Locality (Approved and Awaiting Decision)



Source: StuRents Limited, Bing Maps, All inner London borough councils

Figure 11 | Largest Planning Applications

Applicant	Latest Status	Status Issued	Location	Beds	Expected Live
Urbanest UK Limited	Awaiting Decision	02/07/2020	Trafalgar Way	1672	2025
Tide Construction Ltd	Awaiting Decision	10/12/2020	Marsh Wall	1069	2025
GQ Quill Trustee 1 Ltd and GS Quill Trustee 2 Ltd as Trustees of the GS Quill	Application Approved	17/12/2020	Weston Street	1028	2024
Unite Students and The Cromlech Property Co. Ltd	Application Approved	10/09/2019	Middlesex Street	920	2022
London and Argyll Group	Application Approved	01/04/2018	Palmerston Way	860	2024
Unite Group Plc and Travis Perkins Plc	Awaiting Decision	05/07/2021	Harrow Road	843	2024
Kings College London	Application Approved	17/09/2013	Canada Street	770	2023
EID (General Partner) LLP	Awaiting Decision	30/09/2021	Clove Crescent	716	2025
Dominvs Hammersmith Hotel 9 Limited	Awaiting Decision	05/11/2021	Talgarth Road	713	2025
The London School of Economics and Political Science and Hollybrook Limited	Application Approved	22/12/2020	Glengall Road	676	2024
Dominvs Project 16 Company Ltd	Awaiting Decision	13/09/2021	Holborn Viaduct	656	2025
Hanger Lane Investments Ltd	Application Approved	31/07/2019	Hanger Lane	650	2023
Kings College London	Awaiting Decision	14/01/2019	Borough High Street	417	2025
University of the Arts London & Hollybrook	Application Approved	14/09/2020	Peckham Hill	393	2023

Source: StuRents Limited, All inner London borough councils

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