
Chapter 1

Households with at least one person with a long-standing health condition that required adaptations to their home

- 1.1 English Housing Survey respondents were asked if anyone in their household had a physical or mental health condition or illness (likely to last a year or more), and if so, whether the condition or illness reduces their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.
- 1.2 Households with at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition (referred to subsequently as 'households with at least one person with a health condition'), were also asked¹ whether their health condition made it necessary to have any adaptations in their home.
- 1.3 This chapter examines those households with at least one person with a health condition that required adaptations. In addition, the households' assessment of the suitability of their home has been investigated by tenure and the age of the person with the health condition. The 2019-20 and 2014-15² key findings are compared to establish any changes over time.
- 1.4 In 2019-20, 8% (1.9 million) of all households in England had at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition and said that they required adaptations to their home. This has not changed since 2014-15, Annex Table 1.1.
- 1.5 Furthermore, around 215,000 households (1% of all households) had two or more people with a health condition that required adaptations to their home. This represented 11% of households that stated they required adaptations, a similar position to 2014-15, Annex Table 1.2.

Households' perception of the suitability of their home

- 1.6 In 2019-20, 81% of households that required adaptations to their home, due to their health condition, felt their home was suitable for their needs. This has not changed since 2014-15, Annex Table 1.3.

¹ This was asked regardless of whether the health condition limited their daily activities.

² The adaptations for disability questions are not asked every year in the EHS. They were last asked in 2014-15 and reported in the English Housing Survey Adaptations and Accessibility Report, 2014-15

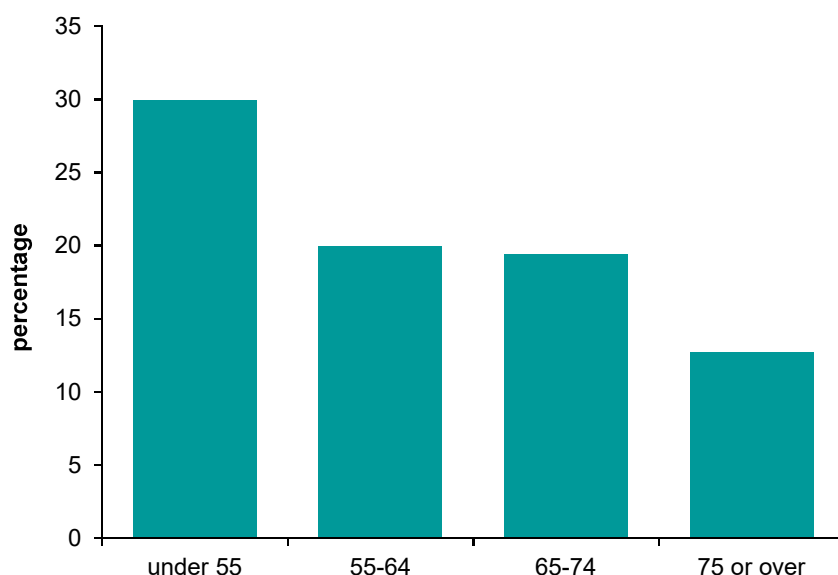
1.7 The 19% (374,000) of households that required adaptations and who considered their accommodation unsuitable accounted for 2% of all households in England, unchanged since 2014-15, Annex Table 1.4.

Age of person with health condition³

1.8 The reported suitability of accommodation varied by the age of the person with a health condition that required adaptations. Households with a person aged under 55 that required adaptations were more likely (30%) to report that their accommodation was unsuitable compared with those that required adaptations in older age groups (20% or less). Households with a person aged 75 or over that required adaptations were least likely to state their accommodation was unsuitable (13%). Between 2014-15 and 2019-20 there were no changes in the reported suitability of the home by age of person with a health condition that required adaptations, Figure 1.1.

1.9 The reasons for these findings are likely to be complex and reflect a number of factors including different tenure and household characteristic profiles such as length of residency; for example, older people tend to have been in the same home for many years, which in some instances means that adaptations have already been installed to maintain independent living.

Figure 1.1: Proportion of households that required adaptations in unsuitable accommodation, by age, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Notes:

1) where more than one person in the household had a long-standing health condition that required adaptations, the age of the oldest person with the condition is used

2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 1.3

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

³ Where more than one person in the household had a long-standing health condition that required adaptations, the age of the oldest person with the condition is used.

Tenure

- 1.10 Among those that required adaptations, owner occupiers (17%) were less likely to report that their accommodation was unsuitable, compared with local authority households (25%). A quarter (25%) of private renters and 21% of housing association renters reported that their accommodation was unsuitable. Between 2014-15 and 2019-20 there were no significant changes in the suitability of the home within each tenure for households that required adaptations, Figure 1.2.
- 1.11 This finding is likely linked to the age of person with the health condition, as households with older occupants are more likely to be owner occupiers than younger households. Owner occupiers may have more control over altering their home and installing their required adaptations.

Figure 1.2: Proportion of households that required adaptations in unsuitable accommodation, by tenure, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 1.3

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Chapter 2

Types of adaptations needed

- 2.1 All households with at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition that required adaptations in their home were asked about the adaptations they needed for disability purposes, irrespective of whether they already had them. This included adaptations needed for kitchen and bathroom facilities, adaptations needed elsewhere in the home, and adaptations needed outside the home.
- 2.2 This chapter describes the adaptations needed inside and outside the home, and then explores the types of adaptations needed by tenure and age of the person with the health condition. Changes since 2014-15 have been investigated where possible, however due to the addition of new responses in the 2019-20 questionnaire, it was not possible to determine the reasons for differences between years⁴.

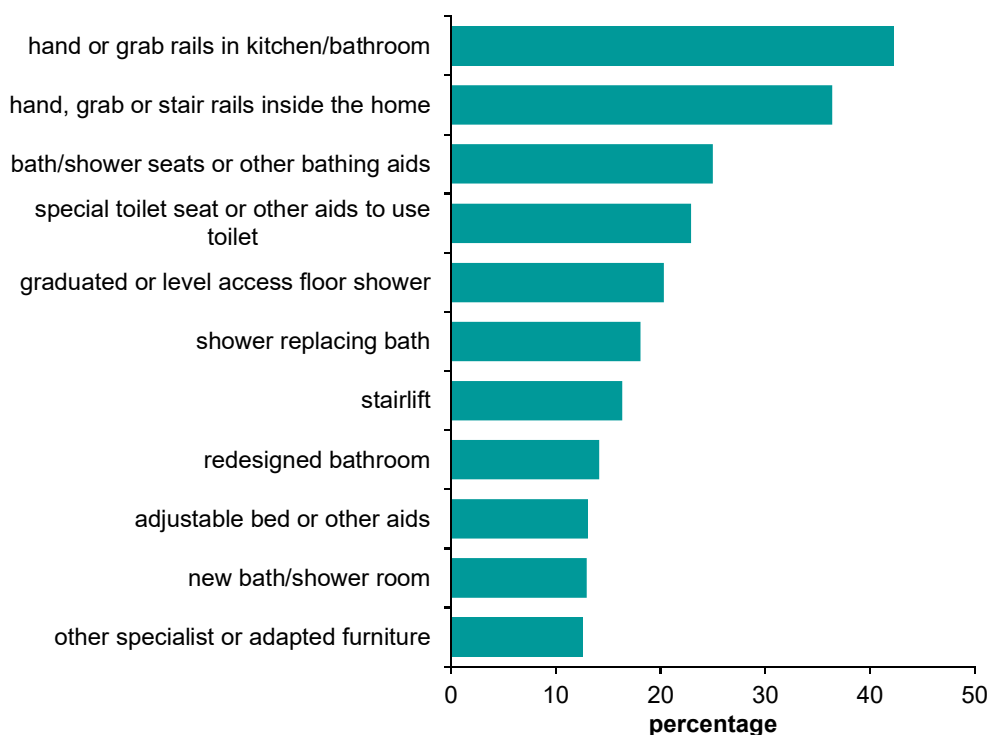
Common adaptations needed

- 2.3 Aids and adaptations in the home can have a positive impact on the quality of life for people with health conditions. Having adaptations can make the difference between being able to do certain everyday activities independently, rather than being reliant on someone else.
- 2.4 The most common adaptation needed inside the home was hand or grab rails in the kitchen or bathroom⁵ (42%), representing around 819,000 households. The six next most common adaptations were: hand, grab or stair rails inside the home (36%); bath/shower seats or other bathing aids (25%); a special toilet seat/raised toilet or other aids to help use the toilet (23%), a graduated or level access floor shower (20%); a shower replacing a bath (18%); and a stairlift (16%), Figure 2.1.
- 2.5 Other commonly reported adaptations included: redesigned bathroom (14%); adjustable bed or other aids to help get in and out of bed (13%); new bath or shower room (13%); and other specialist or adapted furniture for example, rising chairs, specialist lamps (13%).

⁴ For more details see the adaptations for disability module in the EHS questionnaire documentation, 2019-20.

⁵ Hand or grab rails in the kitchen or bathroom was a new category in the EHS 2019-20 questionnaire.

Figure 2.1: Adaptations most commonly needed inside the home, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Notes:

1) multiple responses allowed

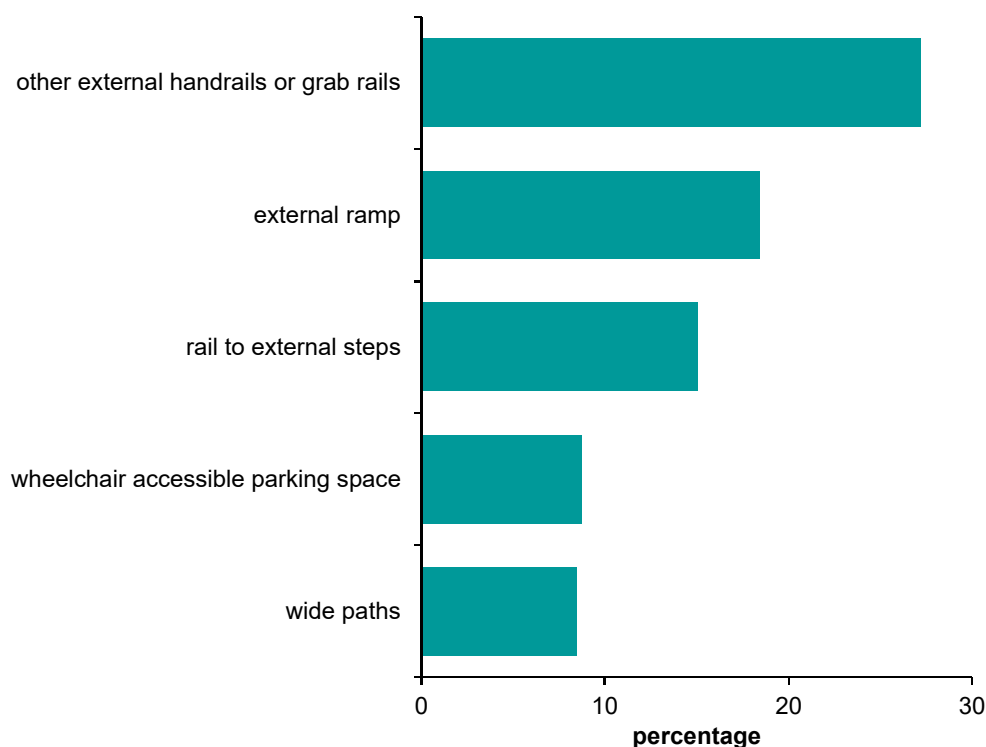
2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.1

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

- 2.6 Outdoor adaptations enable homes to be accessible to occupants and their visitors and can facilitate independent living and the well-being of people with health problems.
- 2.7 The most common adaptation needed outside the home were other external handrails or grab rails⁶ (27%), representing around 527,000 households. The next most common adaptations were: an external ramp (18%); a rail to external steps (15%), a wheelchair accessible parking space (on plot) (9%); and wide paths (8%), Figure 2.2.

⁶ This adaptation was a new category in the EHS 2019-20 questionnaire.

Figure 2.2: Adaptations most commonly needed outside the home, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Notes:

1) multiple responses allowed

2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.2

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

2.8 Among the common adaptations needed inside and outside the home, between 2014-15 and 2019-20 there was a decrease in the proportion of households that needed bath/shower seats or other bathing aids (from 30% to 25%) and a decrease in the proportion of households that needed a rail to external steps (from 19% to 15%)⁷.

2.9 There were also decreases in the following common adaptations needed: adjustable bed or other aids to help get in and out of bed (from 17% to 13%); and other specialist or adapted furniture, for example, rising chairs, specialist lamps (from 16% to 13%). The proportion of households needing the other common adaptations, inside and outside the home, did not change between 2014-15 and 2019-20⁸.

Age of person with health condition

2.10 In 2019-20, there were differences in the prevalence of common adaptations needed by the age of the person with a health condition that required

⁷ It is not possible to quantify whether changes between 2014-15 and 2019-20 are due to the addition of new categories in the questionnaire, or due to changes in behaviour.

⁸ An exception was seen for a category with a wording change between surveys: the response to 'graduated or level access floor shower' was higher in 2019-20 compared with the response to 'graduated floor shower' in 2014-15.

adaptations. Where there were significant differences, a smaller proportion of adaptations were needed by households with someone aged under 55.

- 2.11 A special toilet seat/raised toilet or other aids to help use the toilet was needed by 15% of households with a person under 55 that required adaptations, compared with households with a person aged 55 or over that required adaptations (25% or more), Annex Table 2.3.
- 2.12 Other common adaptations less likely to be needed by households with a person under 55 included: hand, grab or stair rails inside the home (30% under 55; 39% 75 years or over); other external handrails or grab rails (22% under 55; 31% 65 to 74 years); a shower replacing bath (13% under 55; 20% 75 years or over); a stairlift (12% under 55; 20% 75 years or over) and a redesigned bathroom (11% under 55; 19% 65 to 74 years).
- 2.13 External adaptations less likely to be needed by households with a person aged 75 or over that required adaptations compared with their younger counterparts included: a wheelchair accessible parking space (7% 75 or over; 13% 65-74 years); and wide paths (6% 75 or over; 13% 65-74 years).

Tenure

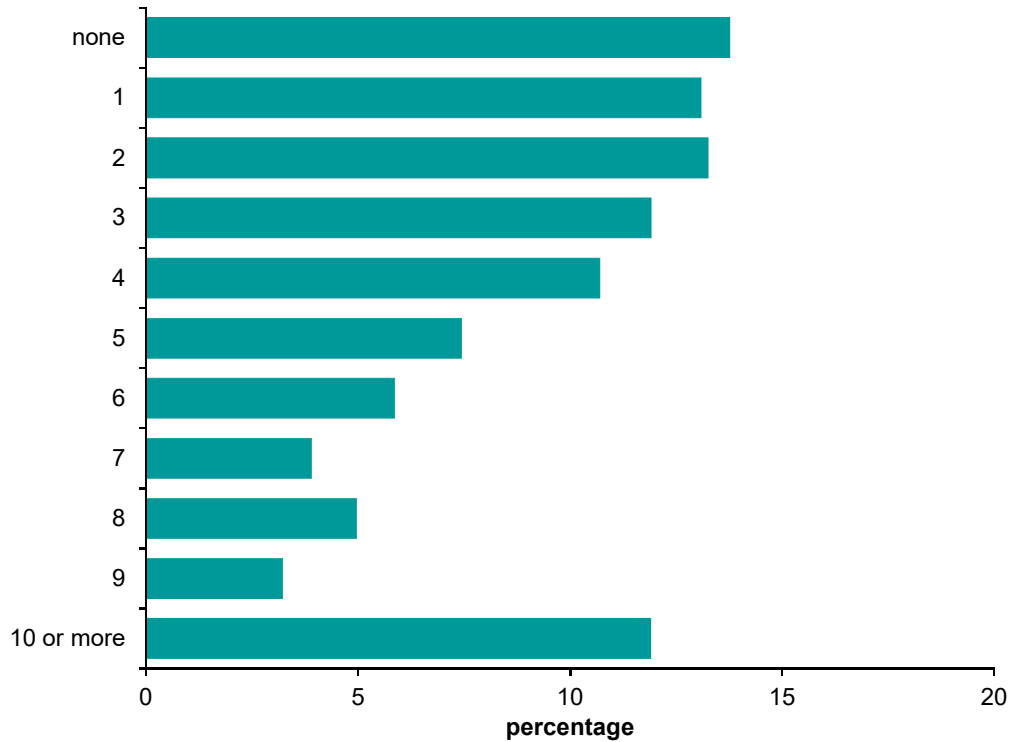
- 2.14 The adaptations needed by households varied by tenure. Where differences arose these typically suggested that housing association renters were more likely to report needing one of the common adaptations than their private renter counterparts, while for other adaptations owner occupiers were more likely to report needing these than their social renter counterparts.
- 2.15 Private renters were, for example, less likely to need a special toilet seat/raised toilet or other aids to help use the toilet (11%) compared with owner occupiers (25%) or housing association tenants (23%). In addition, a smaller proportion of the following adaptations were required by private renters compared with housing association tenants: hand or grab rails in the kitchen or bathroom (31% private renters; 46% housing association); hand, grab or stair rails inside the home (25% private renters; 39% housing association); an external ramp (11% private renters; 22% housing association), Annex Table 2.4.
- 2.16 Furthermore, owner occupiers were more likely to require a rail to external steps (17%) compared with local authority tenants (11%) and more likely to require a stairlift (20%) compared with local authority tenants (8%) and housing association tenants (12%).

Number of adaptations needed

- 2.17 Of households that required adaptations, 86% (1.6 million) selected at least one of the listed adaptations (needed inside or outside the home), regardless of whether they already had the adaptation, while the remaining 14% did not

select any of the listed adaptations. In total, 231,000 households (12%) selected ten or more listed adaptations, Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Number of adaptations that households needed, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.5

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Chapter 3

Households that lacked the adaptations they needed

- 3.1 All households with at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition that required adaptations in their home were asked about the existing adaptations they already had installed. As in Chapter 2, this included adaptations they had for kitchen and bathroom facilities, adaptations they had elsewhere in the home, and adaptations they had outside the home.
- 3.2 This chapter examines the extent to which households did not have the adaptation(s) they needed already installed in their home, and explores how this varied by tenure, age of the person with the health condition, household income and savings. In addition, it reports on the types of adaptations that households lacked, as well as investigating the reasons for not installing needed adaptations.
- 3.3 As in Chapter 2, changes since 2014-15 have been investigated where possible, however due to the addition of new responses in the 2019-20 questionnaire, it was not always possible to determine the reasons for differences between years⁹.
- 3.4 In 2019-20, 47% of households that required adaptations had all the adaptations they needed in their home. Consequently, 53% (1 million) of households did not have the adaptations that they needed. This represented an increase since 2014-15 when 45% (864,000) of households lacked one or more adaptations, Annex Table 3.1.

Age of person with health condition

- 3.5 In 2019-20 there were no differences in the proportion of households that lacked adaptations, by the age of the person with a health condition that required adaptations, Figure 3.1.
- 3.6 Among households where the person requiring adaptations was aged 75 or over, there was an increase in the proportion not having the adaptations they needed, from around 288,000 households (36%) in 2014-15 to around 405,000 households (51%) in 2019-20. No such increase was observed among the younger age groups.

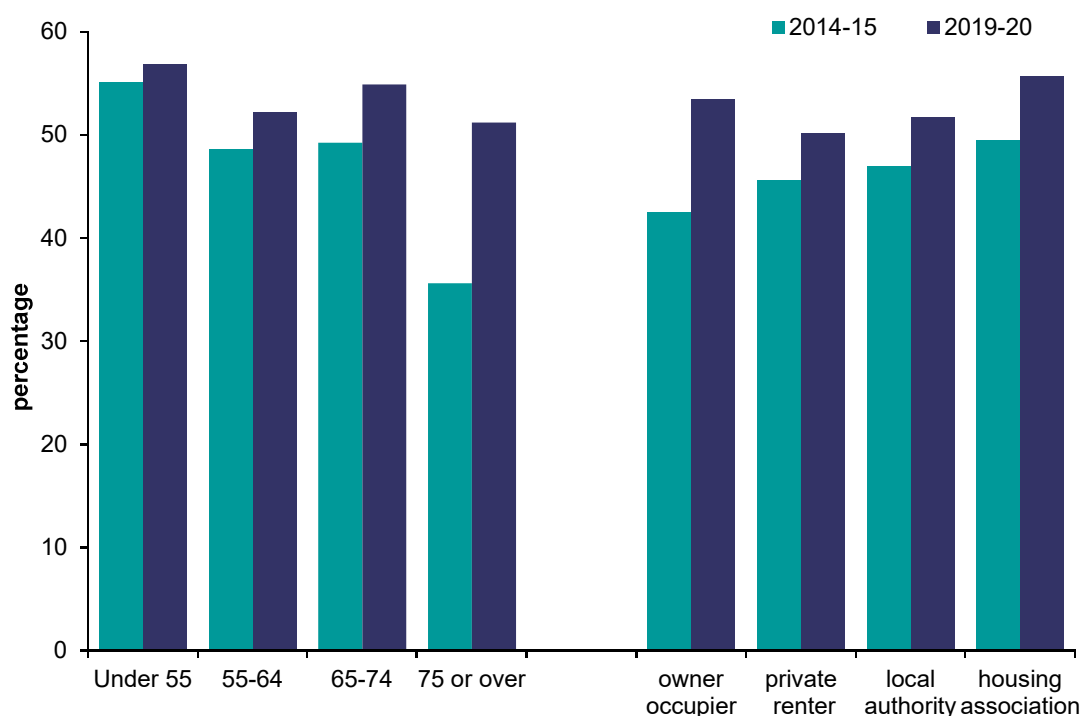
⁹ For more details see the adaptations for disability module in the EHS questionnaire documentation, 2019-20.

Tenure

3.7 In 2019-20, there were no differences in the proportion of households that lacked adaptations, by tenure, Figure 3.1.

3.8 However, between 2014-15 and 2019-20, there was an increase for owner occupiers, from around 461,000 households (42%) in 2014-15 to around 588,000 households (53%) in 2019-20. Other apparent increases by tenure were not statistically significant.

Figure 3.1: Proportion of households that lacked the adaptations they needed, by age and tenure, 2014-15 and 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Notes:

1) where more than one person in the household had a long-standing health condition that required adaptations, the age of the oldest person with the condition is used

2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.1

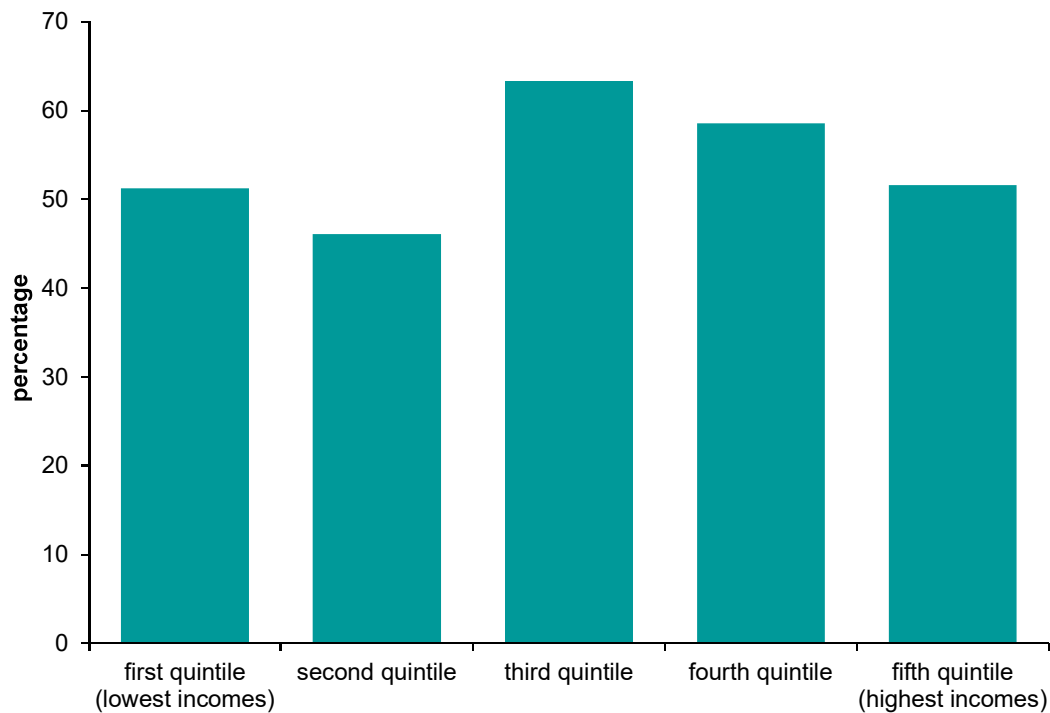
Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Household income and savings

3.9 There were some differences in the prevalence of adaptations that households lacked by income in 2019-20. Households in the middle income quintile were more likely to not have the adaptations that they needed (63%) compared with households in lower (first or second) income quintiles (51% or lower), Figure 3.2.

3.10 The proportion of households that did not have the adaptations that they needed did not differ by the amount of savings the household had.

Figure 3.2: Proportion of households that lacked the adaptations they needed, by household income, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

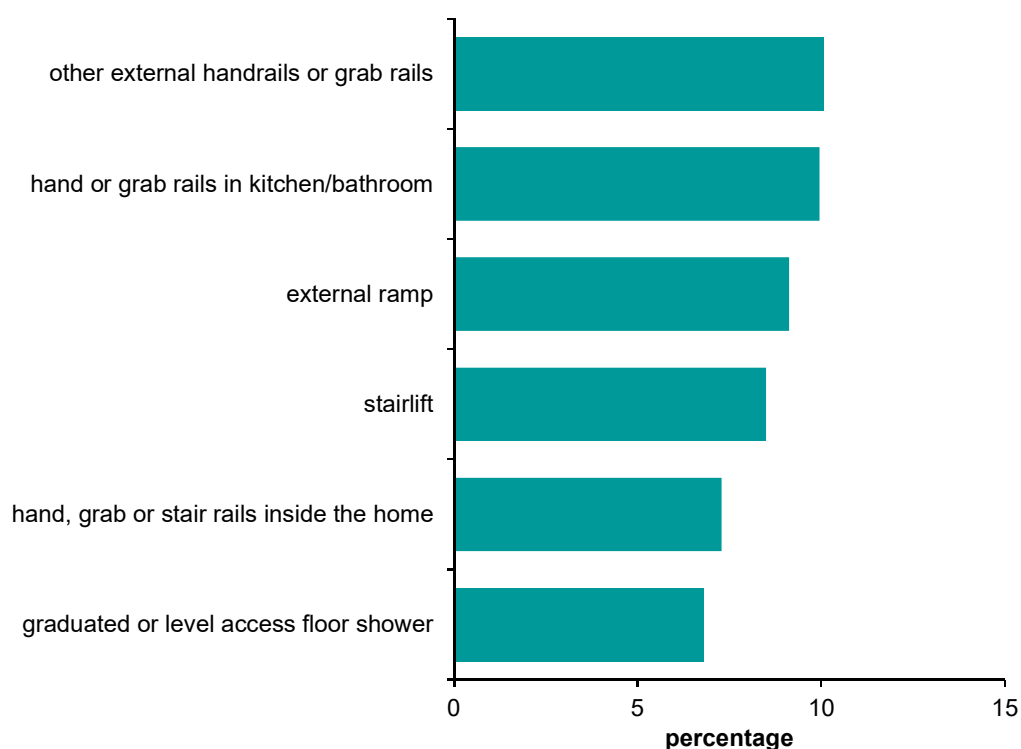
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.2

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Types of adaptations that households lack

3.11 The adaptations that households most commonly reported that they needed but did not have were: other external handrails or grab rails (10%, 195,000), hand or grab rails in the kitchen or bathroom (10%, 193,000), an external ramp (9%), a stairlift (8%), hand, grab or stair rails inside the home (7%) and a graduated or level access floor shower (7%), Figure 3.3. Where comparisons could be made with 2014-15, no significant differences were observed.

Figure 3.3: Adaptations that households most commonly lack, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations

Notes:

1) multiple responses allowed

2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.3

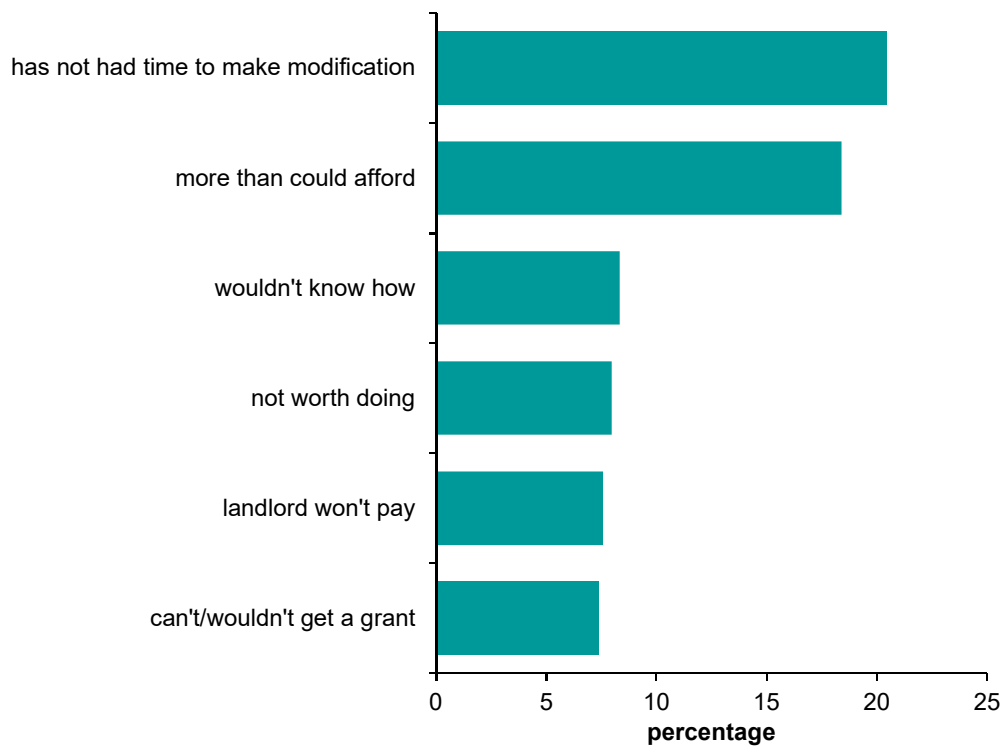
Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

3.12 Of households that required adaptations, 53% (1 million) did not have at least one of the listed adaptations they needed (inside or outside the home), while 47% did not lack any of the listed adaptations. In total, 367,000 households (19%) lacked one listed adaptation and 47,000 households (2%) lacked ten or more listed adaptations, Annex table 2.5.

Why households did not have the adaptations that they needed

3.13 All households that did not have the adaptations they needed were asked why these modifications to their home had not been made; multiple responses were allowed. The most commonly selected reasons given were: expect the modifications will be made, there just hasn't been enough time yet (20%, 205,000); and think it would cost more than could afford (18%, 185,000). Other responses were less common (10% of households or less), including the 8% of households who reported that their landlord wouldn't pay for the adaptations, Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Reasons why households lack adaptations, 2019-20



Base: all households that lack adaptations

Notes:

1) multiple responses allowed

2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.4

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

3.14 Between 2014-15 and 2019-20 there was a decrease in the proportion of households reporting that adaptations were not worth doing (from 13% to 8%), however this could be partly explained by new categories added in the 2019-20 survey. No other differences were observed between 2014-15 and 2019-20.

Chapter 4

Households that wanted to move to more suitable accommodation

- 4.1 All households with at least one person with a long-standing physical or mental health condition that required adaptations in their home were asked about whether they were in the process of moving, or trying to move, in order to get somewhere that is more suitable.
- 4.2 This chapter examines the number of households wanting to move and investigates how this varied by tenure, age of the person with the health condition, whether the households lacked adaptations and whether the accommodation was unsuitable.
- 4.3 In 2019-20, 9% (176,000) of households that required adaptations said they wanted to move (either in the process of moving or trying to move) to get somewhere more suitable for their needs; a similar position to 2014-15 (10%, 185,000), Annex Table 4.1.

Age of person with health condition

- 4.4 Households with a younger person with a health condition that required adaptations were more likely to want to move compared with their older counterparts. Some 17% of households with someone under 55 that required adaptations wanted to move compared with households with someone aged 65 or older that required adaptations (7% or less). Also 12% of households with someone aged 55 to 64 years that required adaptations wanted to move compared with 4% of households with someone aged 75 or older that required adaptations.

Tenure

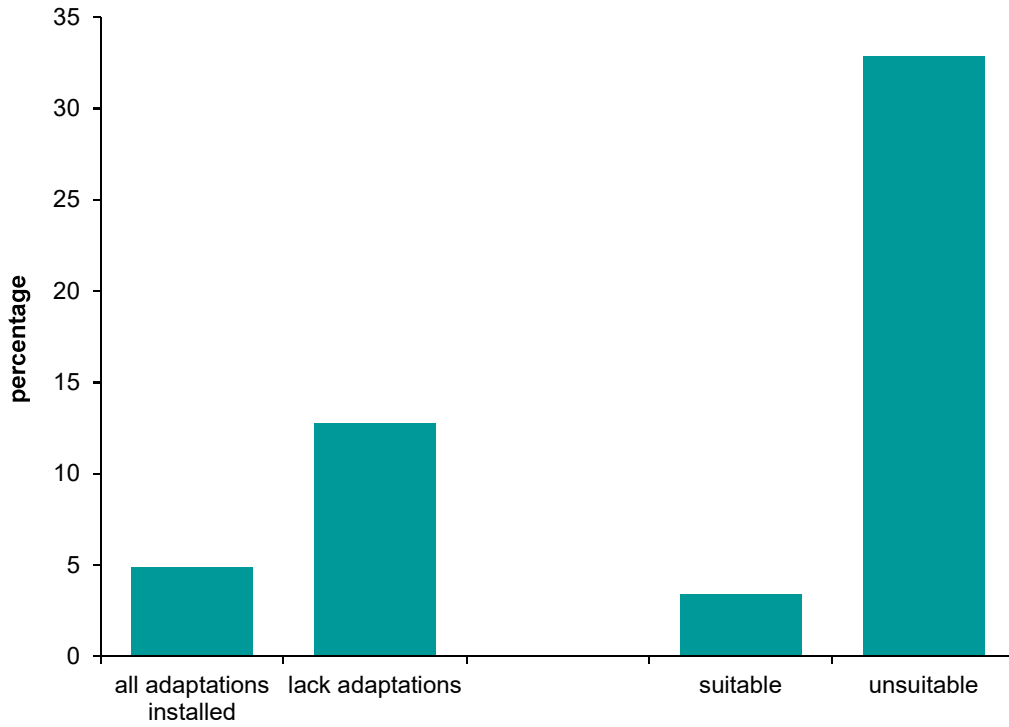
- 4.5 Private renters and housing association tenants were more likely to want to move (20% and 13% respectively) compared with owner occupiers (6%).

Unsuitable accommodation

- 4.6 A larger proportion of households that did not have the adaptations they needed said they wanted to move (13%, 132,000) compared with households that had all adaptations installed (5%, 44,000), Figure 4.1.
- 4.7 In addition, 33% (123,000) of households that required adaptations and had unsuitable accommodation said they wanted to move, compared with 3%

(53,000) of households that required adaptations and had suitable accommodation.

Figure 4.1: Proportion of households that said they wanted to move, by: (a) whether adaptations were installed; and (b) the suitability of their accommodation, 2019-20



Base: all households that required adaptations
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 4.2
Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Technical notes, data quality and glossary

Technical notes

1. Results for this report on households, are presented for '2019-20' and are based on fieldwork carried out between April 2019 and March 2020 on a sample of 13,332 households. Throughout the report, this is referred to as the 'full household sample'.
2. The reliability of the results of sample surveys, including the English Housing Survey, is positively related to the unweighted sample size. Results based on small sample sizes should therefore be treated as indicative only because inference about the national picture cannot be drawn. To alert readers to those results, percentages based on a row or column total with unweighted total sample size of less than 30 are italicised. To safeguard against data disclosure, the cell contents of cells where the cell count is less than 5 are replaced with a "u".
3. Where comparative statements have been made in the text, these have been significance tested to a 95% confidence level. This means we are 95% confident that the statements we are making are true.
4. Additional annex tables, including the data underlying the figures and charts in this report are published on the website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey> alongside many supplementary live tables, which are updated each year (in the summer) but are too numerous to include in our reports. Further information on the technical details of the survey, and information and past reports on the Survey of English Housing and the English House Condition Survey, can also be accessed via this link.

Data quality

5. A full account of data quality procedures followed to collect and analyse English Housing Survey data can be found in the Quality Report, which is updated and published annually¹⁰. A summary of the quality assurance processes for data collection and reporting are provided in the English Housing Survey Headline Report¹¹

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-housing-survey-quality-report>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2019-to-2020-headline-report>

Glossary

Gross household income: The gross annual income of all adults living in a household from wages, pensions, other private sources, savings and state benefits. This does not include any housing related benefits or allowances. This measure is divided by 52 to calculate weekly income. Income is presented in quintiles throughout this report (see income quintiles definition – below).

Household: One person or a group of people (not necessarily related) who have the accommodation as their only or main residence, and (for a group) share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area.

The EHS definition of household is slightly different from the definition used in the 2011 Census. Unlike the EHS, the 2011 Census did not limit household membership to people who had the accommodation as their only or main residence. The EHS included that restriction because it asks respondents about their second homes, the unit of data collection on the EHS, therefore, needs to include only those people who have the accommodation as their only or main residence.

Household reference person (HRP): The person in whose name the dwelling is owned or rented or who is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. In the case of joint owners and tenants, the person with the highest income is taken as the HRP. Where incomes are equal, the older is taken as the HRP. This procedure increases the likelihood that the HRP better characterises the household's social and economic position. The EHS definition of HRP is not consistent with the Census 2011, in which the HRP is chosen on basis of their economic activity. Where economic activity is the same, the older is taken as HRP, or if they are the same age, HRP is the first listed on the questionnaire.

Income quintiles: All households are divided into five equal groups based on their income (i.e. those in the bottom 20%, the next 20% and so on). These groups are known as quintiles. These can be used to compare income levels of particular groups to the overall population.

Long-term limiting illness: This is consistent with the core definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. A person is considered to have a disability if they have a long-standing illness, disability or impairment which causes substantial difficulty with day-to-day activities.

Tenure: In this report, households are typically grouped into three broad categories known as tenures: owner occupiers, social renters and private renters. The tenure defines the conditions under which the home is occupied, whether it is owned or rented, and if rented, who the landlord is and on what financial and legal terms the let is agreed.

- **owner occupiers:** households in accommodation which they either own outright, are buying with a mortgage or as part of a shared ownership scheme.
- **social renters:** this category includes households renting from Local Authorities (including Arms' Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and

Housing Action Trusts) and Housing Associations, Local Housing Companies, co-operatives and charitable trusts.

A significant number of Housing Association tenants wrongly report that they are Local Authority tenants. The most common reason for this is that their home used to be owned by the Local Authority, and although ownership was transferred to a Housing Association, the tenant still reports that their landlord is the Local Authority. There are also some Local Authority tenants who wrongly report that they are Housing Association tenants. Data from the EHS for 2008-09 onwards incorporate a correction for the great majority of such cases in order to provide a reasonably accurate split of the social rented category.

- **private renters:** this sector covers all other tenants including all whose accommodation is tied to their job. It also includes people living rent-free (for example, people living in a flat belonging to a relative).

In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 the United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, signifying that they are fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

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Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000
Email: ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk

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