English Housing Survey

Stock condition, 2016

Contents

Introduction and main findings

1. The English Housing Survey (EHS) is a national survey of people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England. In its current form, it was first run in 2008-09. Prior to then, the survey was run as two standalone surveys: the English House Condition Survey and the Survey of English Housing. It is one of the longest standing surveys in government, with 2017 marking the 50th anniversary since the first survey in 1967.

2. This report examines the condition of the English housing stock. It is split into three chapters. The first explores how the housing stock has changed over the last 20 years in terms of dwelling type and age. It then examines the change in provision of amenities such as second WCs and bathrooms, parking, and plots.

3. Chapter 2 examines the extent to which homes meet the Decent Homes standard and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), the occurrence of damp, condensation and mould, repair costs, and how this has changed over time.

4. Chapter 3 examines the extent to which the following types of households live in poor housing, homes that lack all five electrical safety features[1], or in deprived areas[2]: households with a Black, Asian or minority ethnic HRP (Household Reference Person), households with relative low income[3], households that spend 30% or more of their household income on housing, households which included someone with a long-term illness or disability, and lone parent households.

Main findings

The English housing stock is predominately owner occupied, with a sizeable private rented sector, and a smaller social rented sector.

- In 2016, there were an estimated 23.7 million dwellings in England, including both occupied and vacant homes. Of these, 14.8 million (62%) were owner occupied, 4.9 million (20%) were in the private rented sector, 4.1 million (17%) were in the social rented sector.

The type and condition of the stock varies by tenure, but houses and bungalows make up over three quarters of the stock; over half was built prior to 1965.

- In 2016, 56% of the English housing stock was built prior to 1965. The age of dwellings varied by tenure. For example, dwellings in the private rented sector tended to be older, with a third (35%) built before 1919 compared with 21% of owner occupied and 7% of social rented homes.

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[1] Electrical safety is explored in Chapter 2 of this report. The five electrical safety features are: modern PVC wiring, modern earthing, modern consumer unit casing, miniature circuit breakers and residual current devices.
[2] A 'deprived area' is one in the lowest 20% of ranked areas by the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation.
[3] Households whose equivalised income Before Housing Costs (BHC) is less than 60% of the median value of the BHC equivalised weekly income of all households.

- Meanwhile, the majority (92%) of owner occupied homes were houses or bungalows (compared with 63% of private rented and 54% of social rented stock). There were very few detached houses in the social (less than 1%) or private rented sectors (6%), but a quarter (25%) of owner occupied homes were detached.

In the last 20 years, the proportion of homes in the private rented sector has doubled, while the proportion in owner occupation and the social rented sectors has declined.

- Between 1996 and 2016, the proportion of homes in the private rented sector increased from 10% of the stock to 20%, or from 2.0 million to 4.9 million dwellings.

- While the proportion of owner occupied homes decreased (from 68% in 1996 to 62% in 2016), the number increased (from 13.9 million dwellings to 14.8 million).

- Both the proportion and number of social rented sector dwellings decreased between 1996 and 2016, from 22% of the stock (4.4 million dwellings) to 17% of the stock (4.1 million dwellings).

The composition of the social rented sector has changed considerably in the last 20 years and there are now more social homes owned by housing associations than by local authorities.

- In 2016, housing associations owned a greater proportion of social homes than local authorities (10% compared with 7%). In 1996, the reverse was true: housing associations owned 5% of the stock; local authorities owned 17%.

Across all tenures, the proportion of non-decent homes declined steadily between 2006 and 2016, with year-on-year improvements until 2014, after which the proportion has remained stable.

- In 2016, a fifth of dwellings (20% or 4.7 million homes) failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard, down from 35% (7.7 million homes) in 2006.

- The private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes (27%) while the social rented sector had the lowest (13%); 20% of owner occupied homes failed to meet the standard in 2016.

Housing conditions vary by tenure: private renters were more likely to live in poor housing; social renters were more likely to live in deprived areas but less likely to live in homes that do not have all five electrical safety features.

- In 2016-17, 38% of private renters lived in poor housing (defined as a home that has serious damp or mould, a Category 1 HHSRS hazard, is non-decent, or has substantial disrepair). A quarter of owner occupiers (24%) and 22% of social renters lived in poor housing.

- Almost half (46%) of social renters lived in deprived areas compared with 11% of owner occupiers and 21% of the private renters.

- On electrical safety, 41% of owner occupiers and 39% of private renters lived in homes that did not have all five electrical safety features, compared with 25% of social renters.

Acknowledgements and further queries

5. Each year the English Housing Survey relies on the contributions of a large number of people and organisations. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would particularly like to thank the following people and organisations, without whom the 2016-17 survey and this report, would not have been possible: all the households who gave up their time to take part in the survey, NatCen Social Research, the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and CADS Housing Surveys.

6. This report was produced by Fiona MacKenzie and Helen Garrett at BRE in collaboration with NatCen Social Research and MHCLG.

7. If you have any queries about this report, would like any further information or have suggestions for analyses you would like to see included in future EHS reports, please contact ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

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Chapter 1
Stock and amenities

1.1 This chapter gives an overall profile of the English housing stock, and how this has changed over time. It then examines the change in provision of various amenities. These amenities are: provision of a second WC; provision of a second bathroom; parking provision; the presence and size of plots; and the security of windows and doors.

Stock profile

1.2 In 2016, there were an estimated 23.7 million dwellings in England, including both occupied and vacant homes. This report refers to this number as the total housing stock. In 2016, 62% of the stock was owner occupied, 20% was in the private rented sector and 17% was in the social sector, Annex Table 1.1.

1.3 Over the last 20 years, one of the most notable changes within the housing stock has been the growth of the private rented sector which comprised 10% of the housing stock in 1996 rising to 20% in 2016.

1.4 While the private rented sector grew, the share of the total housing stock owned by social landlords fell from 22% in 1996 to 18% in 2006 before remaining more constant (17% in 2016). Over the 2006 to 2016 period the proportion of owner occupied homes also declined (70% in 2006 to 62% in 2016), Figure 1.1. However, the proportion of owner occupied homes has not changed since 2013.[4]

Dwelling age

1.5 In 2016, around one fifth (21%) of the stock was built before 1919, while roughly a quarter (24%) was built post 1980. Although private rented homes were most likely to have the oldest homes, with 35% built before 1919, a quarter (25%) of private rented sector homes were built after 1980. Overall housing associations had the newest stock, with 37% built after 1980, Annex Table 1.4.

1.6 Not surprisingly, the proportion of stock built after 1980 has grown from 13% in 1996 to 24% in 2016, Annex Tables 1.2 to 1.4. It is likely that this rise has contributed to the improvements in housing performance discussed in Chapter 2 of this report.

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[4] See EHS Headline Report 2016-17

Figure 1.1: Tenure of dwellings, 1996, 2006 and 2016

Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 1.1
Sources:
    1996 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
    2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

1.7   The private rented sector had the greatest increase in homes built post-1980 compared with other tenures. However, the largest proportion of private rented stock are still pre-1919 homes (52% in 1996 and 35% in 2016).

1.8   Throughout the 1996 to 2016 period, housing associations had the highest proportion of homes built after 1980. Around a third of homes owned by housing associations were built after 1980 and this proportion has remained fairly constant over time (34% in 1996 to 37% in 2016). Between 1996 and 2006 the proportion of housing association homes built between 1945 and 1964 more than doubled (12% to 25%) and the proportion of housing association homes built before 1919 more than halved (19% to 8%).

1.9   The changes in the age profile of housing association homes over this time are partly due to Large Scale Voluntary Transfer[5] of local authority owned dwellings to housing association ownership, which started in the late 1980s. Between 1996 and 2016, the number of dwellings owned by local authorities decreased by 1.8 million, while the number owned by housing associations increased by 1.5 million, Annex Table 1.1.

Dwelling type by tenure

1.10   Throughout the 1996 to 2016 period, owner occupied homes comprised mainly semi-detached and detached houses (over 50% of the stock). Over the same period, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of detached houses (21% to 25%) and medium/large terraces (16% to 19%) and a

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[5] A Large Scale Voluntary Transfer involves the council transferring ownership of its homes, with the agreement of its tenants, to a new or existing Housing Association.

decrease in small terraced houses (13% to 7%) within the owner occupied stock, Annex Tables 1.2 to 1.4.

1.11 In 2016, flats were the most prevalent dwelling type in the private rented sector (37%). The proportion of purpose built, low rise flats in the private rented sector increased from 17% in 1996 to 23% in 2016. Alongside the rise in newly built flats in the sector, there has been a drop in the proportion of converted flats in the private rented sector, from 19% in 1996 to 11% in 2016 (although the number of converted flats increased from 382,000 to 539,000 over this period). A small proportion of flats in the sector are high rise purpose built. The stock of such flats increased from 1% in 1996 to 3% in 2016.

1.12 Among local authority owned homes, purpose built, low rise flats are the most prevalent dwelling type. Between 1996 and 2016, the proportion of such flats increased from 33% to 38%. Over the same period, the proportion of semi-detached houses decreased from 22% to 17%. The proportion of purpose built, high rise flats remained steady at around 7%.

1.13 The most common type of homes owned by housing associations were also purpose built, low rise flats although the proportion varied over time from 46% in 1996 to 33% in 2006 to 38% in 2016. The proportion of housing association homes that were converted flats and small terraces has decreased over this period, most notably from 1996 to 2006 when converted flats decreased from 9% to 4%, and small terraces from 14% to 12%. There have been increases in medium/large terraced houses and semi-detached houses, again most notably over the first 10 year period, with the former increasing from 12% to 19%, and the latter from 10% to 18%.

Amenities

1.14 This section looks at the prevalence of amenities in 2016 and how provision of these has changed since 1996.

Secondary amenities (WCs and bathrooms)

1.15 In 2016, 44% of the stock had a second WC, 25% had a second bathroom. Secondary amenities were more prevalent in the owner occupied stock and less prevalent in the local authority stock, Annex Table 1.4.

1.16 Since 1996 there has been a marked increase in the provision of secondary amenities. The proportion of homes with a second WC rose from 31% in 1996 to 44% in 2016 and the proportion with a second bathroom rose from 13% to 25% over the same period. The rate of increase has slowed over the 2006 to 2016 period, Annex Tables 1.2 to 1.4.

Parking[6]

1.17   In 2016, 38% of dwellings had a garage. Provision was markedly higher among owner occupied homes (53%). Over a quarter (28%) of dwellings had off street parking while 18% had adequate street parking which was most common for local authority and housing association homes. Only inadequate street parking was available for 14% of homes, and this was least prevalent in the owner occupied sector. Just 2% of the stock had no parking provision, Annex Table 1.4.

1.18   The most common form of parking has been the use of a garage although from 1996 to 2016 the proportion of homes with a garage steadily decreased from 43% to 38%. There was also a fall in the proportion of dwellings with adequate street parking from 23% to 18% over the 20 year period, Figure 1.2.

1.19   There has, however, been a concurrent increase in homes with other off street parking[7] from 17% in 1996 to 28% in 2016. This may be partly a result of garages being converted into living spaces and front gardens being converted into driveways. Furthermore, the increase in new build flats may account for some of these changes.

1.20   The proportion of homes with inadequate street parking remained consistent during this period (around 15%).

Figure 1.2: Parking provision, 1996, 2006 and 2016
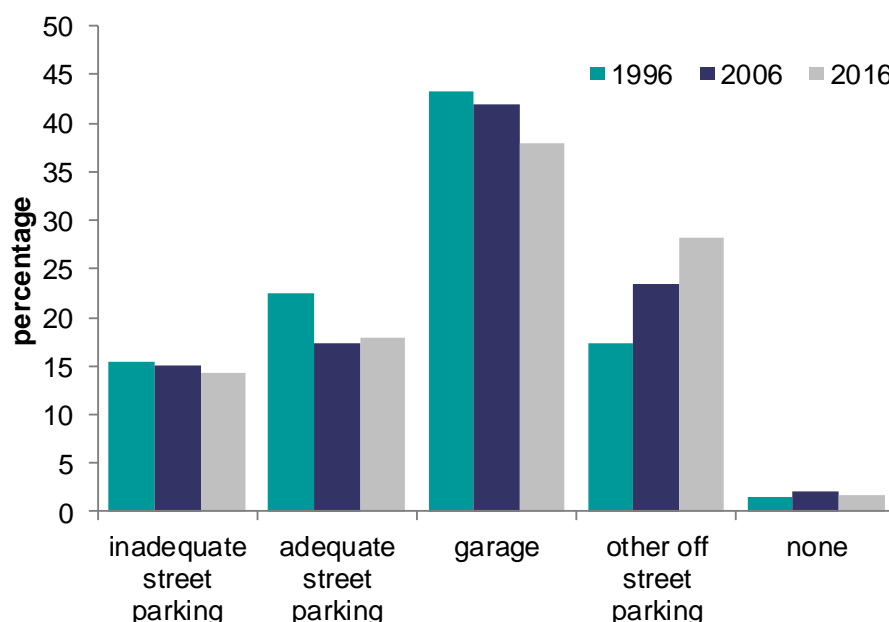
Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 1.2 to 1.4
Sources:
   1996 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
   2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

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[6] See glossary for definitions of types of parking used by the EHS.
[7] Other off street parking refers to either a designated parking space or a car port at the dwelling plot.

1.21   The pattern of change in parking provision for owner occupied homes largely mirrored that for the whole stock. Over half of owner occupied homes had a garage, although provision decreased slightly between 1996 and 2016 (from 58% to 53%). Other off street parking rose from 17% to 28% over the same period, Annex Tables 1.2 to 1.4.

1.22   In 2016, a relatively small proportion of local authority or housing association homes had garages, the most common type of parking provision being adequate street parking (around 40%). The private rented sector had a more even spread of parking options. In 1996 adequate street parking was the most common form of parking provision (30%) in the private rented sector, but by 2016 other off street parking had become the most common (31%).

Secure windows and doors[8]

1.23   In 2016, 85% of all homes had secure windows and doors. There was a marked increase in provision between 1996 and 2016 across all tenures, dwelling types and dwelling ages. Across the whole stock provision rose from 30% in 1996 to 85% in 2016. The most marked increase occurred among local authority homes (22% in 1996 to 90% in 2016).

Private plots

1.24   The English Housing Survey records a number of details relating to the land immediately surrounding a dwelling, referred to as the dwelling's plot.[9] This section looks at the provision of private (exclusive access) plots over time and whether there have been any changes in average plot size.[10]

1.25   Across the stock there was a slight fall in the proportion of homes with a private plot from 86% in 1996 to 83% in 2016. This is likely to be a result of changes in the distribution of dwelling types in the stock over time, particularly the higher proportion of flats, Annex Table 1.5.

1.26   In 2016, private plots were most prevalent in the owner occupied sector (94%), and least prevalent in the social sector (61%). Findings were similar in 1996 and 2006. This is likely to be a reflection of the types of dwellings in these sectors (e.g. a higher proportion of flats in the rented sectors), Figure 1.3.

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[8] The main entrance door to the dwelling and any accessible windows need to be assessed by surveyors as either highly secure or fairly highly secure.

[9] The plot may be private (exclusive access) or shared (shared access, for example where a block of flats have a shared garden). The plot may consist of hard landscaping (e.g. concrete, tarmac, paving, gravel), soft landscaping (e.g. lawn, flower/vegetable beds), or a combination.

[10] The EHS records both the depth and width of any front and back private plot at the dwelling. This enables the total plot area at the front and/or back of the dwelling to be calculated. Where applicable the total front and back plot areas are combined to obtain the total plot area available for the survey dwelling.

1.27   There was a rise in the proportion of housing association homes with a private plot over the time period (54% to 61%) and a concurrent decrease in local authority stock with a private plot (67% to 60%).

1.28   Across the whole stock, the average plot size fell from 309m² in 1996 to 268m² in 2006 but did not change between 2006 and 2016.[11] A similar trend was seen for owner occupied homes with a private plot;[12] however, over the 20 year period the average plot size in rented homes decreased, Annex Table 1.5.

Figure 1.3: Existence of private plot by tenure, 1996, 2006 and 2016
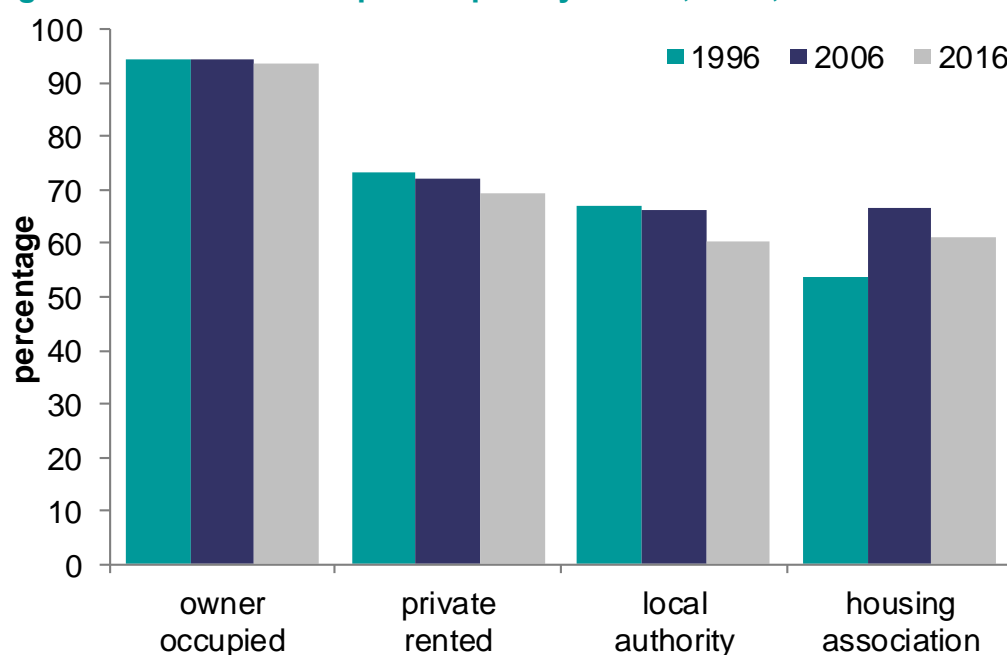
Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 1.5
Sources:
    1996 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
    2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

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[11] The apparent difference between average plot size in 2006 and 2016 is not statistically significant.

[12] The apparent difference between average plot size in 2006 and 2016 is not statistically significant.

Chapter 2
Decent Homes and health and safety

2.1   This chapter provides an overview of the dwelling condition and safety of the whole housing stock and each tenure in 2016 and how this has changed over time.[13] Five key indicators of dwelling condition are examined: the Decent Homes Standard,[14] the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS),[15] electrical safety, the prevalence of damp and mould, and disrepair.

Decent Homes

2.2   For a dwelling to be considered 'decent' under the Decent Homes Standard it must:

- meet the statutory minimum standard for housing (the Housing Health and Safety System (HHSRS) since April 2006), homes which contain a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS are considered non-decent[16]

- provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

- be in a reasonable state of repair

- have reasonably modern facilities and services

2.3   In 2016, 20% of the stock did not meet the Decent Homes Standard. Across all tenures, the proportion of non-decent homes declined steadily between 2006 and 2016, with year-on-year improvements until 2014, after which the proportion has remained stable. The private rented sector had the highest proportion of non-decent homes in 2016 (27%)[17].

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[13] The time period for each of the five indicators varies. For Decent Homes, the time period is from 2006 when the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) replaced the housing fitness standard to determine the statutory minimum standard for housing (one of the four criteria of decent homes detailed in paragraph 2.2). For HHSRS the time period is from 2008 as this is when the EHS began collecting data on 26 hazards (out of the 29 included in HHSRS). For electrical safety measures the time period is from 2001. For dampness and disrepair the time period is from 1996.

[14] A 15-hazard model of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is used to analyse Decent Homes. From 2008 the EHS assessed 26 of the 29 HHSRS hazards (see Live Table DA4101 for published data), but to maintain consistency and avoid a break in the time series, Decent Homes estimates published by MHCLG are based on the 15 hazards collected by the survey from 2006 onwards. See the glossary for further information.

[15] A 26-hazard model of HHSRS is used to analyse health and safety hazards.

[16] A Category 1 hazard is the most serious type of hazard under the HHSRS, and where this exists the dwelling fails to reach the statutory minimum standard for housing in England.

[17] See EHS Headline Report 2016-17, Annex Table 2.2

2.4   The main reason for failing the Decent Homes Standard in 2016 was the presence of a Category 1 hazard (12%), followed by lack of thermal comfort (7%), disrepair (4%) and lack of modern facilities and services (2%).[18]

2.5   In 2016, private rented homes were most likely to fail the Standard on one or more of three criteria: HHSRS, lack of thermal comfort and disrepair. Unlike all other tenures, which were most likely to fail due to the HHSRS criterion, housing association homes were most likely to fail the Standard due to lack of thermal comfort, Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Reasons for failing the Decent Homes Standard, by tenure, 2016
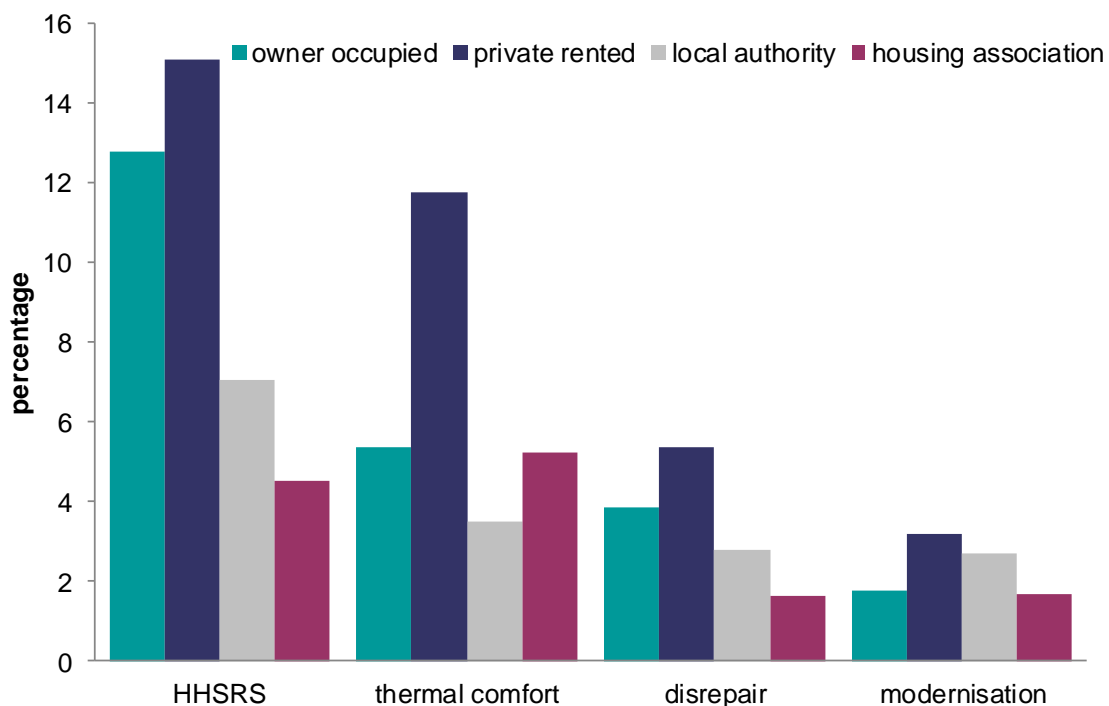
Base: all dwellings
Notes:
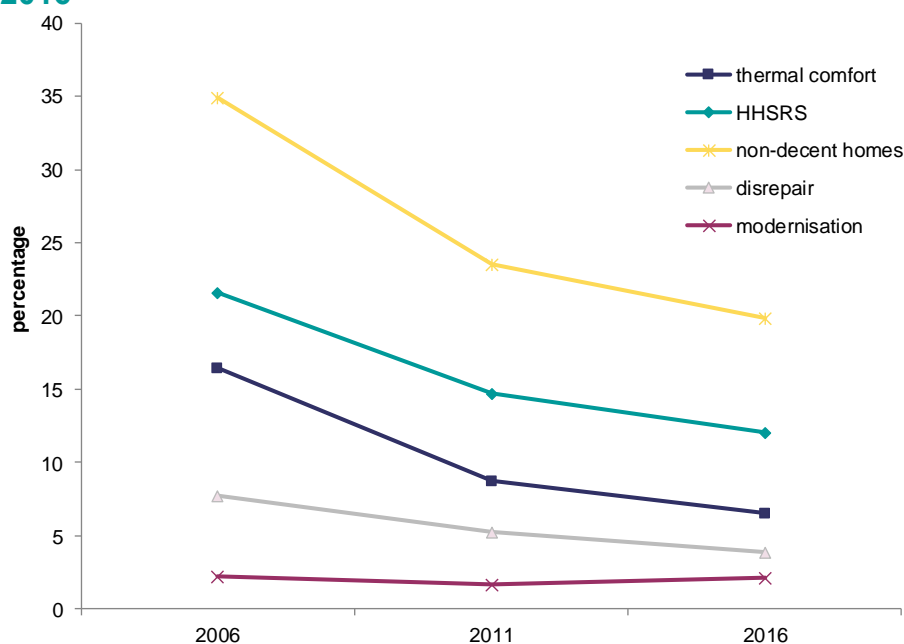   **1) uses 15-hazard HHSRS model**
    2) underlying data are presented in Live Table DA3201
Source: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

2.6   Since 2006 there has been a decrease in the prevalence of non-decency for all criteria except modernisation (i.e. modern facilities and services), most notably for the HHSRS and thermal comfort components. Non-decency due to lack of modern facilities and services increased slightly from 1.6% in 2011 to 2.1% in 2016, Figure 2.2.

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[18] See Live Table DA3201 for Decent Homes- dwellings, https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/dwelling-condition-and-safety

Figure 2.2: Reasons for failing the Decent Homes Standard, 2006, 2011 and 2016

Base: all dwellings
Notes:
   1) uses 15-hazard HHSRS model
   2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.1
Sources:
   2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
   2011 and 2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

2.7   Looking at the reasons for non-decency, since 2006, the pattern of change for the overall stock was similar for owner occupied and private rented homes. For local authority dwellings, however, the prevalence of lack of thermal comfort has become similar to the prevalence of non-decency due to disrepair. For housing association homes, lack of thermal comfort was the most common reason for failing the Standard over the 2011 to 2016 time period[19], Annex Table 2.2 (2006 data).

2.8   In 2016, 81% of homes failing the Decent Homes Standard failed on only one of the four criteria. The proportion of homes failing due to one criterion increased from 2006, while the proportion failing on two, three or four criteria all decreased, Figure 2.3[20].

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[19] See Live Table DA3201 for Decent Homes- dwellings (2008 to 2016 data),
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/dwelling-condition-and-safety
[20] Annex Table 2.4 provides data regarding the repair costs required so that non-decent homes can pass the Decent Homes Standard. Costs have been rebased to 2016 to allow time series comparisons.

Figure 2.3: Trends in number of Decent Homes criteria failed, all tenures, 2006, 2011 and 2016
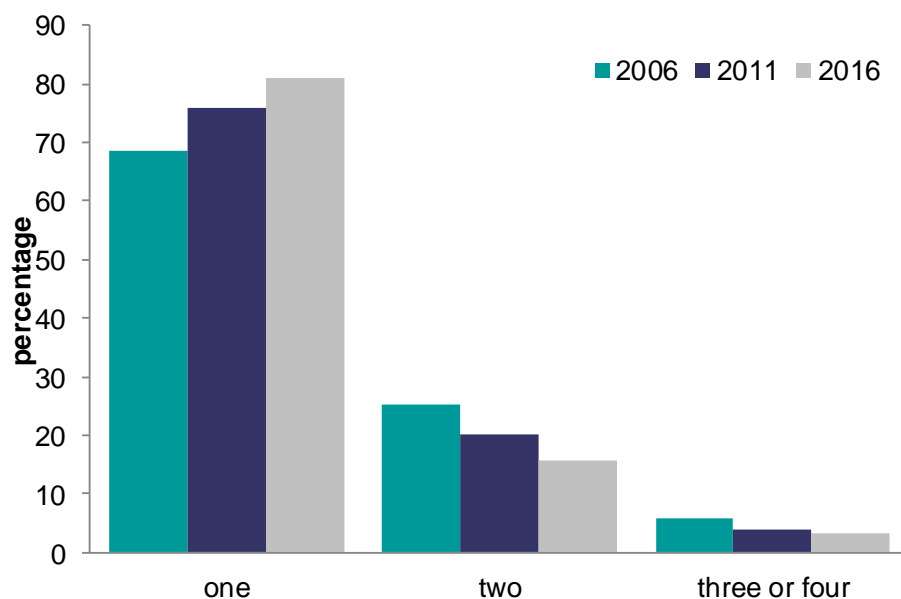
Base: all non-decent dwellings
Notes:
   1) uses 15-hazard HHSRS model
   2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.3
Sources:
   2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
   2011 and 2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

2.9   The HHSRS is a risk-based assessment that identifies hazards in dwellings and evaluates their potential effects on the health and safety of occupants and their visitors, particularly vulnerable people.[21] The most serious hazards are called Category 1 hazards and where these exist in a home, it fails to meet the statutory minimum standard for housing in England.

2.10   This section examines the prevalence of Category 1 hazards in the stock. It then reports on the most common types of hazards where the risks to health and safety were assessed as significantly higher than average (including Category 1 hazards).

Prevalence of Category 1 hazards

2.11   Since 2008 there has been a fall in the proportion of dwellings that failed the statutory minimum standard for housing, across the whole stock and for each

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[21] See Technical Report, Chapter 5, Annex 5.5, for further details of the HHSRS.

tenure. From 2008 to 2016 there was a reduction in the proportion of dwellings with a Category 1 hazard from 23% to 12%[22].

2.12 While the private rented sector had the highest proportion of homes with any Category 1 hazard throughout the 2008 to 2016 period, there was a notable decrease in the proportion of stock with such hazards, from 31% in 2008 to 15% in 2016. This is likely the result of newer homes entering the private rented stock, the installation of energy efficiency measures and improvements in standards due to local enforcement, Figure 2.4.

2.13 Social rented homes were less likely to have Category 1 hazards. This is likely to be due to the stock being 'newer', housing investment through Decent Homes work and planned/responsive repair programmes in this tenure.

Figure 2.4: Category 1 hazards by tenure, 2008 and 2016
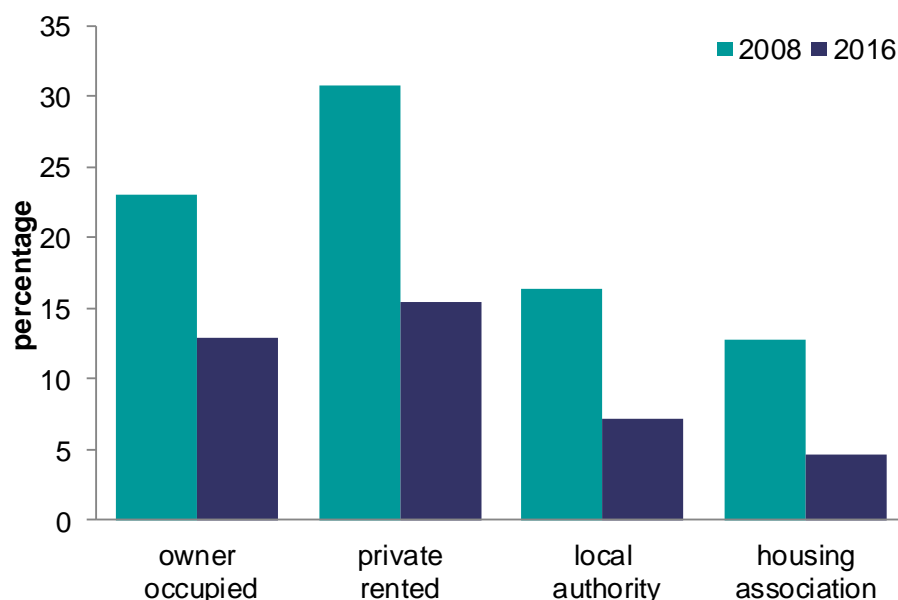
Base: all dwellings
Notes:
   1) uses 26-hazard HHSRS model
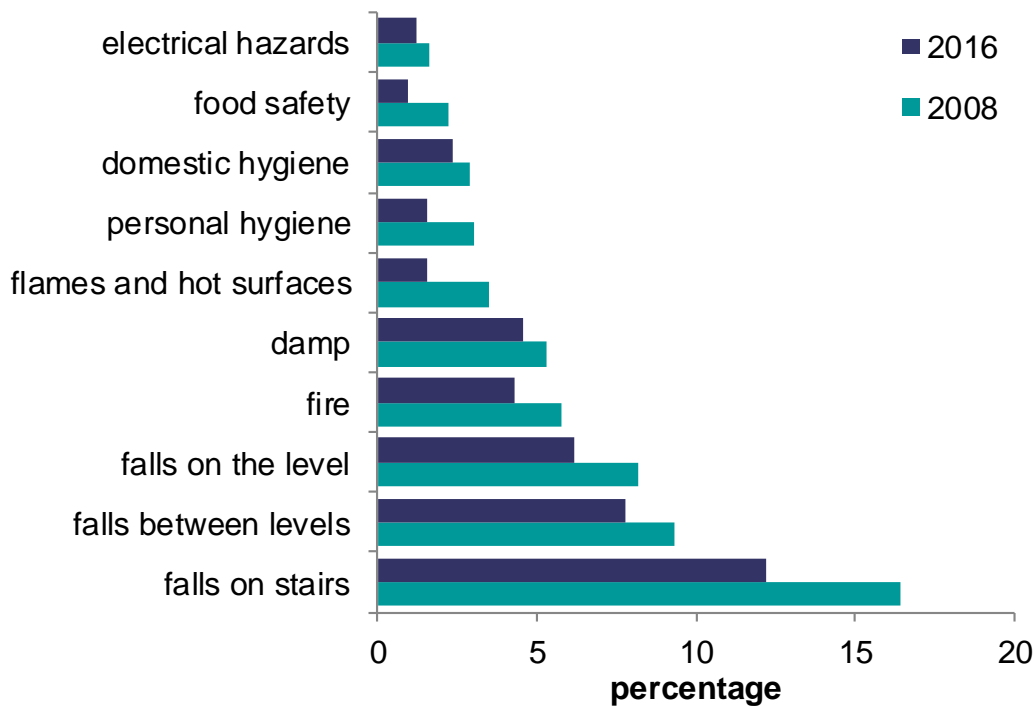   **2) underlying data are presented in Live Table DA4101**
Source: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

Prevalence of significantly worse than average hazards

2.14 In 2008 and 2016 the most common hazards assessed as significantly worse than average related to risks associated with falls on stairs, falls between levels and falls on the level. There has, however, been a reduction in the proportion of homes where risks associated with these three hazards are significantly higher than average (including Category 1 hazards). There were also reductions in the prevalence of other more common hazards, Figure 2.5.

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[22] See Live Table DA4101 for health and safety- dwellings, https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/dwelling-condition-and-safety

Figure 2.5: Proportion of dwellings with a significantly higher than average risk to health and safety, 2008 and 2016

Base: all dwellings
Notes:
   1) uses 26-hazard HHSRS model
   2) underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.5
Sources: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

Electrical safety

2.15   In 2016, 62% of homes had all five electrical safety features[23]. 74% of both local authority and housing association dwellings had all five electrical safety features compared with 60% of private rented homes and 59% of owner occupied homes, Figure 2.6.

2.16   For all tenures there has been a marked increase in the provision of all five electrical safety measures between 2001 and 2016.

Damp

2.17   This section has two parts. First, it reports on the prevalence of damp using the physical survey (surveyor assessment). Second, it reports on the prevalence of damp reported by households as part of the interview survey (household assessment). The surveyor and household assessments are not directly comparable as the physical survey records the presence of damp on

[23] These are: modern PVC wiring, modern earthing, modern consumer unit casing, miniature circuit breakers and residual current devices. It may not be possible for the surveyor to identify the presence of each electrical safety feature (e.g. problems in accessing the garage) so there will be some unknown cases within the dwelling stock.

the day of the survey,[24] while the interview survey asks respondents about their experiences of damp and mould in their home more generally.

Figure 2.6: Trends in proportion of dwellings with all 5 electrical safety features, by tenure, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016
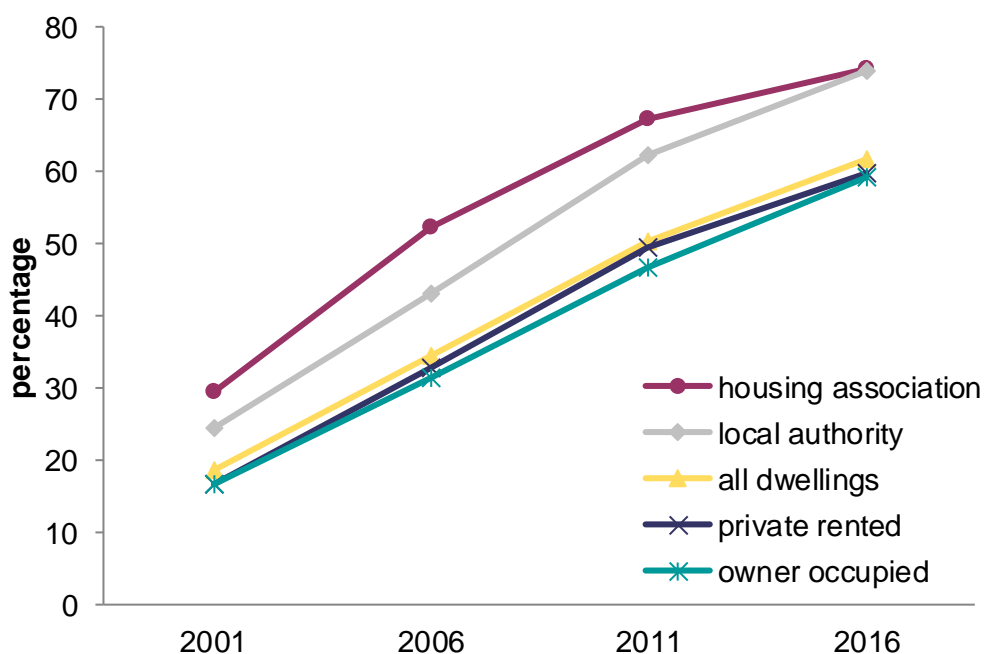
Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.6
Sources:
** 2001 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;**
** 2011 and 2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample**

Surveyor assessment

2.18   In 2016, about a million homes (4%) had problems with damp, down from 2.6 million (13%) homes in 1996, although there has been little change in the incidence of damp since 2011[25]. For the whole stock the most common type of damp was serious condensation and mould. However, among owner occupied and private rented homes levels of condensation/mould were similar to those of rising and penetrating damp[26].

2.19   Between 1996 and 2016 there has been a decrease in the occurrence of damp in all tenures, but this was particularly notable in the private rented sector where the prevalence of damp fell from 26% to 8%, Figure 2.7.

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[24] The surveyor records the presence of damp where extensive patches of mould growth on walls and ceilings and/or mildew on soft furnishings are found.
[25] See EHS Headline Report 2016-17 Figure 2.6 and Annex Table 2.3
[26] See EHS Headline Report 2016-17 Figure 2.6, Figure 2.7 and Annex Table 2.4

Figure 2.7: Damp, by tenure, 1996, 2006 and 2016
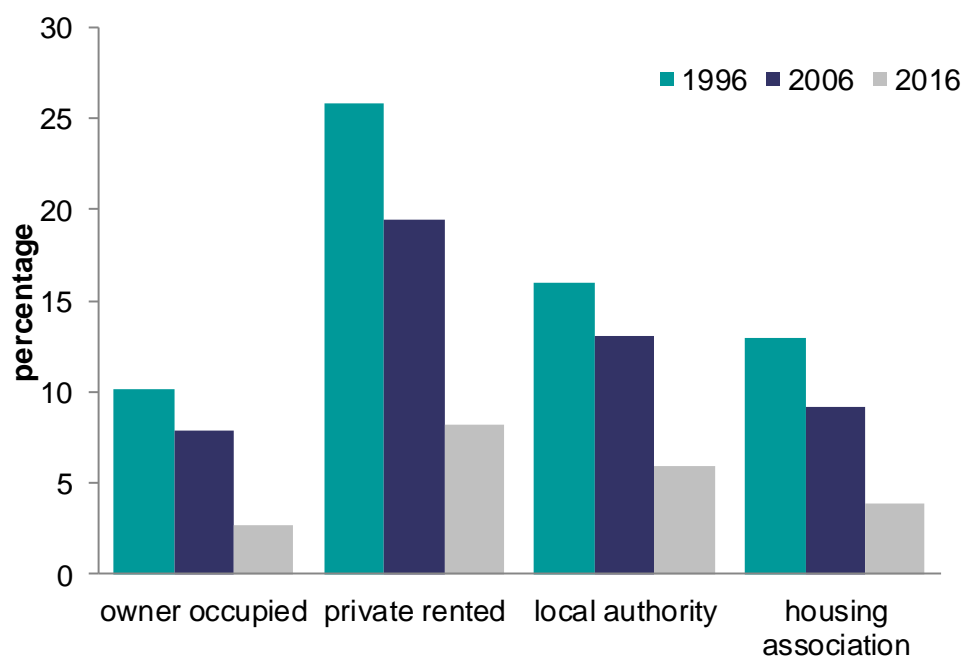
Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.7
Sources:
   1996 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
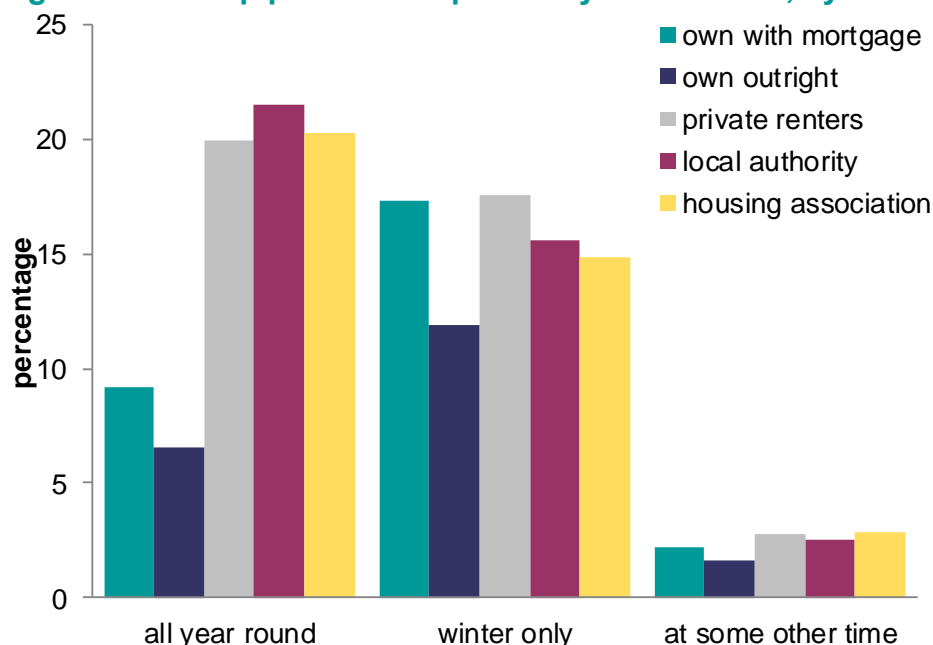   **2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample**

Household assessment

2.20   In 2016-17, 30% of households (6.9 million) reported an issue with condensation, damp or mould in their home; 15% reported that the problems occurred in the winter only, 12% reported that damp occurred all year round and 2% reported the problems occurred at some other time. Overall, a higher proportion of renters reported problems with damp compared with owners, particularly outright owners, Annex Table 2.8.

2.21   Renters were more likely to report problems with damp all year round, for example, 22% of local authority renters compared with 7% of outright owners. Outright owners were less likely to report damp in winter only compared with households in all other tenures, Figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8: Damp problems reported by households, by tenure, 2016-17

Legend:
- own with mortgage
- own outright
- private renters
- local authority
- housing association

Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.8
Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

2.22   Overall, households living in converted flats were more likely to report problems with damp. Conversely, a lower proportion of households living in semi-detached or detached homes reported problems with damp, Annex Table 2.8.

2.23   Among those 6.9 million households who reported problems with damp, the vast majority (86%) said the damp had been there since they started living in their home, 7% said the problems started after the property was insulated, and 3% said the problems got worse after the property was insulated, Annex Table 2.9.

2.24   Households were more likely to report damp problems as having already existed when moving into their home if they were private renters. Conversely, private renters were less likely to report problems with damp after the property was insulated or to report damp as getting worse after it was insulated.

2.25   Households living in converted flats were more likely to report that damp was present in their home when they moved in.

2.26   Actions taken by households who reported damp in their homes mainly involved opening the windows (89%), while 31% of households used extractor fans and 16% used trickle vents, Annex Table 2.10. The actions taken to mitigate against the damp problems showed a similar pattern across all tenures, with opening windows being the most common action taken, followed by extractor fans and trickle vents.

2.27   There were some differences in the types of action according to the type of
        dwelling lived in. Households living in purpose built flats (92%) were more
        likely to open windows to help alleviate damp than those in converted flats
        (86%) or detached houses or bungalows (87%). Households living in terraces
        houses (28%) were less likely to use extractor fans than those in purpose built
        flats (35%) while those living in converted flats (10%) were less likely to use
        trickle vents than all other households (around 18%) except those living in
        terraced houses.

Disrepair

2.28   The analysis uses standardised basic repair costs to show comparative levels
        of disrepair among different tenures[27].

2.29   Standardised repair costs fell between 1996 and 2016 from £35 per m² to £16
        per m². There was a reduction in costs for all tenures, especially for private
        rented homes (£69 per m² to £24 per m²). Despite this, levels of disrepair are
        still highest for the private rented stock, Figure 2.9.

Figure 2.9: Standardised basic repair costs, by tenure, 1996, 2006 and 2016
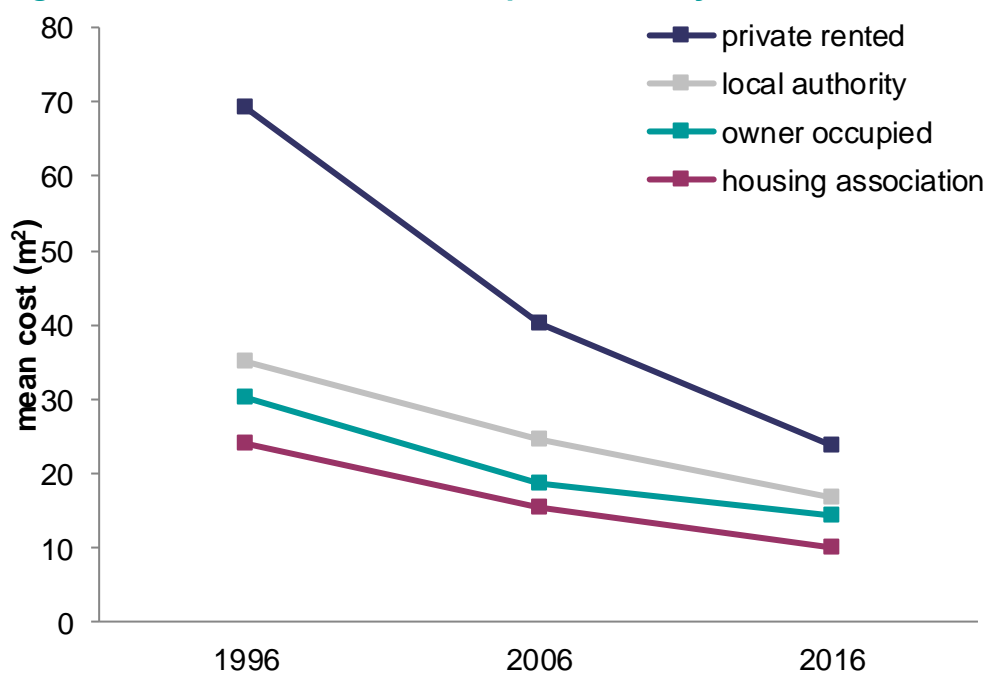
Base: all dwellings
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.11
Sources:
   1996 and 2006: English House Condition Survey, dwelling sample;
   2016: English Housing Survey, dwelling sample

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[27] See the Technical Notes for details of how the EHS categorises disrepair and calculates standardised repair
costs. Standardised repair costs for years earlier than 2016 were set at 2016 prices using the Building Cost
Information Service (BCIS) National Index. The methodology used to create the different EHS repair costs
variables is different to that used to calculate whether a dwelling meets the repair criterion of the Decent Homes
Standard. See EHS Technical Report 2016-17 for details of the different modelling methodologies.

Chapter 3
Poor housing conditions

3.1 This chapter examines the extent to which the following types of households live in poor housing, homes that lack all five electrical safety features[28], or in deprived areas[29]: households with a Black, Asian or minority ethnic HRP (Household Reference Person), households with relative low income[30], households that spend 30% or more of their household income on housing, households which included someone with a long-term illness or disability, and lone parent households.

3.2 For the purposes of this chapter, 'poor housing' is a home that: has serious damp or mould; is non-decent; or has substantial disrepair. These problems may co-exist for a significant number of dwellings. A 'deprived area' is one in the lowest 20% of ranked areas by the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation[31].

3.3 The reasons why certain households are more likely to live in poorer housing conditions are interrelated and complex, and not explored in this report[32].

Tenure overview

3.4 Housing conditions vary by tenure. Private renters were more likely to live in poor housing (38%) than owner occupiers (24%) and social renters (22%). Social renters were less likely to lack all five electrical safety features than owner occupiers and private renters. However, almost half (46%) of social renters resided in deprived areas compared with 11% of owner occupiers and 21% of private renters, Figure 3.1.

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[28] Electrical safety is explored in Chapter 2 of this report. The five electrical safety features are: modern PVC wiring, modern earthing, modern consumer unit casing, miniature circuit breakers and residual current devices.
[29] A 'deprived area' is one in the lowest 20% of ranked areas by the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation.
[30] Households whose equivalised income Before Housing Costs (BHC) is less than 60% of the median value of the BHC equivalised weekly income of all households.
[31] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015
[32] While this report provides an overview and descriptive statistics on some disparities, *English Housing Survey Variations in Housing Circumstances, 2016-17*, published alongside this report, uses multivariate analysis to look at two housing quality indicators (non-decent homes and damp) and how these vary between households.

Figure 3.1: Poor housing conditions, by tenure, 2016-17
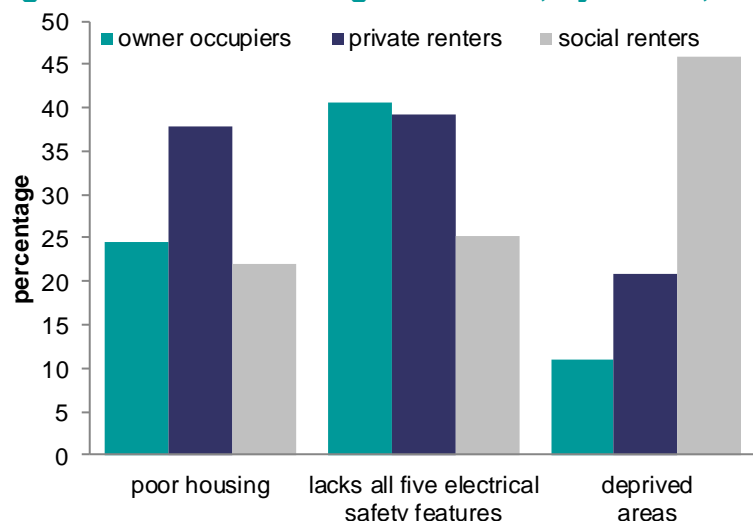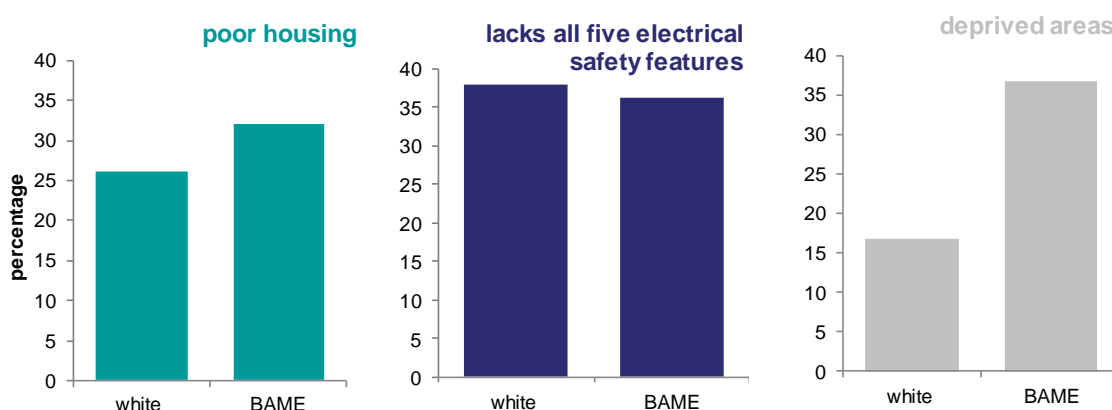

Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.1
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub-sample

Ethnicity

3.5   Overall, households with a Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) HRP (Household Reference Person[33]) were more likely to live in poor housing and in deprived areas. About a quarter (26%) of households with a white HRP lived in poor housing, compared with 32% of households with a BAME HRP. Households with a BAME HRP (37%) were also more likely than their white counterparts (17%) to live in deprived areas. No such disparity existed between the two groups on electrical safety, Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Poor housing conditions, by ethnicity, 2016-17
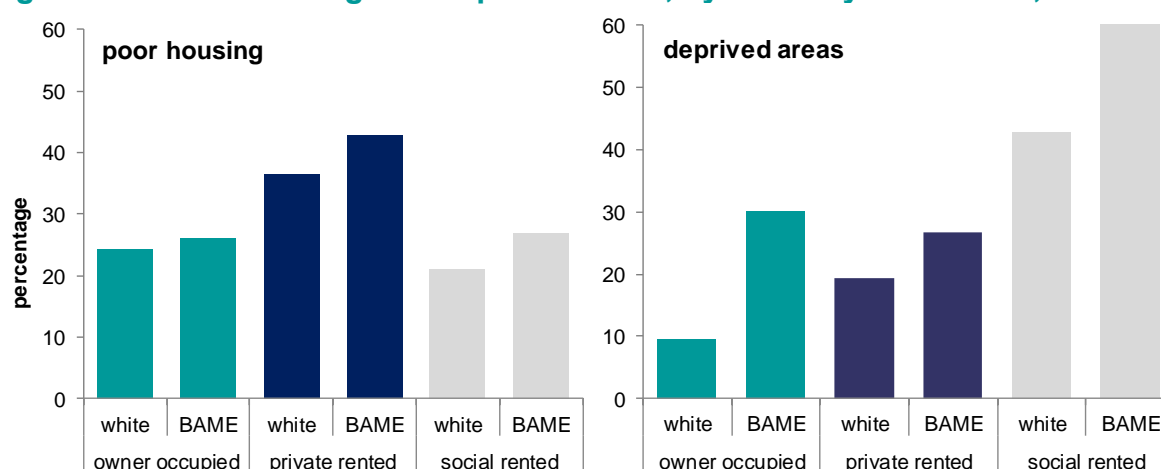

Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 3.2
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub sample

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[33] The HRP is the 'householder' in whose name the dwelling is owned or rented or who is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. See glossary for more details.

3.6 However, not all minority ethnic groups were overrepresented in poor housing or in deprived areas. Households with an Indian HRP were less likely to live in poor housing than Pakistani or Bangladeshi households (26% compared with 36%). Households with an Indian HRP were also less likely to live in deprived areas (18% compared with 52% of households with a Pakistani or Bangladeshi HRP and 45% with a Black HRP), Annex Table 3.2.

3.7 The disparity between white and BAME households in poor housing was observed in the private and social rented sectors, but not among owner occupiers. Meanwhile, the disparity between white and BAME households living in deprived areas was evident across all tenures but was particularly pronounced among owner occupiers and social renters, Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Poor housing and deprived areas, by ethnicity and tenure, 2016-17

Base: all households
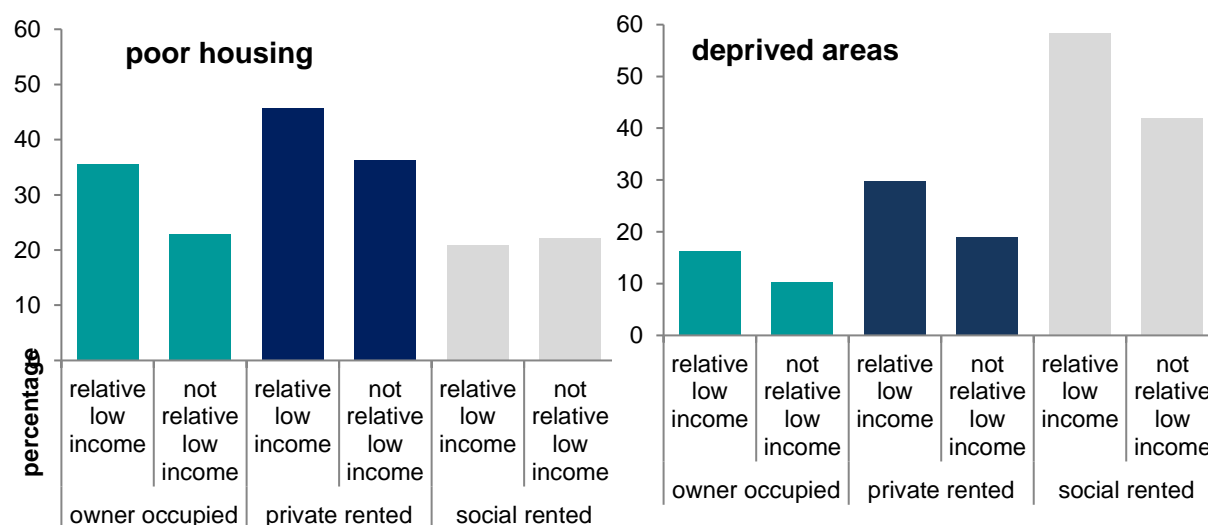**Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5**
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub-sample

Households with relative low income[34]

3.8 Irrespective of tenure, households with relative low income were more likely to live in deprived areas. Almost a third (31%) of all households with relative low income lived in deprived areas compared with 17% of other households, Annex Table 3.2.

3.9 Households with relative low income were also more likely than other households to live in poor housing (34% compared with 25%). This was true for owner occupiers and private renters but not for social renters. Social renters with relative low income were no more likely to live in poor housing than other social renters, Figure 3.4.

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[34] Households whose equivalised income Before Housing Costs (BHC) is less than 60% of the median value of the BHC equivalised weekly income of all households.

Figure 3.4: Poor housing and deprived areas, by relative low income and tenure, 2016-17

Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub-sample

3.10   Relative low income did not appear to affect whether a household had all five electrical safety features; except among owner occupiers. Half (50%) of owner occupiers with relative low income did not have all five electrical safety measures compared with 40% of other owner occupiers.

Housing costs as a proportion of income

3.11   This section examines whether there are differences in housing conditions between households that spend 30% or more of their household income on housing and households that spend less than 30% of their household income on housing.

3.12   Irrespective of tenure, households that spend a greater proportion of their income on housing were more likely to live in poor housing (31%) and/or deprived areas (13%) compared with other households (27% and 11%, respectively), Annex Table 3.2.

3.13   The disparity was greatest for private renters: 42% of private renters who spent 30% or more of their income on housing lived in poor housing, compared with 35% of other private renters. A quarter (24%) of private renters who spent 30% or more of their income on housing lived in deprived areas, compared with 19% of other private renters. In contrast, social renters who spent a greater proportion of their income on housing were less likely to live in poor housing than other social renters (20% compared with 23%), Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: Poor housing and deprived areas, by housing costs and tenure, 2016-17
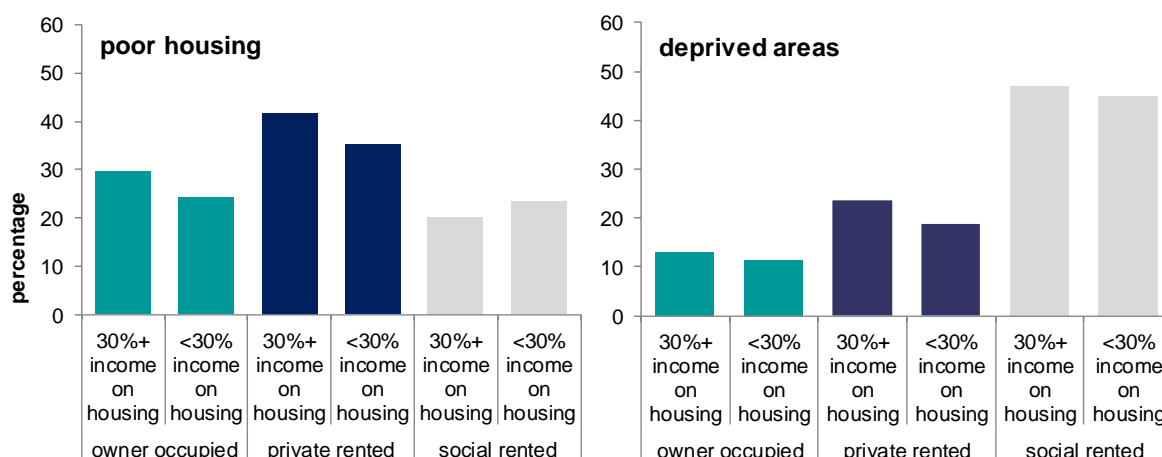
Base: all households
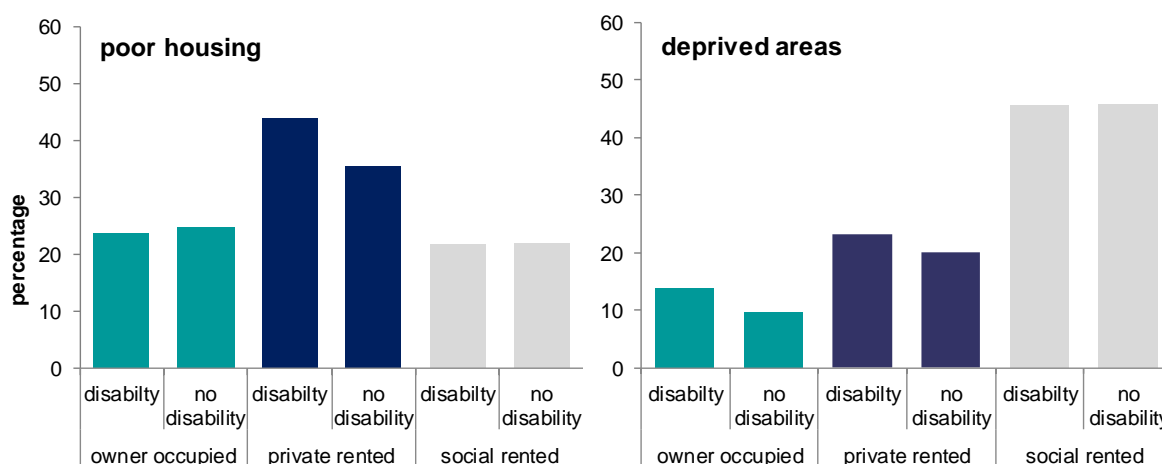**Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5**
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub sample

Long-term illness or disability[35]

3.14   Overall, households which included someone with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to live in deprived areas (24%) than other households (17%), Annex Table 3.2. While no such disparity existed overall in relation to poor housing or electrical safety, there were disparities by tenure.

3.15   Among owner occupiers, households which contained someone with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to live in deprived areas (14% compared with 10%) but there was no such disparity among private or social renters, Figure 3.6. Owner occupier households which contained someone with a long-term illness or disability were also more likely to not have all five electrical safety features (43% compared with 40% of other owner occupiers). This is also true for private renters (42% compared with 39%), Annex Table 3.3.

3.16   In the private rented sector, households which contained someone with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to live in poor housing than other private renters (44% compared with 35%). This was not the case among owner occupiers or social renters.

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[35] In 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.

Figure 3.6: Poor housing and deprived areas, by long-term illness or disability and tenure, 2016-17

Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5
Source: English Housing Survey, household sub-sample

3.17   Households with at least one person aged 65 or over who had a long-term illness or disability were more likely to live in deprived areas than other older households[36] (19% compared with 11%). However, there was no difference between these two groups for the likelihood of living in poor housing or having all five electrical safety features, Annex Table 3.2.

Lone parent households

3.18   This section describes the relative housing conditions of lone parents with dependent children and couples with dependent children[37].

3.19   Overall, lone parent households with dependent children were more likely to live in deprived areas than couples with dependent children (31% compared with 18%). However, this disparity was only evident among private renters: here lone parents with dependent children were more likely than couples with dependent children to live in deprived areas (28% compared with 19%), Figure 3.7.

3.20   Lone parent households with dependent children were also more likely to live in poor housing (32% compared with 27% of couples with dependent children). However, this disparity was only evident among owner occupiers (35% compared with 24%).

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[36] Containing any person aged 65 or older that does not have a long-term illness or disability.
[37] The analysis excludes those lone parents who form part of other multi-person households, some 125,000 households, Annex Table 3.6.

3.21 There were no disparities in the social rented sector (between lone parents with dependent children and couples with dependent children) for any of the housing conditions explored.

Figure 3.7: Poor housing and deprived areas, by dependent children and tenure, 2016-17
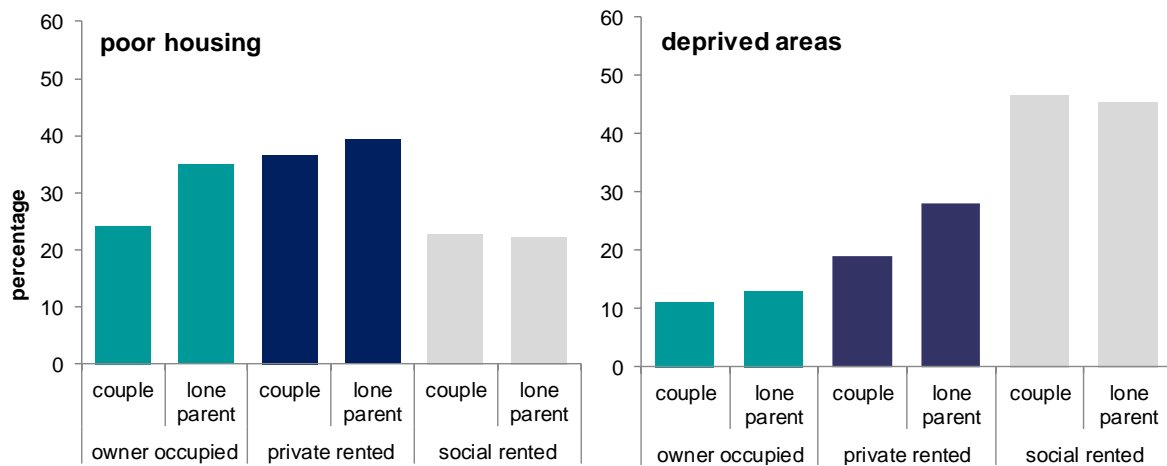
Base: all households
Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5
Sources: English Housing Survey, household sub-sample

Technical notes and glossary

Technical notes

1. The majority of results in the first section of the report relate to dwellings, are presented for '2016' and are based on fieldwork carried out between April 2015 and March 2017 (a mid-point of April 2016). The sample comprises 12,292 occupied or vacant dwellings where a physical inspection was carried out. Throughout the report, this is referred to as the 'dwelling sample'. Throughout the report, this is referred to as the 'full household sample'.

2. The majority of results in the second section of the report are presented for '2016' and are based on fieldwork carried out between April 2015 and March 2017 on a sample of 12,292 dwellings. The sub-section on household assessment of damp is presented for '2016-17' and based on fieldwork carried out between April 2016 and March 2017 on a sample of 12,970 households.

3. Results in the third section of the report are presented for '2016-17' and based on fieldwork carried out between April 2016 and March 2017 on a sample of 12,970 households.

4. 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".

5. 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.

6. 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.

Glossary

Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME): See *Ethnicity*, below.

Category 1 hazard: The most serious type of hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Where such a hazard exists the dwelling fails to reach the statutory minimum standard for housing in England.

Cost to make decent: The cost of carrying out all works required to ensure that the dwelling meets the Decent Homes standard. This is the estimated required expenditure which includes access equipment (e.g. scaffolding and prelims). It is adjusted to reflect regional and tenure variations in building prices.

Damp and mould: There are three main categories of damp and mould covered in this report:

- **rising damp**: where the surveyor has noted the presence of rising damp in at least one of the rooms surveyed during the physical survey. Rising damp occurs when water from the ground rises up into the walls or floors because damp proof courses in walls or damp proof membranes in floors are either not present or faulty.

- **penetrating damp**: where the surveyor has noted the presence of penetrating damp in at least one of the rooms surveyed during the physical survey. Penetrating damp is caused by leaks from faulty components of the external fabric e.g. roof covering, gutters etc. or leaks from internal plumbing, e.g. water pipes, radiators etc.

- **condensation or mould**: caused by water vapour generated by activities like cooking and bathing condensing on cold surfaces like windows and walls. Virtually all dwellings have some level of condensation. Only serious levels of condensation or mould are considered as a problem in this report, namely where there are extensive patches of mould growth on walls and ceilings and/or mildew on soft furnishings.

Decent home: A home that meets all of the following four criteria:

- it meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing as set out in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS – see below).

- it is in a reasonable state of repair (related to the age and condition of a range of building components including walls, roofs, windows, doors, chimneys, electrics and heating systems).

- it has reasonably modern facilities and services (related to the age, size and layout/location of the kitchen, bathroom and WC and any common areas for blocks of flats, and to noise insulation).

- it provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (related to insulation and heating efficiency).

The detailed definition for each of these criteria is included in *A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation*, Department for Communities and Local Government, June 2006[38].

Dependent children: Any person aged 0 to 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or a person aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s) or grandparent(s). It does not include any people aged 16 to 18 who have a spouse, partner or child living in the household.

Deprived local areas: These are Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) scored and ranked by the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

Seven domains of deprivation which can be experienced by people are combined to produce the overall IMD. These seven domains relate to:

- Income deprivation
- Employment deprivation
- Health deprivation and disability
- Education skills and training deprivation
- Barriers to housing and services
- Crime
- Living environment deprivation

LSOAs are statistical geography providing uniformity of size. There are 32,844 in England and on average each contains around 1500 people or 650 households. These ranked areas have been placed into five groups of equal numbers of areas, from the 20% most deprived area on the index, to the 20% least deprived.

Dwelling: A unit of accommodation which may comprise one or more household spaces (a household space is the accommodation used or available for use by an individual household). A dwelling may be classified as shared or unshared. A dwelling is shared if:

- the household spaces it contains are 'part of a converted or shared house', or

- not all of the rooms (including kitchen, bathroom and toilet, if any) are behind a door that only that household can use, and

- there is at least one other such household space at the same address with which it can be combined to form the shared dwelling.

Dwellings that do not meet these conditions are unshared dwellings.

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[38] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance

The EHS definition of dwelling is consistent with the Census 2011.

Dwelling age: The date of construction of the oldest part of the building.

Dwelling type: Dwellings are classified, on the basis of the surveyor's inspection, into the following categories:

- **small terraced house:** a house with a total floor area of less than 70m^2 forming part of a block where at least one house is attached to two or more other houses. The total floor area is measured using the original EHS definition of useable floor area, used in EHS reports up to and including the 2012 reports. That definition tends to yield a smaller floor area compared with the definition that is aligned with the Nationally Described Space Standard and used on the EHS since 2013. As a result of the difference between the two definitions, some small terraced houses are reported in the 2014 Housing Supply Report as having more than 70m².

- **medium/large terraced house:** a house with a total floor area of 70m^2 or more forming part of a block where at least one house is attached to two or more other houses. The total floor area is measured using the original EHS definition of useable floor area which tends to yield a small floor area compared with the definition used on the EHS since 2013.

- **end terraced house:** a house attached to one other house only in a block where at least one house is attached to two or more other houses.

- **mid terraced house:** a house attached to two other houses in a block.

- **semi-detached house:** a house that is attached to just one other in a block of two.

- **detached house:** a house where none of the habitable structure is joined to another building (other than garages, outhouses etc.).

- **bungalow:** a house with all of the habitable accommodation on one floor. This excludes chalet bungalows and bungalows with habitable loft conversions, which are treated as houses.

- **converted flat:** a flat resulting from the conversion of a house or former non-residential building. Includes buildings converted into a flat plus commercial premises (such as corner shops).

- **purpose built flat, low-rise:** a flat in a purpose built block less than six storeys high. Includes cases where there is only one flat with independent access in a building which is also used for non-domestic purposes.

- **purpose built flat, high-rise:** a flat in a purpose built block at least six storeys high.

Electrical safety:

- **wiring**: this is the cabling from the input electrical supply point, which runs through the meters and consumer units and leading out into the dwelling. The earliest types of wiring used lead or black rubber sheathings to enclose the wires. The danger with this type of cable is the degrading of the rubber: any failure of the insulation can cause the outer covering to become live. Modern wiring is PVC sheathed.

- **earthing**: these are the wires joining the components at the electrical distribution centre. The early forms of earthing wires were unsheathed then later covered with green rubber, then green plastic. In 1977 the colour convention changed and all wires had to be coloured green and yellow.

- **consumer unit arrangement (fuse boxes)**: in older systems, each individual electrical circuit was fed through an individual switch and fuse box. From 1960s through to the 1980s, fuses were collected together into a small number of smaller boxes, normally with a switch on the front which controlled all the circuits leading to the box. These boxes were normally fitted with a cover, the removal of which gave access to the fuses hidden inside. From the early 1980s, the newly named consumer unit (some dwellings have two) catered for the whole dwelling and was also designed to accommodate modern safety measures namely circuit breakers and residual current devices.

- **overload protection / miniature circuit breakers (MCBs)**: these provide the most modern form of electrical current overload protection by detecting a fault condition and interrupting the current flow. MCBs replaced cartridge fuses and the original wire fuses (these simply melt when overheated) which formed the earliest form of protection.

- **residual current devices (RCDs)**: these are designed to break an electrical current very easily by detecting any abnormality in the circuit, for example, through someone touching a live wire. They are normally located in the consumer unit but a separate RCD may exist to protect an additional circuit, for example, an electrical circuit used in the garden.

Ethnicity: Classification according to respondents' own perceived ethnic group.

Ethnic minority background or Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) are used throughout the report to refer to those respondents who do not identify as White.

The classification of ethnic group used in the EHS is consistent with the 2011 Census. Respondents are classified as White if they answer one of the following four options:

1. English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
2. Irish

3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any Other White background

Otherwise, they are classified as being from an ethnic minority background.

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.

Household type: The main classification of household type uses the following categories; some categories may be split or combined in different tables:

• couple no dependent child(ren)
• couple with dependent child(ren)
• couple with dependent and independent child(ren)
• couple with independent child(ren)
• lone parent with dependent child(ren)
• lone parent with dependent and independent child(ren)
• lone parent with independent child(ren)
• two or more families
• lone person sharing with other lone persons
• one male
• one female

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS): A risk assessment tool used to assess potential risks to the health and safety of occupants in residential properties in England and Wales. It replaced the Fitness Standard in April 2006.

The purpose of the HHSRS assessment[39] is not to set a standard but to generate objective information in order to determine and inform enforcement decisions. There are 29 categories of hazard, each of which is separately rated, based on the risk to the potential occupant who is most vulnerable to that hazard. The individual hazard scores are grouped into 10 bands where the highest bands (A-C representing scores of 1,000 or more) are considered to pose Category 1 hazards. Local authorities have a duty to act where Category 1 hazards are present, and may take into account the vulnerability of the actual occupant in determining the best course of action.

For the purposes of the decent homes standard, homes posing a Category 1 hazard are non-decent on its criterion that a home must meet the statutory minimum requirements.

The EHS is not able to replicate the HHSRS assessment in full as part of a large scale survey. Its assessment employs a mix of hazards that are directly assessed by surveyors in the field and others that are indirectly assessed from detailed related information collected. For 2006 and 2007, the survey (the then English House Condition Survey) produced estimates based on 15 of the 29 hazards. From 2008, the survey is able to provide a more comprehensive assessment based on 26 of the 29 hazards. See the EHS Technical Note on Housing and Neighbourhood Conditions[40] for a list of the hazards covered.

Income (equivalised): Household incomes have been 'equivalised', that is adjusted (using the modified Organisation Economic Co-operation and Development scale) to reflect the number of people in a household. This allows the comparison of incomes for households with different sizes and compositions.

The EHS variables are modelled to produce a **Before Housing Costs (BHC)** income measure for the purpose of equivalisation. The BHC income variable includes:

Household Reference Person and partner's income from benefits and private sources (including income from savings), income from other household members, housing benefit, winter fuel payment and the deduction of net council tax payment.

Large Scale Voluntary Transfer: A Large Scale Voluntary Transfer is the voluntary transfer of ownership of all or some of a local authority's tenanted and leasehold homes to a private registered housing provider, registered by the Social Housing Regulator, in return for a payment for the value of that stock.

Long-term illness or disability: In the core definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if they have a long-standing

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[39] https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-hhsrs-guidance
[40] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/211302/Housing_and_Neighbourhood_Conditions.pdf

illness, disability or impairment which causes substantial difficulty with day-to-day activities.

Median income: The amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount.

Parking provision: This represents the 'best' parking available to the dwelling i.e. if the home has both a garage and off street parking, parking provision is coded as 'garage'. The parking provision does not have to be located on the plot of the dwelling – an off street parking space or garage may be in a block further down the street or round the corner.

All types of parking provision recorded are for the exclusive use of the survey dwelling apart from any available parking in communal areas. Communal parking relates to car parking provision for the module or block of which the survey dwelling is a part. Dwellings may have access to more than one type of communal parking facility. Other off street parking refers to either a designated parking space or a car port at the dwelling plot.

- Adequate parking - street parking generally being available outside or adjacent to the house or block of flats where the surveyed flat is located and the road is sufficiently wide to allow easy passage of traffic.

- Inadequate parking - it is difficult to park outside the house or block of flats where the surveyed flat is located. This might be due to the volume of cars competing for places, or due to legal restrictions on parking.

- None – it is not possible to park outside the house or block of flats where the surveyed flat is located at any time due to either the distance from the road or permanent parking restrictions.

Plot: The EHS records a number of details relating to the land immediately surrounding a dwelling, referred to as the dwelling's plot. The plot may be private (exclusive access) or shared (shared access, for example where a block of flats have a shared garden). The plot may consist of hard landscaping (e.g. concrete, tarmac, paving, gravel), soft landscaping (e.g. lawn, flower/vegetable beds), or a combination.

Secure windows and doors: The main entrance door to the dwelling and any accessible windows need to be assessed by surveyors as either highly secure or fairly highly secure

- **Main entrance door:**

  o **High**: good quality door that is double glazed or contains no glazing. It should have a strong frame, and auto deadlocking rim lock in the top one-third of the door plus a mortice lock in the lower third of the door.

- o **Fairly high:** as above but with either a standard Yale lock instead of the auto deadlocking rim lock or the locks not set apart.

- **Accessible windows:**

  - o **High:** double glazed windows with key locks
  - o **Fairly high:** double glazed windows without key locks

Secondary amenities: Additional WCs and baths/showers that are located inside the dwelling.

Storeys: The number of storeys *above* ground i.e. it does not include any basements.

Substantial disrepair: Standardised basic repair costs of more than £35/m². Standardised repair costs measure repair costs expressed in pounds per square metre of floor area

Thermal comfort: an assessment from the surveyor as to whether a dwelling has both efficient heating; and effective insulation. Efficient heating is defined as

- any gas or oil programmable central heating

- electric storage heaters; or warm air systems

- underfloor systems

- programmable LPG/solid fuel central heating

- similarly efficient heating systems which are developed in the future

The primary heating system must have a distribution system sufficient to provide heat to two or more rooms of the home. There may be storage heaters in two or more rooms, or other heaters that use the same fuel in two or more rooms.

Because of the differences in efficiency between gas/oil heating systems and the other heating systems listed, the level of insulation that is appropriate also differs:

- For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively) or at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is loft space) is an effective package of insulation.

- For dwellings heated by electric storage heaters/LPG/programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively).

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).

Vacant dwellings: The assessment of whether or not a dwelling is vacant is made at the time of the interviewer's visit. Clarification of vacancy is sought from neighbours. Both properties in between lets and those that are vacant for a longer period are classified as vacant on the EHS. Surveyors are required to gain access to vacant dwellings and undertake full inspections.

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.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.