



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Statistical release

Housing

Housing supply: indicators of new supply, England: October to December 2020

In this release:

Building control figures (seasonally adjusted):

- The number of dwellings where - according to building control figures - building work has started on site was 42,110 in October to December 2020. This is a 16 per cent increase when compared to last quarter. Following a 116 per cent increase from July to September 2020, this is the first consecutive quarterly increase since June 2017.
- The number of dwellings completed - according to building control figures - on site was 46,950 in October to December 2020. This is a 4 per cent increase when compared to last quarter. Following a 185 per cent increase from July to September 2020, this represents the first consecutive quarterly increase since September 2019.

Other housing supply indicators:

- There were 243,770 net additional dwellings between April 2019 and March 2020, a 1 per cent increase on the net additional dwellings created between April 2018 and March 2019.
- There were 66,500 new dwelling EPCs lodged in England in the quarter ending December 2020, representing a 3 per cent decrease compared to the same quarter last year. In the 12 months to December 2020, new dwelling EPCs totalled 216,600, a decrease of 15 per cent on the 12 months to December 2019.
- There was a net increase of 187,230 in the number of domestic properties with a council tax band in England between September 2019 and September 2020. This represents a 15 per cent decrease compared to the same period in the previous year.

Release date: 18 March 2021

Date of next release: July 2021

Contact: Simon Gillespie housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk

Media enquiries: 0303 444 1209 NewsDesk@communities.gov.uk

Table of contents

In this release:.....	1
Table of contents	2
Introduction	2
Changes to this release	3
Building control reported new build starts and completions	3
Final tenure estimate – new build completions	8
Further indicators of supply.....	10
Accompanying tables and open data	16
Technical Notes	16

Introduction

The purpose of this release is to provide an indication of the levels of and trends in new housing supply in England (please refer to the Technical Notes document for information on statistics in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland). This statistical release presents National Statistics on building control reported estimates of housing supply in England up to 31 December 2020. The figures also show estimates of housing supply in England using other, additional, data sources.

The ‘new build dwelling’ figures are based on building control inspection data, submitted to the Ministry by local authorities, the National House Building Council (NHBC) and other independent approved building control inspectors. This series began in 1946 based solely on Local Authority building control. NHBC data were added from 1985 and, after 2007, legislation allowed data from independent approved inspectors.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) also publishes an annual release entitled ‘Housing supply: net additional dwellings’, which is the primary and most comprehensive measure of housing supply. The indicators of new supply release should be regarded as a leading indicator of overall housing supply. The next release of ‘Housing supply: net additional dwellings’ will be in November 2021.

Changes to this release

MHCLG published a consultation, on 26 March 2020, on proposed changes to further improve the house building statistics. This is the third release since this consultation was published. The consultation is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/house-building-statistics-proposed-changes>

This release is the first to contain more extensive weekly data on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) lodged for new dwellings, alongside the quarterly EPC data featured in previous releases. The weekly EPC data series is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-energy-performance-of-buildings-certificates>

Building control reported new build starts and completions

It is estimated that the building control sourced data currently provides information on about 80% of house building in England, further details are available in the technical notes that support this release. These figures should therefore be used as a leading indicator of trends in total housing supply which is published in the net additional dwelling release in November.

Building control – latest quarterly update

Quarterly figures for new build dwelling starts and completions are given on a seasonally adjusted basis. These should be used for quarterly comparisons to see trends.

Starts – December quarter 2020

Seasonally adjusted new build dwelling starts in England are estimated at 42,110 (seasonally adjusted) in the December quarter 2020, a 16 per cent increase compared to the September quarter 2020. Compared to a year ago, starts this quarter are up by 24 per cent. Starts are 14 per cent below their March quarter 2007 peak and are 145 per cent above the previous trough in the June quarter of 2009. This quarter's figure is the highest quarterly starts figure in the seasonally adjusted time series since the same quarter in 2018.

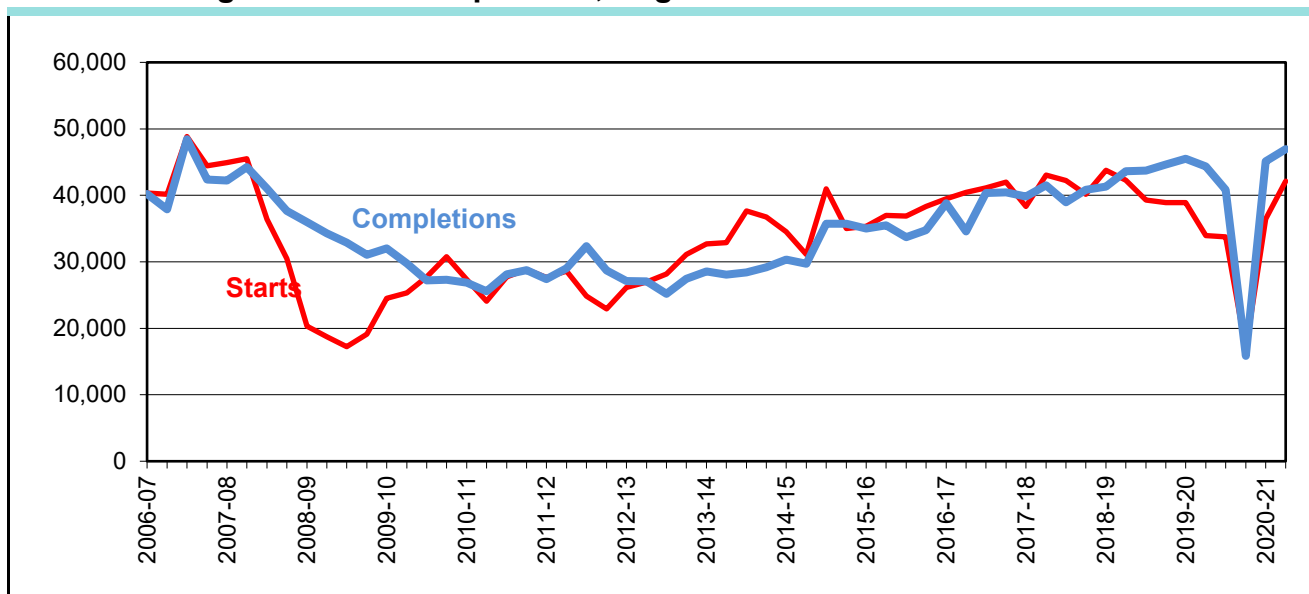
Completions – December quarter 2020

Completions were estimated at 46,950 (seasonally adjusted) in the December quarter 2020, a 4 per cent increase from the previous quarter and 6 per cent above their level in the same quarter a year ago. Completions are now 3 per cent below their peak in the March quarter 2007 and 87 per cent above the previous trough in March quarter 2013. This quarter's figure is the highest quarterly completions figure in the seasonally adjusted time series since its peak in the March quarter 2007.

Long term trends

Looking at Figure 1, trends in starts and completions were similar up to 2008. Completions fell more slowly than starts during the downturn but over a longer period. From 2009 starts began to recover and during the next two years both series converged and levelled out. From 2013 to 2018, starts and completions grew again gradually. Since 2019, completions continued to grow, but there was a sustained decrease in starts and more recently a steep fall in starts and completions reflecting UK government COVID-19 national restriction measures in early 2020. Following a sharp uptick in the September quarter of 2020, starts and completions both continued to increase from October to December 2020.

Figure 1: Seasonally adjusted trends in quarterly building control reported new build dwelling starts and completions, England



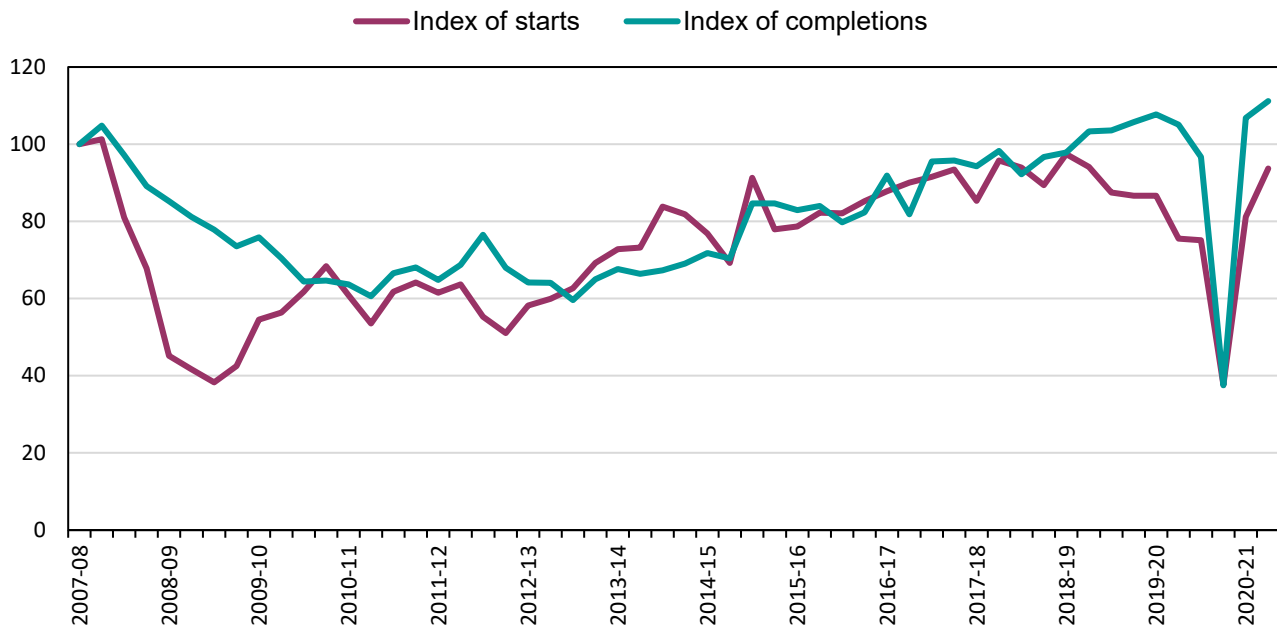
¹ The chart includes data from independent approved inspectors from June quarter 2007.

Quarterly Index

The chart below shows the quarterly trends of starts and completions as an index starting at 100 in June 2007. This should be used when looking at the rate of change of starts and completions rather than the numeric change. The index shows a similar pattern to the quarterly estimates with the continued recent increase in starts and completions evident.

The sharp decrease in starts and completions seen in the 2020-21 period reflects the national restrictions imposed by the Government at the beginning of 2020. The sharp increase at the end of 2020 reflects the relaxation of the national restrictions. Starts and completions continued to increase, albeit at slower rates, to the December quarter of 2020.

Figure 2: Index of building control reported new build dwelling starts and completions, quarterly (seasonally adjusted), England

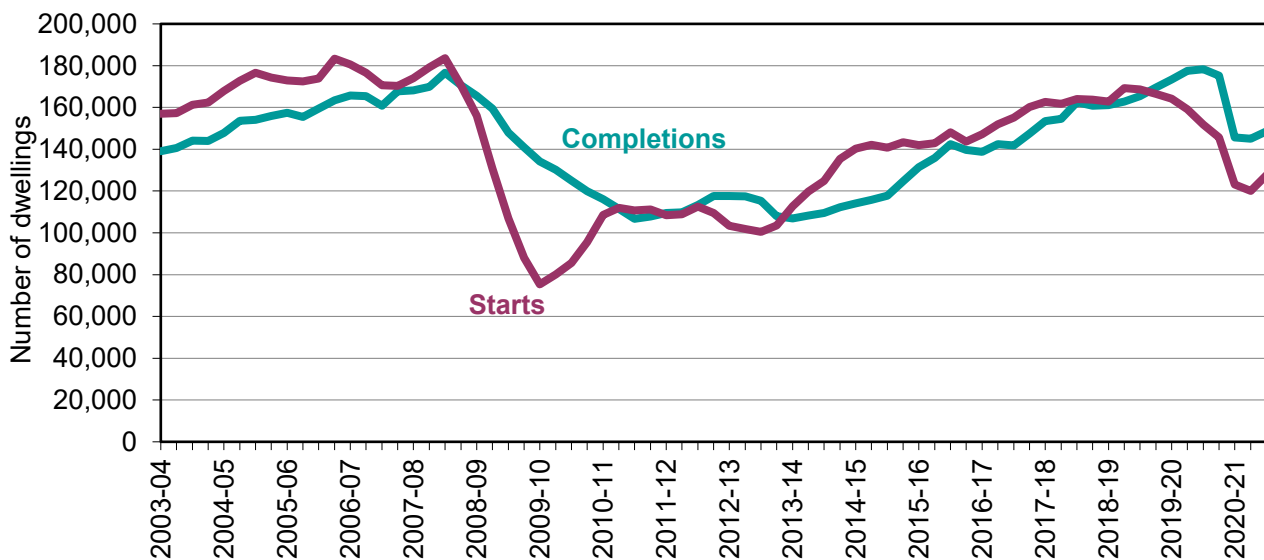


This chart begins in the June quarter of 2007 as data from independent approved inspectors was included as an additional source from this point.

Building control – latest 12 months update

These figures are not seasonally adjusted and give annual estimates for house building over rolling 12-month periods. These data can be used to make year on year comparisons.

Figure 3: Trends in building control reported estimates of starts and completions, England, 12 month rolling totals



The chart includes data from independent approved inspectors from June quarter 2007.

Long term annual trends

Annual new build dwelling starts were increasing from 2003-04 until reaching a peak of 183,600 in 2007. Starts fell sharply during the downturn to a low of 75,350 in the year ending June 2009. Since then, starts have experienced some periods of growth, levelling off and now an increase, averaging around 145,000 for the past two years.

Similarly, annual completions increased from 2003-04, reaching a peak of 176,650 in the year ending December 2007. Completions then fell gradually through 2008 - 2010. Despite fluctuations, completions had increased gradually from 2013 to 2019 before decreases at the beginning of 2020, then increasing in the December quarter, averaging around 164,000 for the past two years.

Starts – year ending December 2020

There were 127,600 estimated new build dwellings starts in the year to December 2020, a 16 per cent decrease compared to the year to December 2019.

Completions – year ending December 2020

An estimated 148,630 new build dwellings were completed in the year to December 2020, a decrease of 17 per cent compared to the year to December 2019.

Table 1: Estimated annual total new building control reported build dwelling starts and completions, England, not seasonally adjusted¹

		All Starts		All Completions	
		Starts in previous 12 months	% change on previous year	Completions in previous 12 months	% change on previous year
2007	Jan-Dec	183,600	8%	176,650	10%
2008	Jan-Dec	106,890	-42%	148,010	-16%
2009	Jan-Dec	85,600	-20%	124,970	-16%
2010	Jan-Dec	110,660	29%	106,720	-15%
2011	Jan-Dec	113,260	2%	114,020	7%
2012	Jan-Dec	101,020	-11%	115,590	1%
2013	Jan-Dec	124,790	24%	109,440	-5%
2014	Jan-Dec	140,760	13%	117,810	8%
2015	Jan-Dec	148,150	5%	142,470	21%
2016	Jan-Dec	155,150	5%	141,870	0%
2017	Jan-Dec	164,110	6%	162,480	15%
2018	Jan-Dec	168,610	3%	165,420	2%
2019	Jan-Dec	151,740	-10%	178,310	8%
2020	Jan-Dec	<i>P</i> 127,580	-16%	148,630	-17%

¹ Seasonally adjusted data are presented in the tables accompanying this release

Sub-national trends

Figure 4 shows generally higher rates of annual starts per 1,000 dwellings in the East Midlands, East of England, North East, and South West. It shows higher rates of annual completions per 1,000 dwellings in the South East and East of England.

Starts

In the year to December 2020, starts fell in all regions except for London. In London, starts were 11 per cent higher in the year to December 2020 than the year to December 2019. The largest decrease was 27 per cent in the North West.

Completions

All regions had a decrease in completions in the year to December 2020 from the year to December 2019. The smallest decrease was 6 per cent in the North West, and the largest was 24 per cent in the South West.

Local Authority

Local Authority level building control reported house building statistics are found in Live Table 253 and 253a. Figures aggregate to Local Enterprise Partnership geographies are in Live Table 255.

During the data collection period for this release, Reading submitted 702 completions under the Local Authority tenure for the December quarter 2020. Following quality assurance, this has been raised with Reading and is pending further investigation. In the interim, it been reclassified by MHCLG to the Private Enterprise tenure, which is the default if the tenure is unknown, and this is subject to revision in future statistical releases. Full details are provided in the technical notes (page 6), that accompany this release.

Figure 4: Starts per 1,000 dwellings (left) and completions per 1000 dwellings (right) for each English region in the 12 months to December 2020.

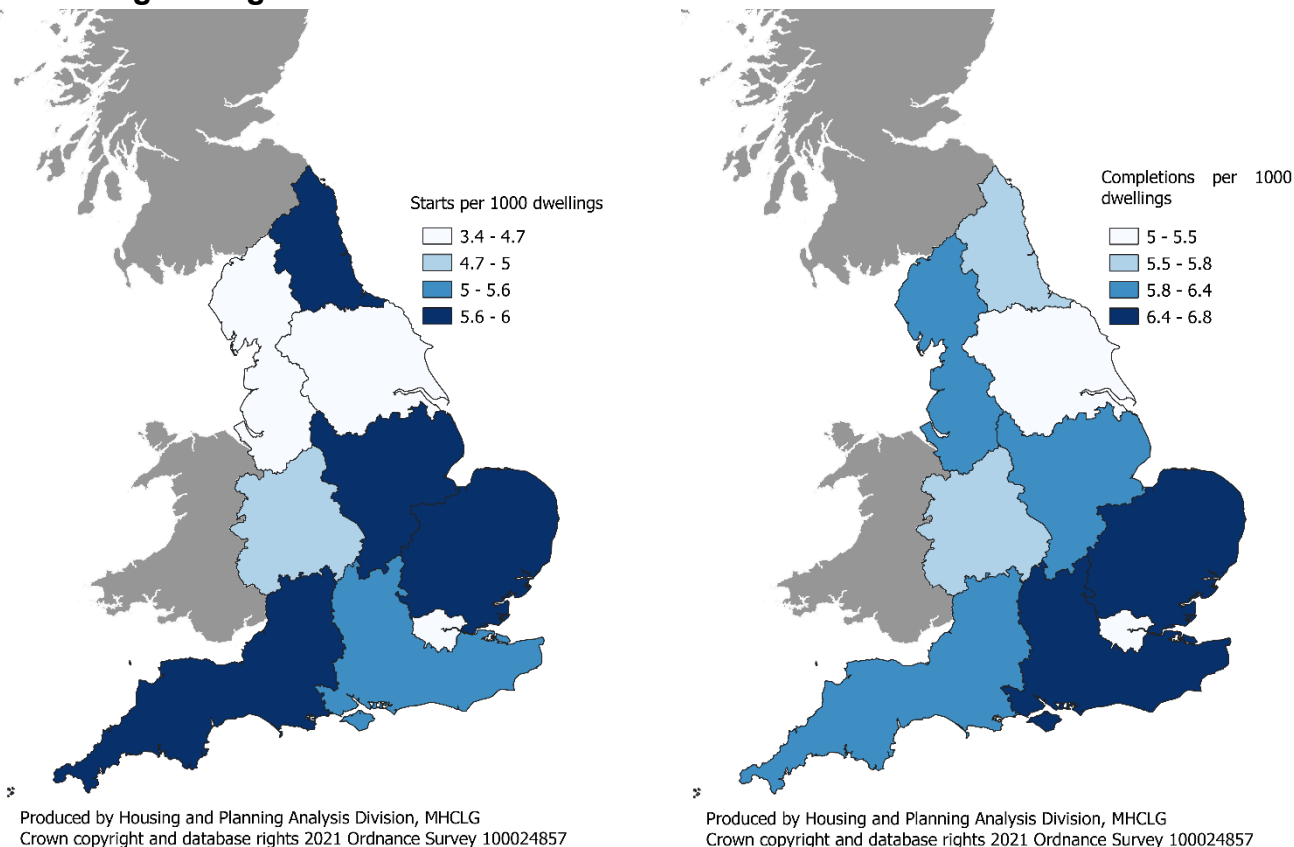


Figure 4 shows the number of starts and completions per 1000 dwellings in each of the 9 English regions over the year to December 2020. To show house building in proportion to the size of each district we divide the number of starts or completions in the year by the existing dwelling stock. The result is multiplied by 1,000 to give a figure that is easier to interpret. For example, a region with 100,000 dwellings where, over the previous year, 570 new dwellings are started. This would give a value of 5.7 new dwellings per thousand of existing stock and would therefore be shaded in dark blue in the coloured map for starts.

© Crown copyright and database right 2021 Ordnance Survey 10024857

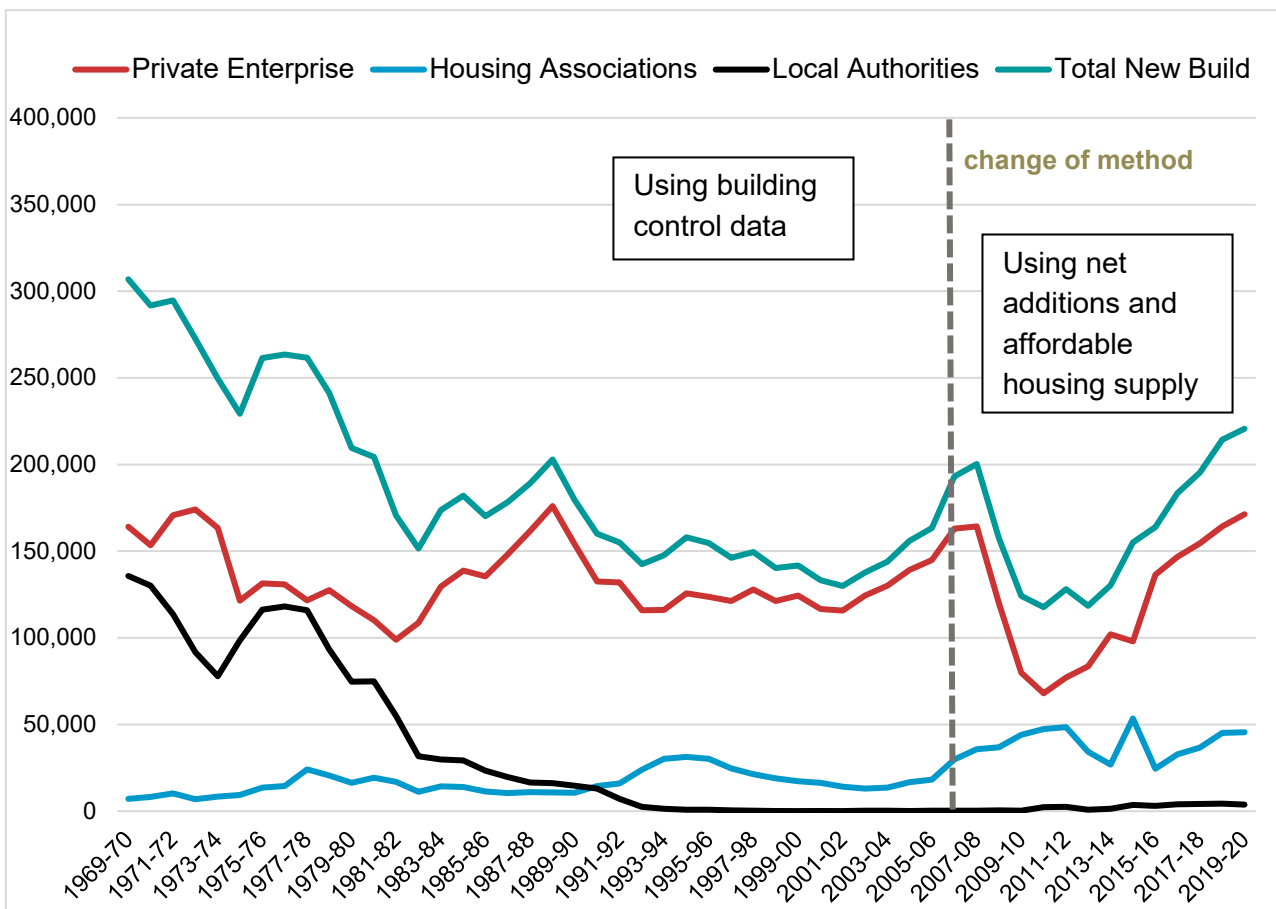
Final tenure estimate – new build completions

Figure 5 below shows the estimated final tenure split of new build completions since 2006-07 using a modelled approach based on the Affordable Housing Supply Statistics explained in the methodology section below.

The final tenure is the final usage of the new dwellings - whether they are for private ownership, housing associations or local authority housing stock. This is different to the tenure of the developer as private developers also build for housing associations and local authorities.

In 2019-20, it is estimated that Private Enterprise (dwellings built for private sale, private renting, and by non-registered providers) delivered 78%, Housing Associations 21% and Local Authorities 2% of new build dwellings.

Figure 5: Number of permanent new build dwellings completed, by final tenure, England, 1969-70 to 2019-20



New build dwellings by non-registered providers are included in Private Enterprise.

Sources: 1969-70 – 2005-06 Building control reported build dwellings Live Table 213

2006-07 – 2019-20:

Total New Build: Housing supply: net additional dwellings 2019-20, Live Table 120

Housing Association New Build: Affordable Housing Supply 2019-20, Open Data

Local Authority New Build: Affordable Housing Supply 2019-20, Open Data

Private Enterprise: Modelled as Total new build - housing association and local authority components

Methodology

This estimate of tenure split in Figure 5 uses total new build completions from net additions and completions delivered by Housing Associations (HAs) and Local Authorities (LAs) from the Affordable Housing Supply release to estimate the Private Enterprise (PE) delivery.

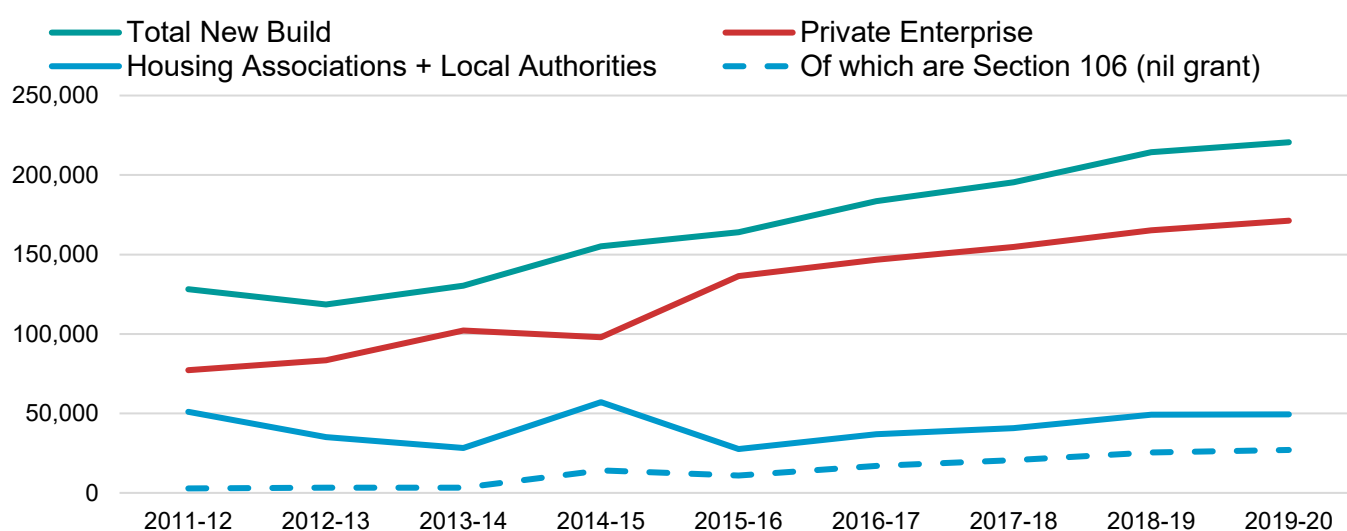
Prior to 2005-06 the tenure split is estimated using the building control reported data, which reports on the provider type. However, this is not the same as providing an estimate of the final tenure of the dwellings once they are completed. It is not always possible, nor is it the responsibility, of a building control inspector to know the final tenure and this is likely to cause an over estimation of the supply for private enterprise.

From 2006-07 onwards the affordable housing statistics and net additional dwellings are used to model the tenure split, this method will be more accurate in providing the final tenure of new housing supply. This series begins at 2006-07 as this is when a new build component in the net

additions estimates was first published.

Included in Figure 6 are the number of units whose final tenure is either Housing Association or Local Authorities having been provided under Section 106(nil grant) agreements. In 2019-20, over half of the completions delivered through Housing Associations and Local Authorities were under Section 106 agreements. The Section 106 (nil grant) figures before 2011 are not included however as the data were not collected. Non-registered providers and unknown providers contributing to affordable housing delivery are being included in the Private Enterprise estimate in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 6: Number of permanent new build dwellings completed, by tenure, England, 2011-12 to 2019-20



Source: Total New Build: Housing supply: net additional dwellings 2019-20, Live Table 120
Housing Association + Local Authority New Build: Affordable Housing Supply 2019-20, Open Data
Private Enterprise: Modelled as Total new build - housing association and local authority components
Section 106 (nil grant): Affordable Housing Supply 2019-20, Open Data

Further indicators of supply

This section of the release provides analysis of other indicators of housing supply. It is intended that these indicators along with the building control data provide a suite of information which give a rounded estimate of the current trends in housing supply and what the more complete estimate of supply (Net additional dwellings) will show when it becomes available in November.

Energy Performance Certificates

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government publishes quarterly experimental official statistics on the Energy Performance of Buildings¹ which includes statistics on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) lodged for new dwellings. These can be compared to the previously mentioned annual 'Housing supply: net additional dwellings' release, which is the primary measure of housing supply.

EPCs provide a very close estimate to net additions. As with the net additions figures, those from the EPC data include new builds, conversions and change of use etc. They are not a direct comparison with the building control figures shown earlier in this release. This is the reason for the use of other sources to estimate new build completions.

MHCLG started publishing Weekly EPC data in 2020 because they were judged to be of immediate value to interested parties to meet demands for statistics to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Weekly data is more timely than the quarterly statistics, but differ from quarterly figures due to overlaps of weekly figures. For example, the week commencing 28 December 2020 contains days in December 2020 as well as January 2021.

Quarterly comparison: new dwelling EPCs and new build completions

Quarterly figures on EPCs lodged for new dwellings have followed a similar trend to quarterly new build dwelling completions since 2009-10. The number of new dwelling EPCs lodged are higher than quarterly new build completions as they comprise of new build dwellings plus dwelling conversions (for example a house into flats) and change of use of an existing building (for example a shop into a house or a barn conversion). One of the reasons for the difference between the two sets of figures is partly due to an increase in the number of new dwellings created through change of use.

There were 66,500 new dwelling EPCs lodged in England in the quarter ending December 2020. This represents a 3 per cent decrease compared to the same quarter last year, and a 6 per cent increase on the quarter ending September 2020, in which there were 63,000 new dwelling EPCs lodged².

Annual comparison: new dwelling EPCs and net additional dwellings

Both net additional dwellings and EPCs lodged for new dwellings in England have been steadily increasing since 2012-13, the low point following the economic downturn. In 2019-20, net additions reached 243,800 and new dwelling EPCs totalled 254,900. In the 12 months to December 2020, new dwelling EPCs fell to 216,600, a decrease of 15 per cent from the 12 months to December 2019.

¹ While the EPBC statistical release covers England and Wales, the accompanying tables also have data for England and Wales separately. Energy Performance of Buildings Statistics, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/energy-performance-of-buildings-certificates>

² These figures are provisional. The full dataset will be available from 1 April 2021 in live table NB4, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-energy-performance-of-buildings-certificates#weekly-epcs-for-domestic-properties-existing-and-new-dwellings>

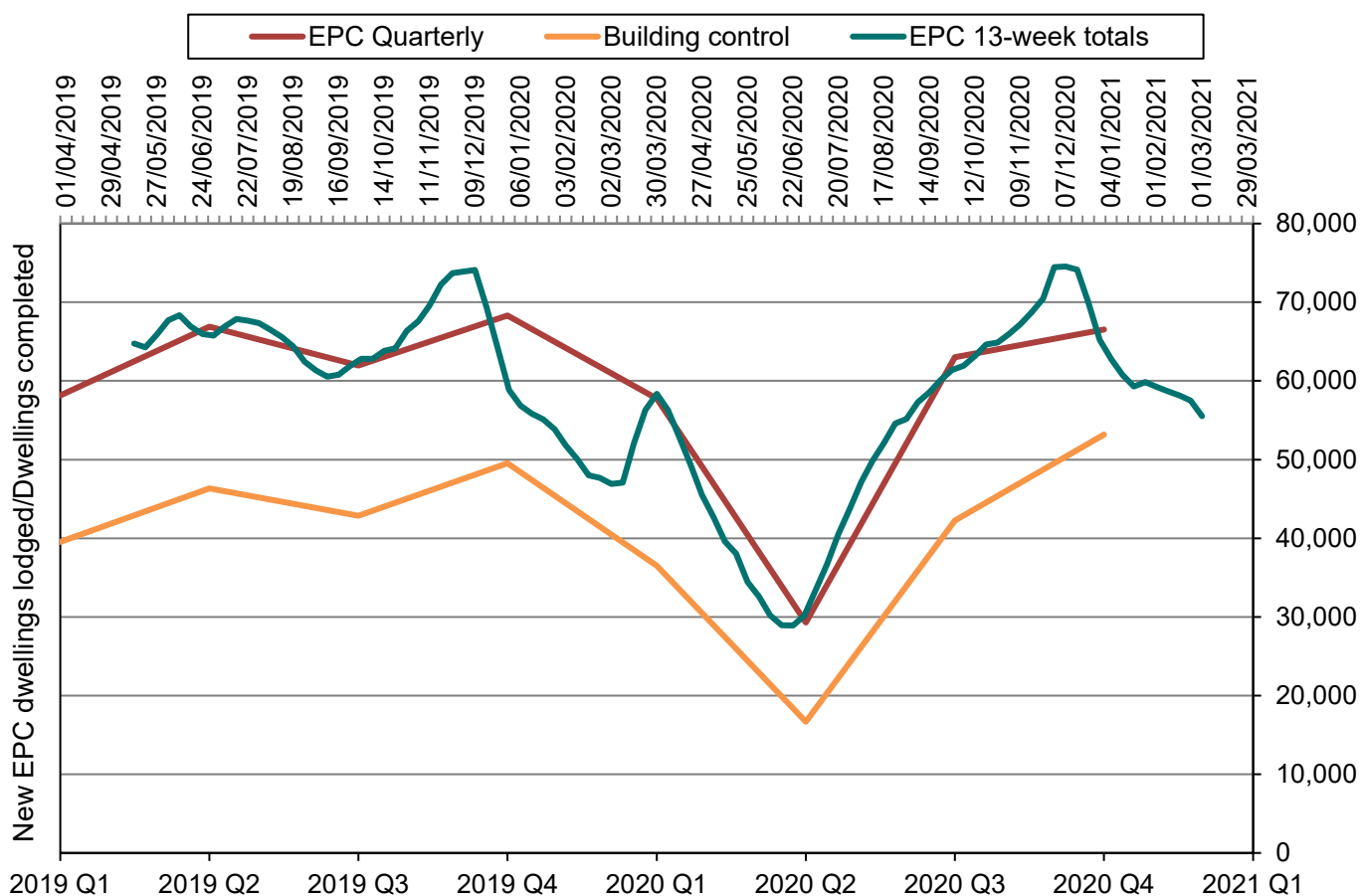
New dwelling EPCs: Weekly and quarterly data

There were 55,500 EPCs lodged in the 13 weeks to the week commencing 1 March 2021, a 3 per cent decrease on the 13 weeks to the week commencing 22 February 2021.

Figure 7 below shows a comparison of EPCs lodged for new dwellings from the quarterly series and the weekly series. The weekly series is presented with 13-week rolling totals.

The figure shows the rolling weekly totals closely follow the quarterly series up to the December quarter of 2020. Weekly EPCs increased to the December quarter 2020 and have decreased through the beginning of 2021, though, decreases in the weekly EPC series at the end of each year do not necessarily reflect the trends in housing completions, as fewer EPCs are lodged in the Christmas period.

Figure 7: Quarterly new dwelling EPCs, 13-week rolling new dwelling EPCs, building control new build completions



Sources: Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates for new domestic properties in England, 2008 to December 2020 (18 March 2021);

Building control reported new build dwellings Live Table 213;

Weekly EPCs for domestic properties (new dwellings).

Council Tax Stock of Properties

The Valuation Office Agency publishes annual official statistics on the number of domestic properties with a council tax band in England³ which includes statistics on the net increase in the stock of domestic properties. These can be compared to net additional dwellings statistics, though it is an approximate comparison as the VOA figures include communal accommodation and properties moving between the business rates list and the council tax list (e.g. re-classification of holiday lets to a dwelling). Previous data show it can over or under-estimate net additional dwellings (Figure 6 and Table 5). The Council Tax stock of properties also includes new builds, conversions and change of use etc. so are not a direct comparison with the building control figures. Net additional dwellings are the most comprehensive measure of housing supply.

Annual comparison: Net change in domestic properties and net additional dwellings

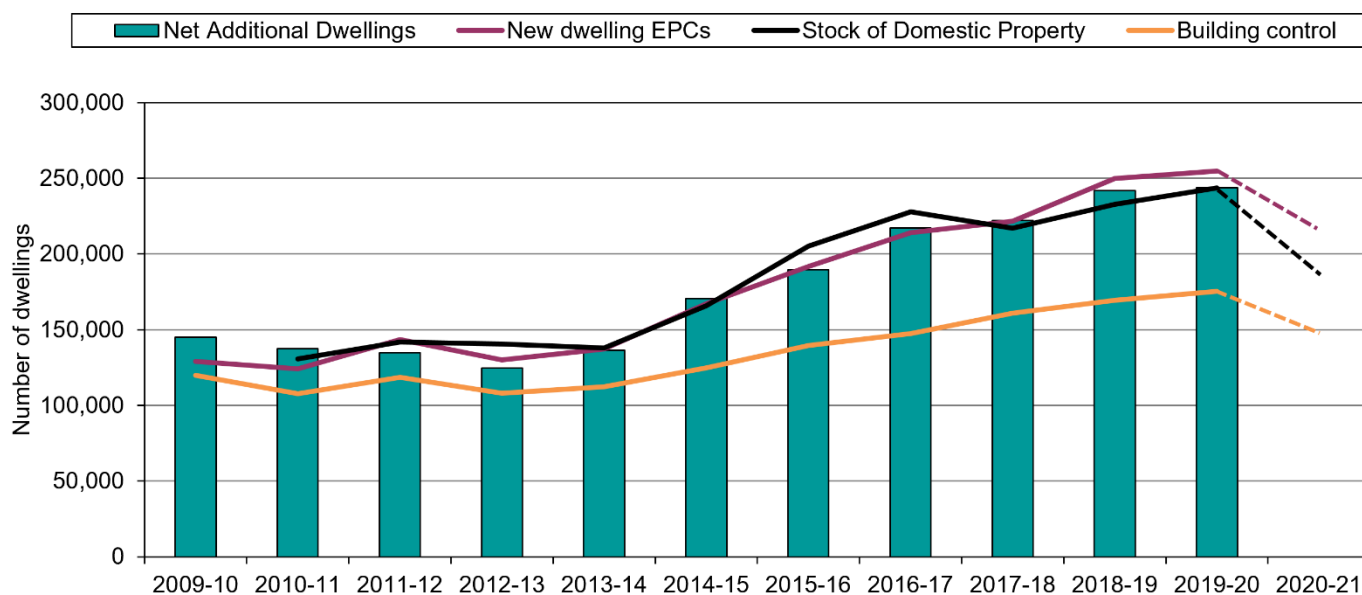
Net additional dwellings and the change in Council Tax stock of properties in England have been steadily increasing since 2012-13 or 2013-14 respectively, the low point following the economic downturn. In 2019-20, net additional dwellings reached 243,770 and the change in Council Tax stock of properties totalled 243,720.

³ While the statistical release covers England and Wales, the accompanying tables also have data for England and Wales separately. Council Tax Stock of Properties, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/valuation-office-agency-council-tax-statistics>

Estimating total housing supply (net additional dwellings)

Figure 8 shows the other measures of housing supply directly compared to net additions.

Figure 8: Net additional dwellings, new dwelling EPCs lodged, annual change in Council Tax stock of properties and building control new build completions, England 12 month totals¹



¹ Dashed lines represent 12-month running totals for quarters before the end of the 2020-21 period. The dashed line for new dwelling EPCs represents the total for January 2020 to December 2020. The dashed line for stock of domestic property represents the total for October 2019 to September 2020. The dashed line for building control represents the total for January to December 2020.

Sources: Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates for new domestic properties in England, 2008 to December 2020 (18 March 2021); Housing supply: net additional dwellings 2019-20, Live table 120; Council Tax: stock of properties, 2020, Table CTSOP1.0; Building control reported new build dwellings Live Table 213. Council Taxbase 2020 in England: Local authority level data

Planning applications

MHCLG produces planning applications statistics measuring the number of applications submitted and granted.

Residential units

The figures collected by the department are the numbers of decisions on planning applications submitted to local planning authorities, rather than the number of units included in each application, such as the number of homes in the case of housing developments. The department supplements

this information by obtaining statistics on housing permissions from a contractor⁴. The latest provisional figures show that permission for 368,600 homes was given in the year to 30 September 2020, down 6 per cent from the 392,200 homes granted permission in the year to 30 September 2019.

On an ongoing basis, figures are revised to ensure that any duplicates are removed, and also to include any projects that local planning authorities may not have processed: they are therefore subject to change, and the latest quarter's provisional figures tend to be revised upwards. These figures are provided here to give contextual information to users and have not been designated as National Statistics. Further details are provided in the Planning statistics release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-applications-statistics>

Table 2: Number of housing units granted planning permission, England, annual totals to September 2020

		Units granted	
		Number	% change on previous year
2008	Oct-Sep	230,500	-8%
2009	Oct-Sep	168,200	-27%
2010	Oct-Sep	183,200	9%
2011	Oct-Sep	171,700	-6%
2012	Oct-Sep	195,200	14%
2013	Oct-Sep	226,000	16%
2014	Oct-Sep	246,000	9%
2015	Oct-Sep	265,500	8%
2016	Oct-Sep	287,200	8%
2017	Oct-Sep	352,100	23%
2018	Oct-Sep	377,700	7%
2019	Oct-Sep	392,200	4%
2020	Oct-Sep	<i>P</i> 368,600	-6%

These figures show a similar trend to what we see with building control reported starts, which have decreased since 2018. The number of units granted increased from 2009 up to 2019, before decreasing up to September 2020.

⁴ Glenigan routinely collects data on planning applications submitted to all English local planning authorities and records the information by maintaining a 'planning application' for every project. The data have been updated over time as subsequent applications are submitted and decisions made, with all new applications being matched against the existing database at entry stage. This has involved an automated process supplemented by manual checking to identify any further matching project.

Accompanying tables and open data

Symbols used

The following conventions have been used in the tables:

- .. Not available;
- Fewer than 5 dwellings;
- ^P Figure provisional and subject to revision;
- ^R Revised from previous release.

Totals may not equal the sum of component parts due to rounding to the nearest 10.

Tables

Relevant accompanying data can be found in the house building live tables which are updated at the same time as this release is published. The available live tables are:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building>

All statistical releases on house building can be accessed on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government website at

<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/series/house-building-statistics>.

Open data

The EPC statistics are available in fully open and linkable data formats at:

<https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/domestic/search>

Technical Notes

Please see the accompanying technical notes document for further details.

This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/house-building-statistics>.



© Crown copyright, 2021

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/mhclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

For all our latest news and updates follow us on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/mhclg>

March 2021