



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



*Statistical release*

Housing

# Housing supply: indicators of new supply, England: January to March 2021

## 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 46,010 in January to March 2021. This is a 7 per cent increase when compared to last quarter and is the highest number of quarterly starts since January to March 2007.
- The number of dwellings completed - according to building control figures - was 49,470 in January to March 2021. This is a 4 per cent increase when compared to last quarter. This is the highest quarterly completions figure since the beginning of the seasonally adjusted series in 2000.

### **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 62,970 new dwelling EPCs lodged in England in the quarter ending March 2021, representing a 9 per cent increase compared to the same quarter last year. In the 12 months to March 2021, new dwelling EPCs totalled 220,730, a decrease of 13 per cent on the 12 months to March 2020.
- 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:** 30 June 2021

**Date of next release:** September 2021

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## 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 March 2021. 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. The consultation is available at the following link:

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

Following the consultation, this release is accompanied with an interactive dashboard for the first time. The dashboard is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-supply-indicators-of-new-supply-england-january-to-march-2021>

This release is the second to contain more extensive weekly data on Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) lodged for new dwellings. 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 – March quarter 2021

Seasonally adjusted new build dwelling starts in England are estimated at 46,010 (seasonally adjusted) in the March quarter 2021, a 7 per cent increase compared to the December quarter 2020. Compared to a year ago, starts this quarter are up by 36 per cent. Starts are 6 per cent below their March quarter 2007 peak and are 167 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 peak in the March quarter 2007.

#### Completions – March quarter 2021

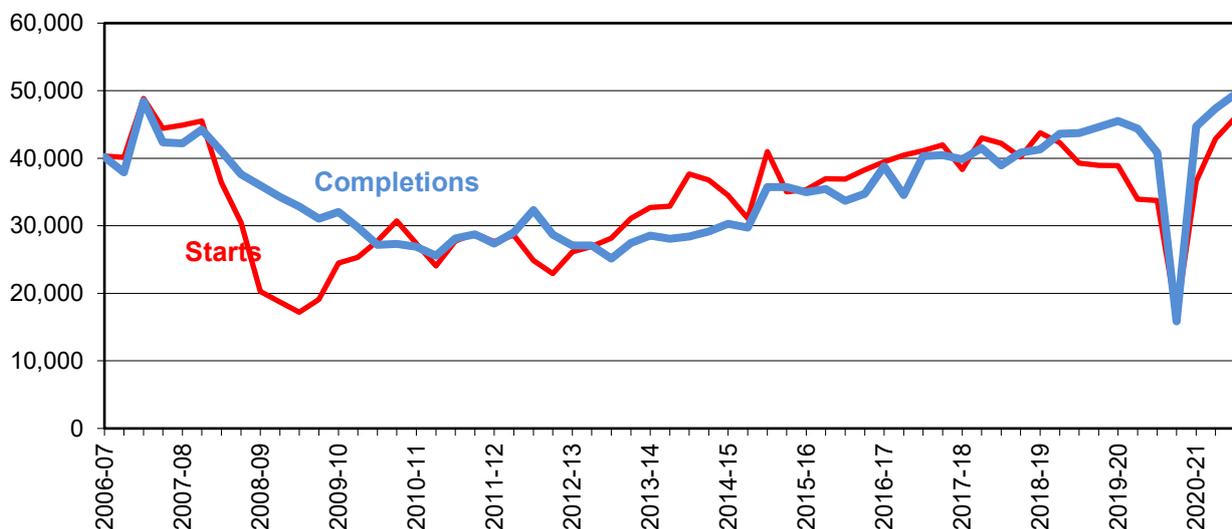
Completions were estimated at 49,470 (seasonally adjusted) in the March quarter 2021, a 4 per cent

increase from the previous quarter and 21 per cent above the same quarter a year ago. Completions are now 2 per cent above their previous peak in the March quarter 2007 and 97 per cent above the trough in March quarter 2013. This quarter's figure is the highest quarterly completions figure since the beginning of the seasonally adjusted time series in 2000.

### 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 up to March 2021.

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



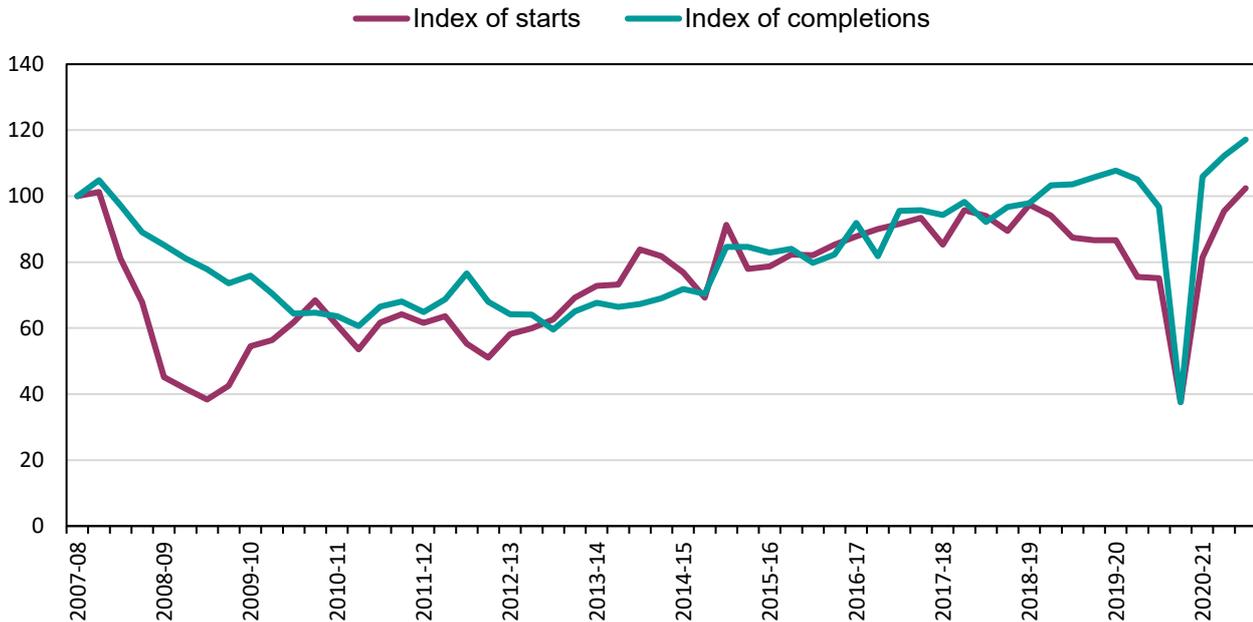
<sup>1</sup> The chart includes data from independent approved inspectors from June quarter 2007.

### 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 beginning of 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 to the March quarter of 2021, to their highest levels since the beginning of the index in 2007.

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

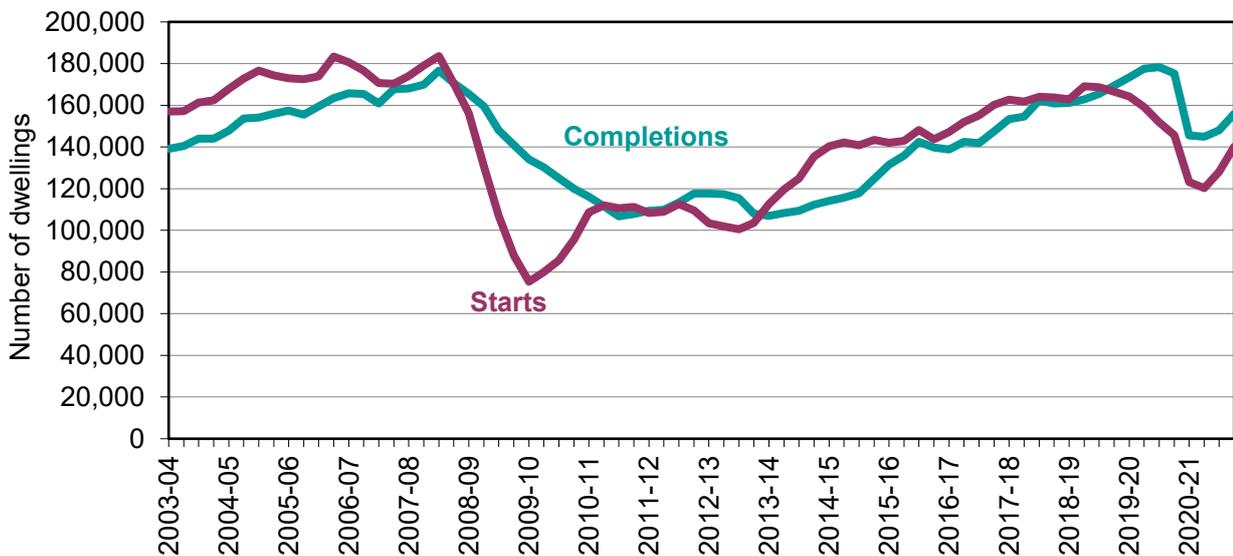


This chart begins in the June quarter of 2007 as data from independent approved inspectors was included as an additional source from this point onward.

### 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 143,000 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 to the March 2021 quarter, averaging around 166,000 for the past two years.

### Starts – year ending March 2021

There were 140,170 estimated new build dwellings starts in the year to March 2021, a 4 per cent decrease compared to the year to March 2020.

### Completions – year ending March 2021

An estimated 155,960 new build dwellings were completed in the year to March 2021, a decrease of 11 per cent compared to the year to March 2020.

**Table 1: Estimated annual total new building control reported build dwelling starts and completions, England, not seasonally adjusted<sup>1</sup>**

| Year Ending |         | All Starts                   |                           | All Completions                   |                           |
|-------------|---------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
|             |         | Starts in previous 12 months | % change on previous year | Completions in previous 12 months | % change on previous year |
| 2008        | Jan-Mar | 170,440                      | 0%                        | 170,610                           | 2%                        |
| 2009        | Jan-Mar | 88,010                       | -48%                      | 140,990                           | -17%                      |
| 2010        | Jan-Mar | 95,560                       | 9%                        | 119,910                           | -15%                      |
| 2011        | Jan-Mar | 111,150                      | 16%                       | 107,870                           | -10%                      |
| 2012        | Jan-Mar | 110,820                      | -1%                       | 118,580                           | 9%                        |
| 2013        | Jan-Mar | 103,520                      | -6%                       | 107,980                           | -8%                       |
| 2014        | Jan-Mar | 135,410                      | 31%                       | 112,330                           | 4%                        |
| 2015        | Jan-Mar | 143,390                      | 6%                        | 124,640                           | 11%                       |
| 2016        | Jan-Mar | 143,740                      | 0%                        | 139,710                           | 12%                       |
| 2017        | Jan-Mar | 160,280                      | 11%                       | 147,520                           | 6%                        |
| 2018        | Jan-Mar | 163,800                      | 2%                        | 160,900                           | 9%                        |
| 2019        | Jan-Mar | 166,560                      | 2%                        | 169,500                           | 5%                        |
| 2020        | Jan-Mar | 145,650                      | -13%                      | 175,250                           | 3%                        |
| 2021        | Jan-Mar | <i>P</i> 140,170             | -4%                       | 155,960                           | -11%                      |

<sup>1</sup> 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 of England and the South West. It shows higher rates of annual completions per 1,000 dwellings in the South East, East Midlands, and East of England.

### Starts

In the year to March 2021, starts fell in most regions except for London, the North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber. In London, starts were 18 per cent higher in the year to March 2021 than the year to March 2020, and in the North East starts were 10% higher than the previous year. The largest decrease was 13 per cent in the North West.

### Completions

All regions had a decrease in completions in the year to March 2021 from the year to March 2020. The smallest decrease was 6 per cent in the North West, and the largest was 17 per cent in the East of England.

### **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.

**Figure 4: Starts per 1,000 dwellings (left) and completions per 1000 dwellings (right) for each English region in the 12 months to March 2021.**

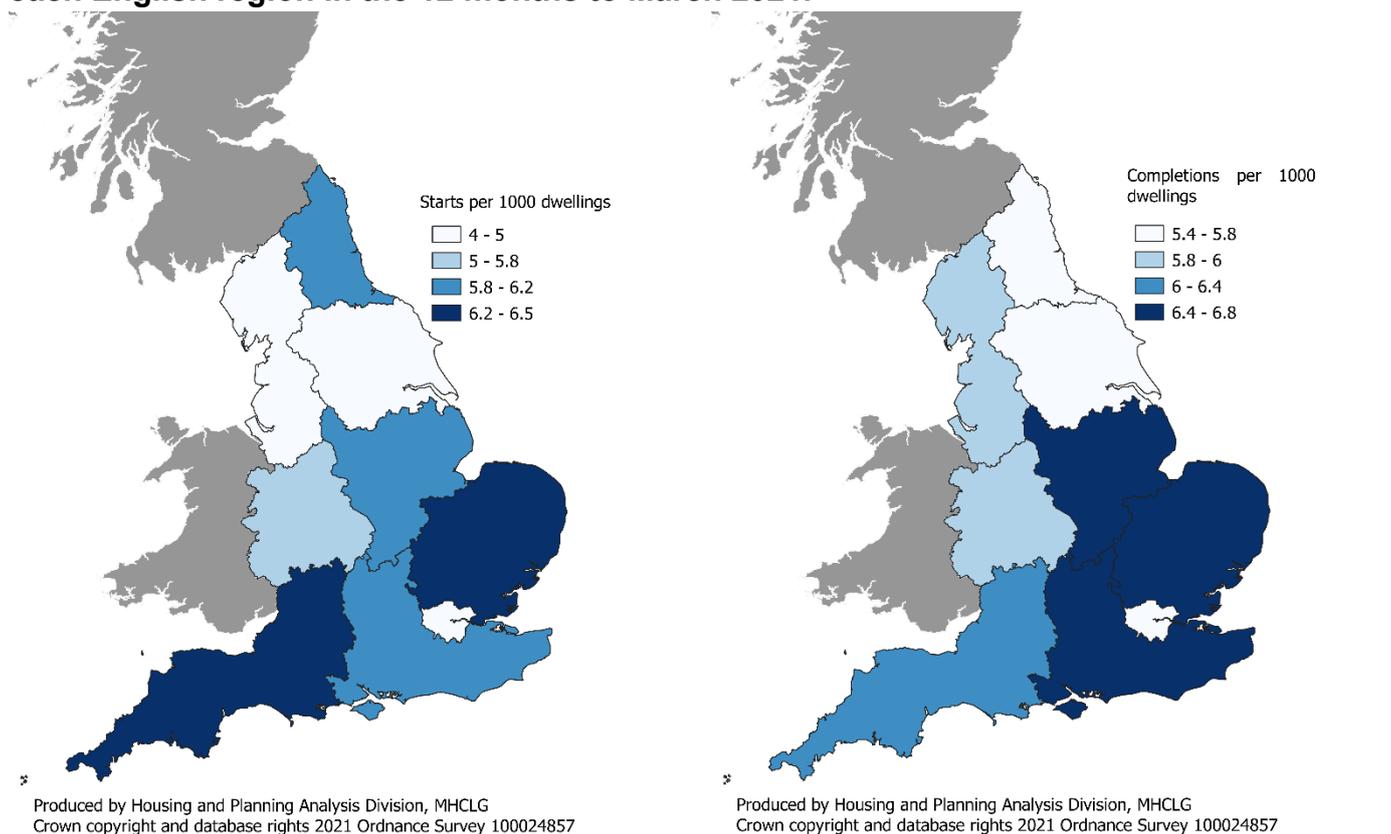


Figure 4 shows the number of starts and completions per 1000 dwellings in each of the 9 English regions over the year to March 2021. To show house building in proportion to the size of each district we divide the number of starts or completions in the year by the existing dwelling stock. The result is 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.

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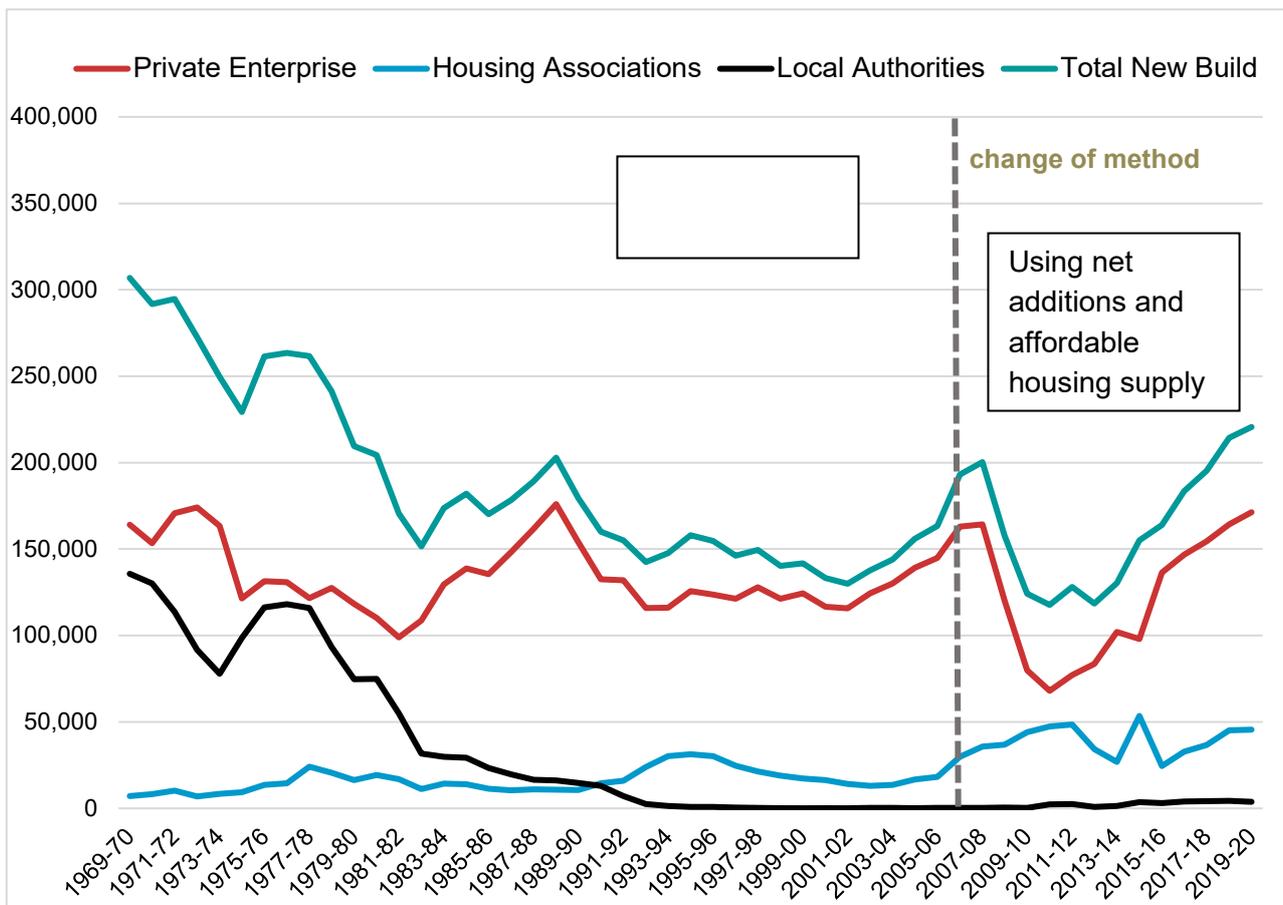
## Final tenure estimate – new build completions

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

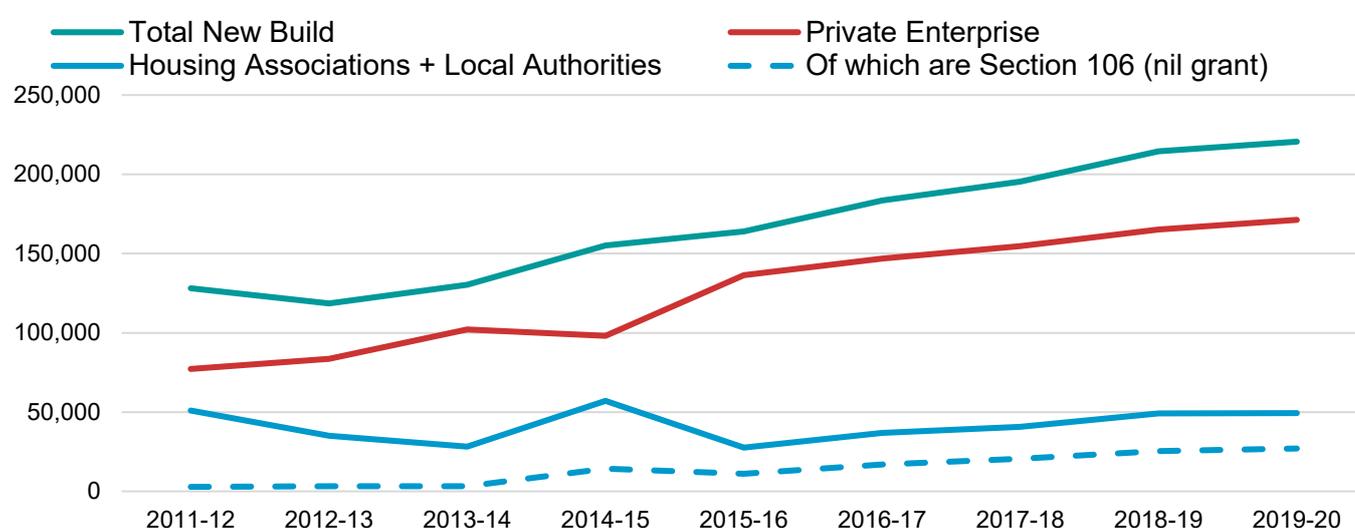
This estimate of tenure split in Figure 5 uses total new build completions from net additions and completions delivered by Housing Associations (HAs) and Local Authorities (LAs) from the Affordable Housing Supply release to estimate the Private Enterprise (PE) delivery.

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 Buildings<sup>1</sup> 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 62,970 new dwelling EPCs lodged in England in the quarter ending March 2021, representing a 9 per cent increase compared to the same quarter last year.

### 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 243,770 and new dwelling EPCs totalled 254,720. In 2020-21, new dwelling EPCs fell to 220,730, a decrease of 13 per cent from 2019-20.

### New dwelling EPCs: Weekly and quarterly data

There were 61,590 EPCs lodged in the 13 weeks to the week commencing 21 June 2021. This was more than double the number lodged in the equivalent part of 2020, which was the period most affected by the national restrictions introduced in response to the pandemic.

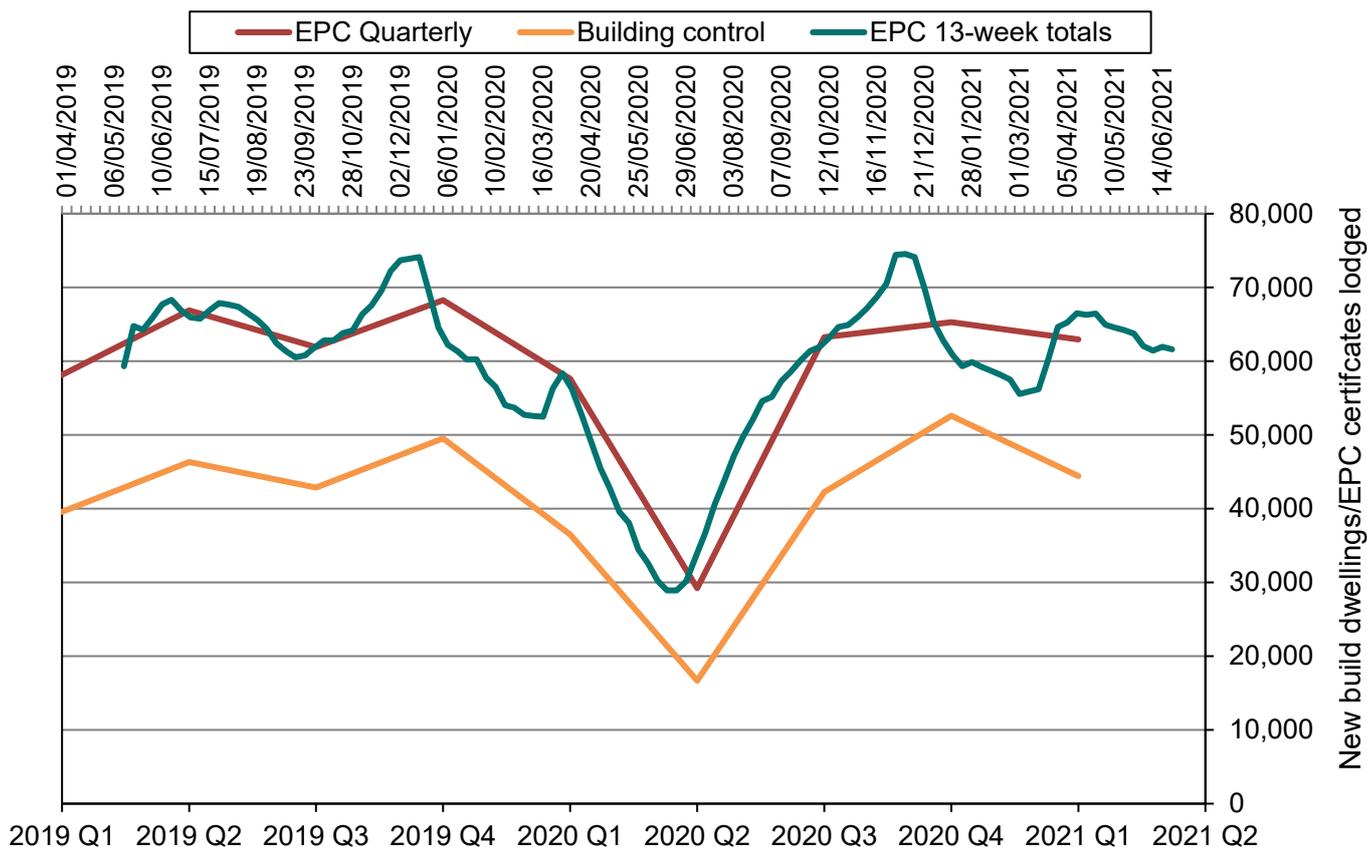
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<sup>1</sup> While the EPBC statistical release covers England and Wales, the accompanying tables also have data for England and Wales separately. Energy Performance of Buildings Statistics, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/energy-performance-of-buildings-certificates>

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 March quarter of 2021. 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 (not seasonally adjusted)**



**Sources:** Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates for new domestic properties in England, 2008 to March 2021 (13 May 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 England<sup>2</sup> 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.

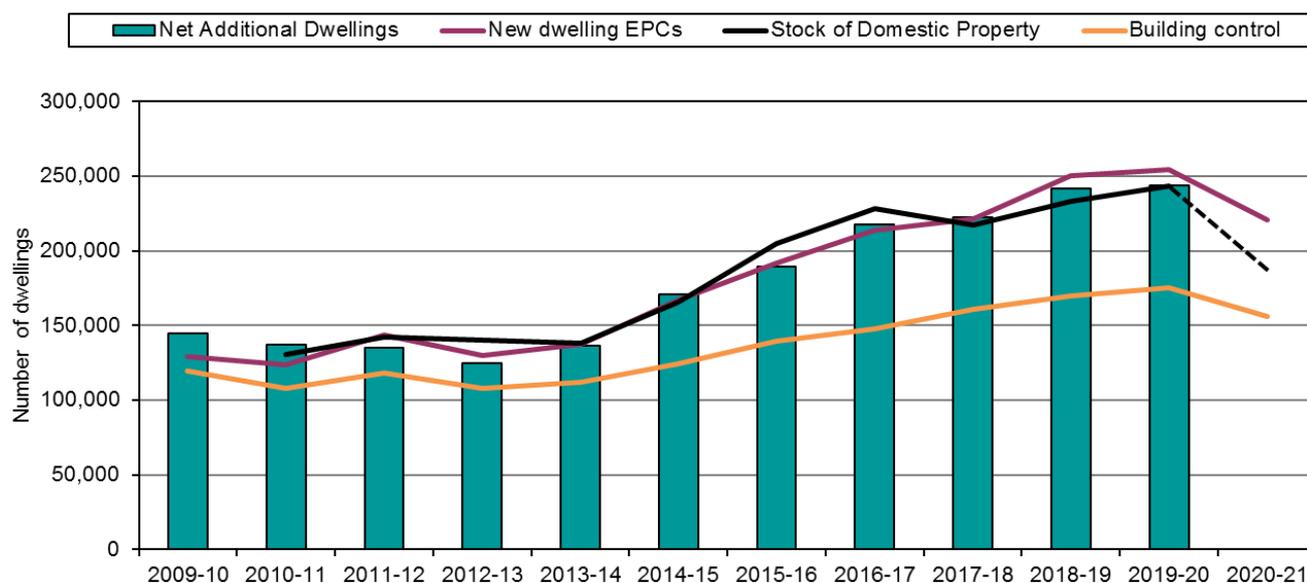
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<sup>2</sup> While the statistical release covers England and Wales, the accompanying tables also have data for England and Wales separately. Council Tax Stock of Properties, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/valuation-office-agency-council-tax-statistics>

## 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 totals<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> The dashed line for stock of domestic property represents the total for October 2019 to September 2020.

**Sources:** Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates for new domestic properties in England, 2008 to March 2021 (13 May 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 contractor<sup>3</sup>. The latest provisional figures show that permission for 295,000 homes was given in the year to 31 March 2021, down 6 per cent from the 315,000 homes granted permission in the year to 31 March 2020.

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 March 2021**

| Year Ending |         |   | Units granted |                           |
|-------------|---------|---|---------------|---------------------------|
|             |         |   | Number        | % change on previous year |
| 2017        | Jan-Mar | R | 329,000       | 22%                       |
| 2018        | Jan-Mar | R | 314,000       | -4%                       |
| 2019        | Jan-Mar | R | 327,000       | 4%                        |
| 2020        | Jan-Mar | R | 315,000       | -4%                       |
| 2021        | Jan-Mar | P | 295,000       | -6%                       |

This table only reports granted planning applications back to 2017 due a recent methodology change which revised the series.

These figures show a similar trend to what we see with building control reported starts and completions, which have decreased since 2018. The number of units granted increased to 2019, before decreasing up to March 2021.

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<sup>3</sup> 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;

<sup>P</sup> Figure provisional and subject to revision;

<sup>R</sup> 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>.



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