



Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

Commentary, July 2019

Coverage: UK and Great Britain

Geographical Area: Country, region and county

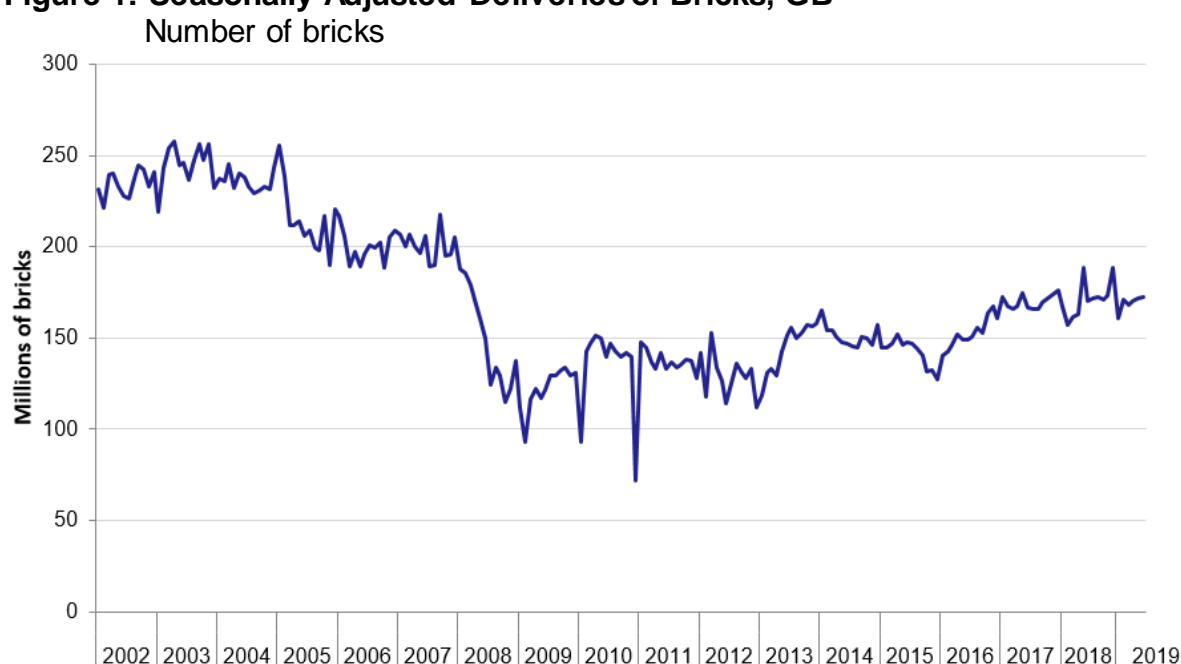
07 August 2019

National Statistics

Headline Results

- There was an **8.5% decrease** in brick deliveries in June 2019 compared to June 2018, according to the seasonally adjusted figures. The month-on-month change shows a **0.3% increase** in June 2019.
- There was an **12.0% decrease** in concrete block deliveries in June 2019 compared to June 2018, according to the seasonally adjusted figures. The month-on-month change shows a **7.3% decrease** in June 2019.
- The material price index of 'All Work' **increased by 3.0%** in June 2019 compared to the same month the previous year.

Figure 1: Seasonally Adjusted Deliveries of Bricks, GB



Source: Table 9, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

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Introduction

This commentary accompanies the latest Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components bulletin, published on the BEIS building materials [web page](#) on 7th August 2019. It provides an overview of recent trends in the data presented in the bulletin.

The bulletin presents the latest detailed information on selected building materials and components. It covers the following building materials statistics:

- Construction material price indices (monthly, UK)
- Sand and gravel sales (quarterly, GB*)
- Slate production, deliveries and stocks (quarterly, GB)
- Cement and clinker production, deliveries and stocks (annual, GB)
- Bricks production, deliveries and stocks (monthly, GB*)
- Concrete building blocks production, deliveries and stocks (monthly, GB*)
- Concrete roofing tiles production, deliveries and stocks (quarterly, GB)
- Ready-mixed concrete deliveries (quarterly, UK)
- Values of overseas imports and exports trades for selected materials and components for use in construction (quarterly, UK)
- Value of EU and Non-EU Trade for selected materials and components for use in construction (annual, UK)

Note: * Regional figures available

These statistics support analysis of the construction materials market and business planning. They are regularly reported in the construction press and are used for a variety of purposes, including policy development and evaluation concerning the construction products industry, as well as monitoring market trends. Further detail is available in this document under [Uses of these statistics](#).

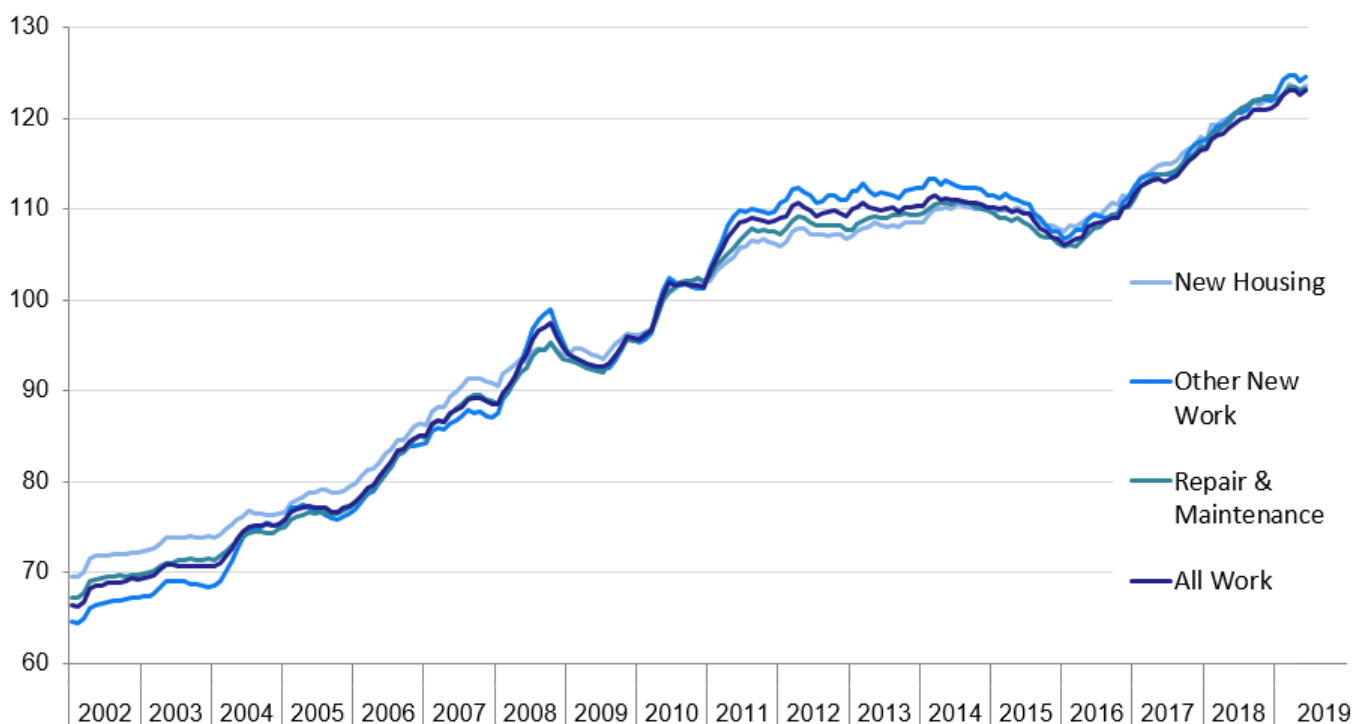
Seasonal Adjustment Review

Seasonally adjusted series for deliveries of bricks, concrete blocks, ready-mixed concrete and sales of sand & gravel are published in this bulletin. The purpose of correcting the reported series is to allow for seasonal factors such as winter weather (including the reduction in hours of daylight, and frost and rain) and other seasonal events such as Christmas and Easter. Thus, seasonally adjusted figures show the underlying trend more clearly. Further information can be found in this document under [Technical Information](#).

Summary of Results

Material Price Indices

Chart 1: Construction Material Price Indices, UK
Index, 2010 = 100



Source: Table 1, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

Year-on-year change

Change from June 2018 to June 2019	
New Housing	2.5%
Other New Work	3.3%
Repair & Maintenance	2.3%
All Work	3.0%

Month-on-month change

Change from May 2019 to June 2019	
New Housing	0.5%
Other New Work	0.4%
Repair & Maintenance	0.1%
All Work	0.3%

- Looking at the longer-term change, the material price index of **'All Work'** **increased by 3.0%** in June 2019 compared to the same month the previous year.

Table 1: Construction materials experiencing the greatest price increases and decreases in the 12 months to June 2019, UK

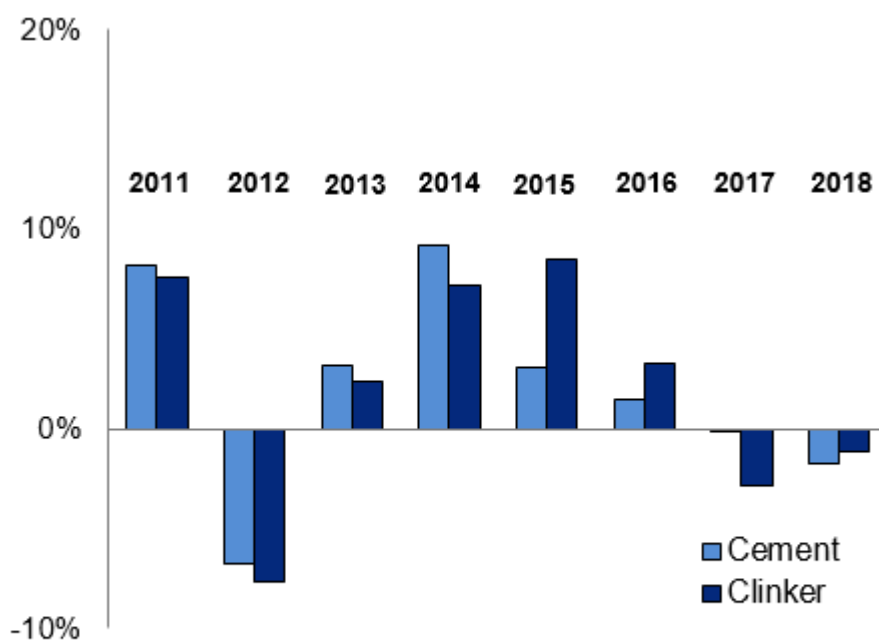
Construction Materials	% change on a year earlier
Greatest price increases	
Taps and Valves for sanitaryware	13.5
Insulating materials (thermal or acoustic)	12.2
Metal sanitaryware	7.5
Greatest price decreases	
Electric water heaters	-16.4
Imported plywood	-8.8
Paint (non-aqueous)	-5.8

Source: Table 2, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

The aggregated construction material price index hides larger price movements for some specific products and materials. The three largest increases and decreases are presented here.

Cement and Clinker

Chart 2: Production of Cement and Clinker, GB
Percentage change over previous year (%)



Source: Table 8, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

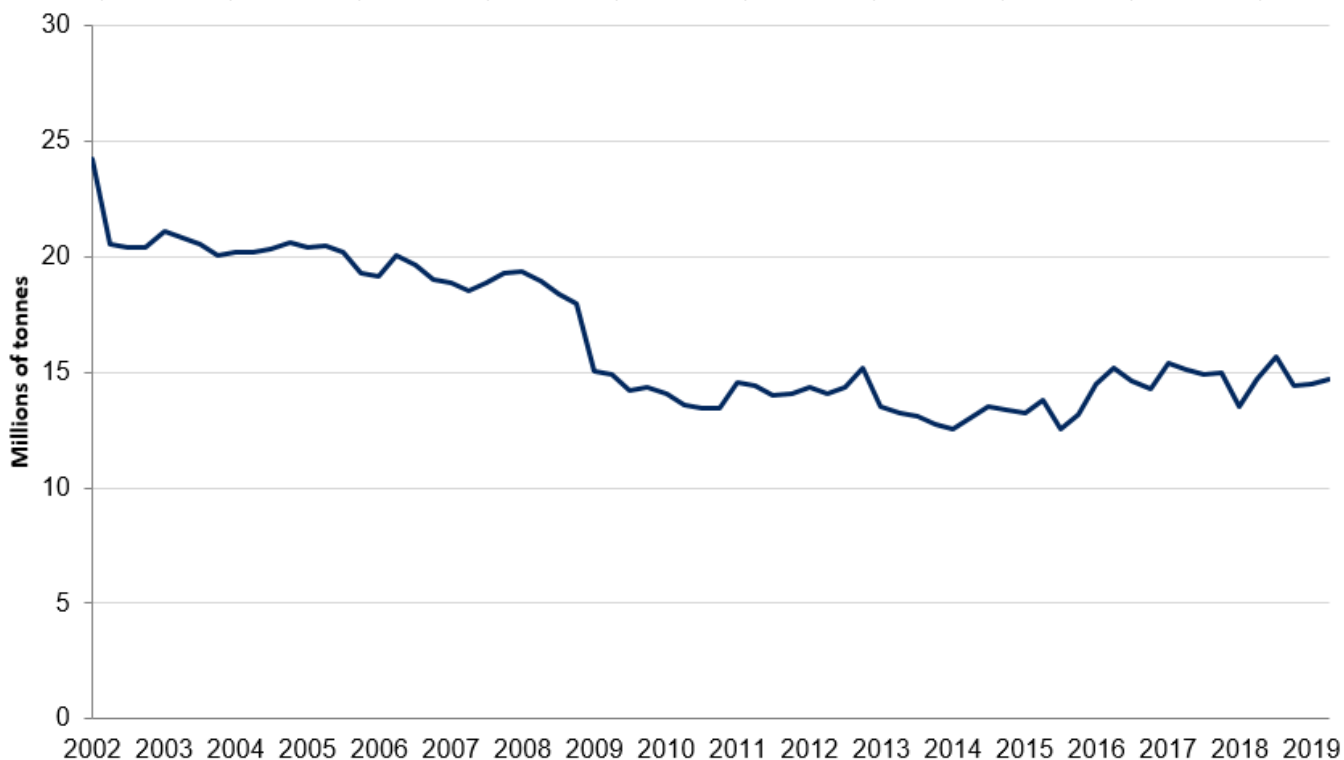
Cement production fell by 1.7% to 9.2 million tonnes in 2018, compared to the previous year. This fall in cement production follows a fall of 0.1% to 9.4 million tonnes in 2017. Pre-recession production peaked in 2007 at 11.9 million tonnes.

Production of Clinker fell by 1.1% to 7.7 million tonnes in 2018, compared to the previous year. This fall in clinker production follows a fall of 2.9% to 7.8 million tonnes in 2017. Pre-recession production stood at 10.2 million tonnes in 2007.

Sand & Gravel

Chart 3: Seasonally Adjusted Sales of Sand & Gravel, GB

Weight of sand & gravel



Source: Table 4, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

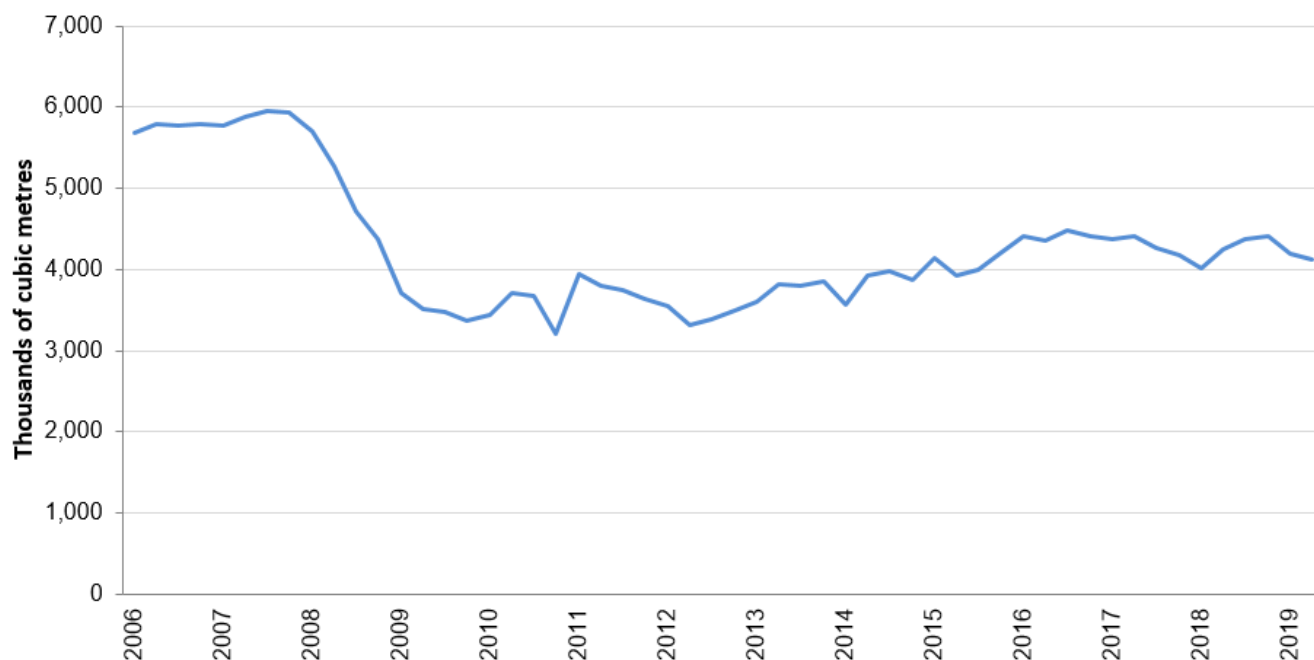
- Sales of sand & gravel **increased** by **1.4%** in Quarter 2 2019 compared to Quarter 1 2019, according to the seasonally adjusted data.
- This followed an increase of 0.2% in Quarter 1 2019.
- Comparing Quarter 2 2019 to the same quarter in the previous year, sales have remained **unchanged**.
- Seasonally adjusted sales of sand & gravel have consistently remained below levels typically seen before the recession of 2008 to 2009.

From Quarter 1 2019, sand and gravel data reported in this publication includes recycled material.

Concrete

Chart 4: Seasonally Adjusted Sales of Ready-Mixed Concrete, GB

Volume of concrete



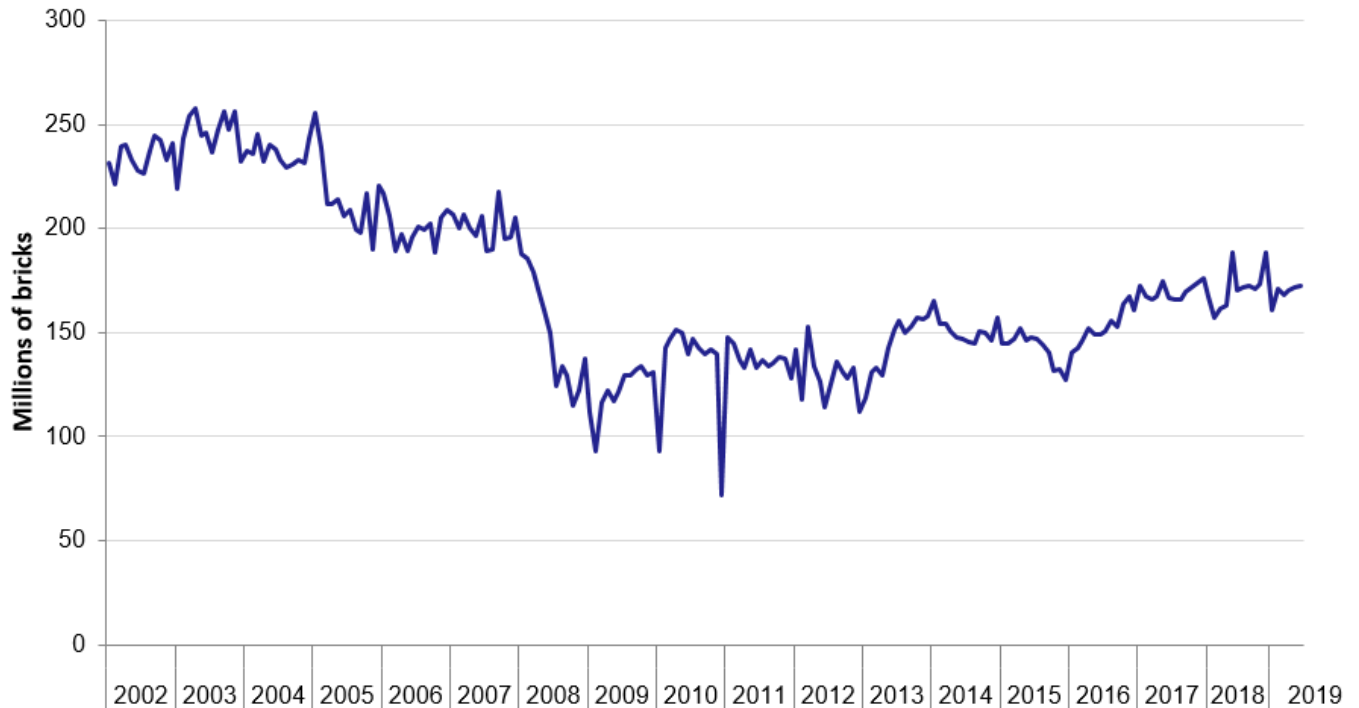
Source: Table 13, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components.

- Ready-mixed concrete sales **decreased** by **1.4%** in Quarter 2 2019 compared to Quarter 1 2019, according to the seasonally adjusted data.
- This followed a 5.0% decrease in Quarter 1 2019.
- Sales in Quarter 2 2019 **decreased** by **2.9%** compared to the same quarter in the previous year, following an 4.1% increase in Quarter 1 2019, on the same basis.
- The seasonally adjusted data show that the lowest quarterly sales in the post-recession period occurred in Quarter 4 2010, which included extreme winter conditions.
- Sales have steadily recovered since Quarter 2 2012, although they have failed to reach pre-recession levels.

Bricks

Chart 5: Seasonally Adjusted Deliveries of Bricks, GB

Number of bricks



Source: Table 9, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

- There was an **8.5% decrease** in brick deliveries in June 2019 compared to June 2018, according to the seasonally adjusted figures.
- This followed a 5.4% increase in May 2019, on the same basis.
- The month-on-month change shows a **0.3% increase** in June 2019.
- This followed a 1.0% increase in May 2019, on the same basis.
- Deliveries of bricks declined during the recession of 2008 to 2009 and have recovered slowly since 2013.

Blocks

Chart 6: Seasonally Adjusted Deliveries of Concrete Blocks, GB

Area of concrete blocks



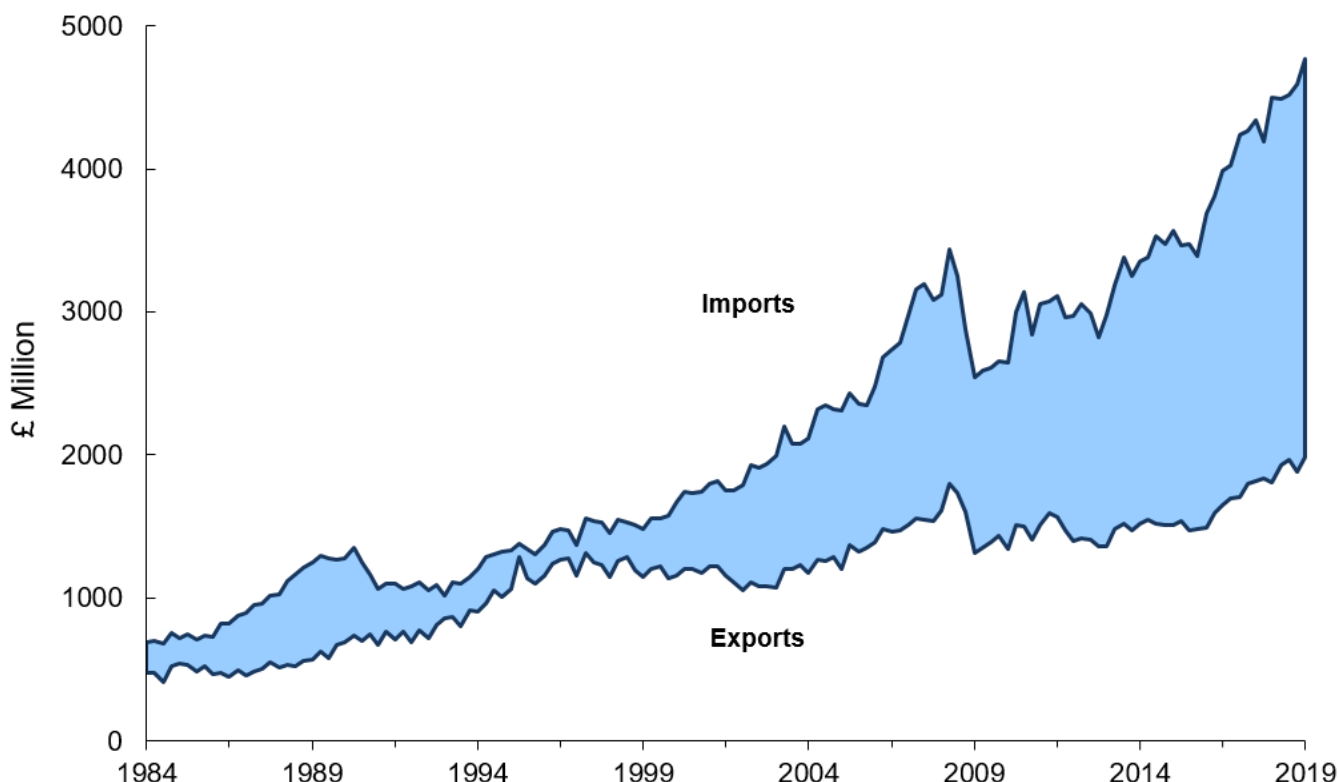
Source: Table 11, *Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components*

- There was an **12.0% decrease** in concrete block deliveries in June 2019 compared to June 2018, according to the seasonally adjusted figures.
- This followed a 1.2% increase in May 2019, on the same basis.
- The month-on-month change shows a **7.3% decrease** in June 2019.
- This followed a 2.5% decrease in May 2019, on the same basis.
- Concrete block deliveries declined during the recession of 2008 to 2009, though the general trend has been one of growth since 2013.

Imports and Exports of Construction Materials

Chart 7: Exports and Imports of Construction Materials, UK.

Value in pounds sterling



Source: Table 14, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

- **Imports** of construction materials **increased** by £182 million in the first quarter of 2019 (to £4,772 million) compared to the previous quarter, **an increase** of 4.0%.
- **Exports** of construction materials **increased** by £101 million in the first quarter of 2019 (to £1,984 million), a 5.4% increase.
- As a result, the **trade deficit widened** by £81 million to £2,788 million in Quarter 1 2019, an increase of 3.0%.
- Over the period from Quarter 1 1984 to Quarter 4 2018, construction materials imports have increased, on average (per quarter), by 4.2%. Over the same period, exports increased by an average of 2.3% per quarter.
- The trade deficit was historically at its smallest throughout the 1990s, with a mean of £0.3 billion over this period. This trade deficit was 24% of the value of imports. As of Quarter 1 2019, the trade deficit is £2,788 million, 58% of the value of imports.

Table 2: Top-5 Exported and Imported Construction Materials in 2018

Top-5 Exported Materials	£ million	Top-5 Imported Materials	£ million
Electrical Wires	866	Electrical Wires	1,896
Paints & Varnishes	717	Lamps & Fittings	912
Plugs & Sockets	455	Sawn Wood > 6mm thick	885
Air Conditioning Equipment	412	Structural Units (steel)	785
Lamps & Fittings	388	Central Heating Boilers	665

The top five exported materials in 2018 accounted for 37% of total construction material exports.

The top five imported construction materials in 2018 accounted for 28% of total construction material imports.

Source: Table 14, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

Table 3: UK Trade of Construction Materials with EU and Non-EU Countries, 2018

£million (% of total trade in italics)		
All Building Materials & Components	EU	Non-EU
Imports	11,278	6,828
	62%	38%
Exports	4,755	2,830
	63%	37%

Compared to pre-recession levels in 2007, the share of total UK construction material exports going to the EU has declined from 70% to 63%.

Source: Table 15 Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

Table 4: Top 5 UK Export and Import Markets for Construction Materials in 2018

Top-5 Export Markets	£ million	Top-5 Import Markets	£ million
Republic of Ireland	1185	China	2831
Germany	805	Germany	2577
USA	642	Italy	1056
France	615	Spain	910
Netherlands	602	Netherlands	910

The top five export markets comprised 51% of total construction materials exports in 2018. The Republic of Ireland remains the largest market, despite having shrunk from a pre-recession peak of 27% of total exports in 2007, to 16% in 2018.

The top 5 import markets comprised 46% of total construction materials imports in 2018. 16% of all imports are from China.

Source: HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics

The '[Rotterdam Effect](#)' (also known as the 'Antwerp Effect') may affect trade figures. This is explained in detail by [HM Revenue & Customs](#).

Economic Background

Construction Output

The most recent [construction output](#) figures for May 2019 were published by the **Office for National Statistics** on 10th July 2019.

Key points:

- Construction output growth was flat (0.0%) in the three-month on three-month all work series in May 2019; this was because of a fall in repair and maintenance of 0.5% being offset by a 0.3% increase in new work.
- In new work, the increase in the three-month on three-month series in May 2019 was driven by growth in private commercial new work and public new housing, which saw growths of 2.2% and 8.4% respectively.
- In repair and maintenance, the decrease in the three-month on three-month series in May 2019 was because of declines in both private and public housing repair and maintenance, which decreased by 2.5% and 3.2% respectively.
- Construction output increased by 0.6% in the month-on-month all work series in May 2019; driven by increases in both new work and repair and maintenance which grew by 0.4% and 1.2% respectively.
- Estimates in this release are consistent with the GDP quarterly national accounts, UK: January to March 2019 publication released on 28 June 2019.

Bank of England Summary of Business Conditions

The **Bank of England** published its latest update to the [Agents' Summary of Business Conditions](#) on 20th June 2019. It compares activity and prices over the past three months with a year ago.

Key points:

- Growth in the value of retail sales remained subdued. The late timing of Easter this year compared with 2018 boosted sales, as did a sustained improvement in real incomes. However, there was weaker demand for household goods and new car sales also softened.
- Housing market transactions continued to be dampened by EU exit uncertainty, with activity largely restricted to “forced” moves due to life changes. More viewings were needed to achieve sales, transactions were taking longer to complete, and fall through rates had increased. House prices were reported to be flat in most areas and falling in some, mainly London and the South East.
- Investor demand for commercial property remained muted but continued to outpace supply. Heightened uncertainty about EU exit and the political landscape caused some domestic and overseas investors to pause the construction of projects, contributing to broader constraints on supply.
- Construction output growth slowed, with overall activity being broadly flat compared with a year ago due to some housing and commercial property projects being scaled back. Public Infrastructure projects continued to provide some support to the sector overall, but there were concerns that delays may reduce the pipeline of projects.

Gross Domestic Product Estimate

The **Office for National Statistics** published the [monthly estimate](#) of gross domestic product for May 2019 on 10th July 2019. Further details of the new GDP publishing model can be found in the bulletin.

Key points:

- UK GDP grew by 0.3% in the three months to May and also by 0.3% in May itself, due in part to the partial recovery in car production.
- The services industries grew by 0.3% in the three months to May 2019. Production rose by 0.3% over the same period and construction growth was flat (0.0%). Services growth was flat (0.0%) in May 2019, and production and construction both rose, by 1.4% and 0.6% respectively.
- The month-on-month gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate was 0.1% in March 2019, -0.4% in April and 0.3% in May.

Gross Domestic Product Forecast

The latest monthly **Consensus Economics** [forecast survey](#) (which uses an average of private sector forecasts) results were published in June 2019.

Key points:

- The mean GDP growth forecast for 2019 is 1.4% growth, unchanged from the previous months survey.
- The mean GDP growth forecast for 2020 is 1.4% growth, unchanged from the previous months survey.

The **Office for Budget Responsibility** published its most recent [Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#) on 13th March 2019.

Key point:

- The GDP growth forecast for 2019 was revised from 1.6% in October 2018, to 1.2%.

Construction Output Forecasts

In July 2019, **Experian** published their Summer [forecasts](#) for the construction sector.

Key points:

- Output is expected to increase by 0.9% in 2019, 2.0% in 2020 and 2.8% in 2021.
- Private housing will slow down but continue to rise steadily through the forecast period. Public housing will be flat in 2019 but then recover strongly over the next three years.
- The infrastructure sector is forecast to see strong growth of 10% in 2019 and 9% in 2020, and then slow slightly in 2021 to 5%. Growth in this sector depends on progress on large projects such as Crossrail and Thames Tideway, as well as on new projects such as HS2 and Hinkley Point nuclear power station.

- Private commercial building fell by 6.4% in 2018 and is forecast to continue to fall by 7% in 2019 and 5% in 2020, followed by flat growth in 2021. This decrease seen across the main subsectors of offices, retail, and leisure, and is thought to be due to a more cautious attitude from investors and developers in light of the EU Referendum vote in June 2016.

The **Construction Products Association** published their Spring 2019 [forecasts](#) for the construction sector in April 2019.

Key points:

- Overall, construction output is forecast to fall by 0.4% in 2019, downgraded from the Winter 2018 forecast of 0.3%. Output will then rise by 1.4% in 2020 and by 1.7% in 2021.
- Private housing starts are forecast to fall by 2% in 2019, although completions are expected to rise as house builders finish projects they started in 2018. Private housing starts are expected to rise by 1% in both 2020 and 2021. Public housing is forecasted to rise significantly over the forecast period, by 2% in 2019, 5% in 2020 and 2% in 2021.
- Infrastructure is expected to rise by 9.3% in 2019, followed by 9.7% in 2020 and 8.6% in 2021 due to several major projects. CPA expect this sector to be the key driver of growth for the construction industry.
- The private commercial sector is forecast to fall 7% in 2019, followed by falls of 5.8% in 2020 and 1.5% in 2021.

Manufacturing

The latest **Index of Production** data for May 2019 were published on 10th July 2019 by the Office for National Statistics.

Key points for the SIC 23.1-4/7-9 industry (includes the manufacture of bricks, tiles and other construction products):

- When comparing May 2019 with May 2018, **output decreased by 5.7%**
- When comparing May 2019 with April 2019, **output increased by 1.7%**

Key points for the SIC 23.5-6 industry (includes the manufacture of concrete, cement and other products for construction purposes):

- When comparing May 2019 with May 2018, **output increased by 19.2%**
- When comparing May 2019 with April 2019, **output decreased by 0.6%**

Accompanying tables

The most recently published bulletin (available in PDF format) and accompanying data tables (available in Excel and ODS format) can be found on BEIS' *Building Materials and Components* [website](#). The list of tables in the bulletin is as follows:

- 1 Construction Material Price Indices
- 2 Price Indices of Construction Materials – monthly
- 3 Price Indices of Construction Materials – annual averages
- 4 Sales of Sand and Gravel in Great Britain (including seasonally adjusted sales)
- 5 Sales of Sand and Gravel by English Regions, Wales and Scotland
- 6 Sales of Sand and Gravel by English and Welsh Counties and Scottish Region
- 7 Slate: Production, Deliveries and Stocks
- 8 Cement and Clinker: Production, Deliveries and Stocks
- 9 Bricks: Production, Deliveries and Stocks for Great Britain (including seasonally adjusted deliveries)
- 10 Bricks: Production, Deliveries and Stocks by English Regions, Wales and Scotland (including seasonally adjusted deliveries)
- 11 Concrete Building Blocks: Production, Deliveries and Stocks for Great Britain
- 12 Concrete Building Blocks: Production, Deliveries and Stocks by English Regions, Wales and Scotland
- 13 Concrete Roofing Tiles and Ready-Mixed Concrete (including seasonally adjusted sales of ready-mixed concrete)
- 14 Value of Overseas Trade in Selected Materials and Components for Constructional Use: Imports (CIF) and Exports (FOB)
- 15 Value of EU and Non-EU Trade in Selected Materials and Components for Constructional Use: Imports (CIF) and Exports (FOB)

Accompanying tables with data relating to 2011 are accessible from [this](#) link.

Accompanying tables for 2005 - 2010 are accessible from [this](#) link.

Requests for older data should be sent to MaterialStats@beis.gov.uk.

Technical information

1. In work done for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) on improving the quality of statistics published in the Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, the Office for National Statistics' Methodology Advisory Service (MAS) recommended that BIS should start seasonally adjusting key data series (see [ONS/MAS review of building materials statistics: final report](#) for more detail). Seasonal adjustment is widely used in official statistics and aids data interpretation by removing effects associated with the time of the year or arrangement of the calendar. Seasonal effects frequently obscure features of interest in data, such as long-term trends and the effects of unusual occurrences. By removing seasonal effects, users can more readily identify the features of interest.

Following advice from the MAS, and the results of a consultation (see the [results of the BIS consultation on seasonal adjustment](#) for more detail), BIS agreed to publish seasonally adjusted data for the following series:

- Sand and gravel, total sales
- Concrete blocks, all types deliveries
- Bricks, all types deliveries
- Ready-mixed concrete, deliveries

For the initial publication of seasonally adjusted data, data from 1983 onwards will be seasonally adjusted. Subsequently, for each monthly publication, data up to 12 months or 4 quarters previous to the new data point will be revised. Upon the completion of each year's data series, data for the previous 12 years will be revised. BEIS will publish both non-seasonally adjusted and seasonally adjusted data in the tables of this publication. From the June 2015 edition this publication will only use seasonally adjusted data in the commentary for these series.

2. Quality issues related to the *Building Materials and Components* outputs are discussed in the review of the Building Material statistics that was carried out in 2010 by BIS's construction team. The review aimed to ascertain user needs, examine whether existing data collection methodologies are fit for purpose, estimate compliance costs, assess compliance with the Code of Practice and identify options for change.

The full [report](#) can be found on the BEIS *Building Materials and Components* webpage.

Detailed information on data suppliers, coverage and data collection methodology can be found in sections 2.1-2.10. Quality issues (coverage and accuracy of sample panels, response rates, survey results processing, disclosure etc.) and potential measures that could be employed to improve the quality of the statistics are discussed in section 2.11 of the review. Users' views on the quality of the *Building Materials and Components* statistics are given in section 3.3.4. These are derived from a user survey carried out in early 2010, as part of the review (see section 3 for details).

3. Following the review, BIS acted on the recommendations including commissioning the Office for National Statistics Methodology Advisory Service (ONS/MAS) to address some of the recommendations from the 2010 review. In July 2011, MAS published their [interim report](#). In July 2012, MAS published their [final report](#).

4. HM Revenue and Customs use administrative sources to produce Overseas Trade Statistics. A [Statement of Administrative Sources](#) used to compile construction material trade statistics is available on the BEIS *Building Materials and Components* webpage:

Separately, HM Revenue and Customs also have a [Statement of Administrative Sources](#) which covers Overseas Trade Statistics.

5. [The pre-announcement of any major changes to samples or methodology](#) also details some methodological changes to the collection of data.
6. The following table gives a summary of response rates related to some of the latest survey results. Where the response rate is less than 100%, estimates are made for missing values.

For latest data used	Bulletin table number	Response rate
Quarterly Sand and Gravel	4, 5 & 6	72%
Quarterly Sand and Gravel – Land Won	4, 5 & 6	70%
Quarterly Sand and Gravel – Marine Dredged	4, 5 & 6	85%
Quarterly Slate	7	89%
Quarterly Concrete Roofing Tiles	13	100%
Monthly Bricks Provisional data	9	100%
Monthly Bricks Final data	9 & 10	100%
Monthly Concrete Blocks	11	87%

Definitions

Production	Products completed and ready for dispatch
Deliveries	Sold products which have left the premises
Stocks	Manufacturer's stocks
CIF	Cost, insurance and freight (more information on shipping terms, visit the HMRC website)
FOB	Free on-board (for more information on shipping terms, visit the HMRC website)
Sand and gravel - land won	Sand and gravel from pits and quarries, including that derived from beaches and rivers
Sand and gravel - marine dredged	Sand and gravel derived from seas and estuaries

Further information

Future updates to these statistics

The next publication in this series will be on 4th September 2019.

Related statistics

1. [Construction Statistics: Sources and Outputs](#) lists the known sources of information available on the construction industry and their outputs. These include information on employees, employment, enterprises, output and new orders in the construction industry as well as the contribution of the industry to the economy. Related information, for example housing, is also included.
2. The [Construction Statistics Annual](#) brings together a wide range of statistics currently available on the construction industry from a variety of sources and provides a broad perspective on statistical trends in the construction industry, with some international comparisons.
3. In its monthly **Index of Production (IoP)** [publication](#), the Office for National Statistics publishes Gross Value Added (seasonally adjusted, UK) data for the following two industries:
 - SIC 23.1-4/7-9 industry, which includes the manufacture of bricks, tiles and other construction products.
 - SIC 23.5-6 industry, which includes the manufacture of concrete, cement and other products for construction purposes.

These data are not directly comparable with the data in this bulletin, due to differences in coverage and methodology. They are nevertheless useful in illustrating the latest output trends of related construction materials as measured by the Office for National Statistics.

Revisions policy

1. Our [revisions policy](#) can be found on the BEIS Building Materials webpage.
2. [The pre-announcement of any major changes to samples or methodology](#) and [Summary of Revisions](#) give further information on revisions and other changes to data and can also be found on the BEIS Building Materials webpage.

Uses of these statistics

The *Building Materials and Components* statistics are used for a variety of purposes, including policy development and evaluation concerning the construction products industry, as well as monitoring market trends. In a wider context, the figures are regularly reported in the construction press to facilitate market analysis and business planning for its wide range of readers. The

statistics are also increasingly used by financial institutions for assessing market information and industry trends. For more information on the uses of the Building Materials statistics, their usefulness to users and users' views on the quality of these statistics, see Section 3 of the *Building Materials and Components* [review](#).

User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide comments and feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and should be sent to: materialstats@beis.gov.uk

The Consultative Committee on Construction Industry Statistics (CCCIS) meets twice a year, chaired by BEIS, to discuss issues relating to the collection and dissemination of UK construction statistics. The CCCIS has a wide membership representing government, the construction industry and independent analysts. [Minutes of previous CCCIS meetings](#) are available from the BEIS building materials web page.

The BEIS statement on [statistical public engagement and data standards](#) sets out the department's commitments on public engagement and data standards as outlined by the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics designation

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The statistics last underwent a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in 2011.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- carried out a public consultation and introduced publication of [seasonally adjusted](#) data on deliveries of sand and gravel, concrete blocks, bricks, and ready-mixed concrete
- in response to the cessation of MHCLG's Annual Minerals Raised Inquiry, which previously supplied the sampling frame for the land-won sand and gravel survey, we have:
 - changed the survey from sample survey to a census, increasing the panel from 200 sites to around 500 sites
 - refreshed the panel of sites annually using information from the British Geological Survey
 - made the survey statutory under the [Statistics of Trade Act 1947](#), bringing it into line with the marine-dredged sand and gravel survey
- improved the design of the [blocks survey](#), making it fully monthly instead of a mixture of monthly and quarterly data collection
- introduced the publication of the tables in an OpenDocument (ODS) spreadsheet, in addition to Microsoft Excel and PDF

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