



Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components

Commentary, July 2023

Coverage: UK and Great Britain

Geographical Area: Country, region and county

2 August 2023

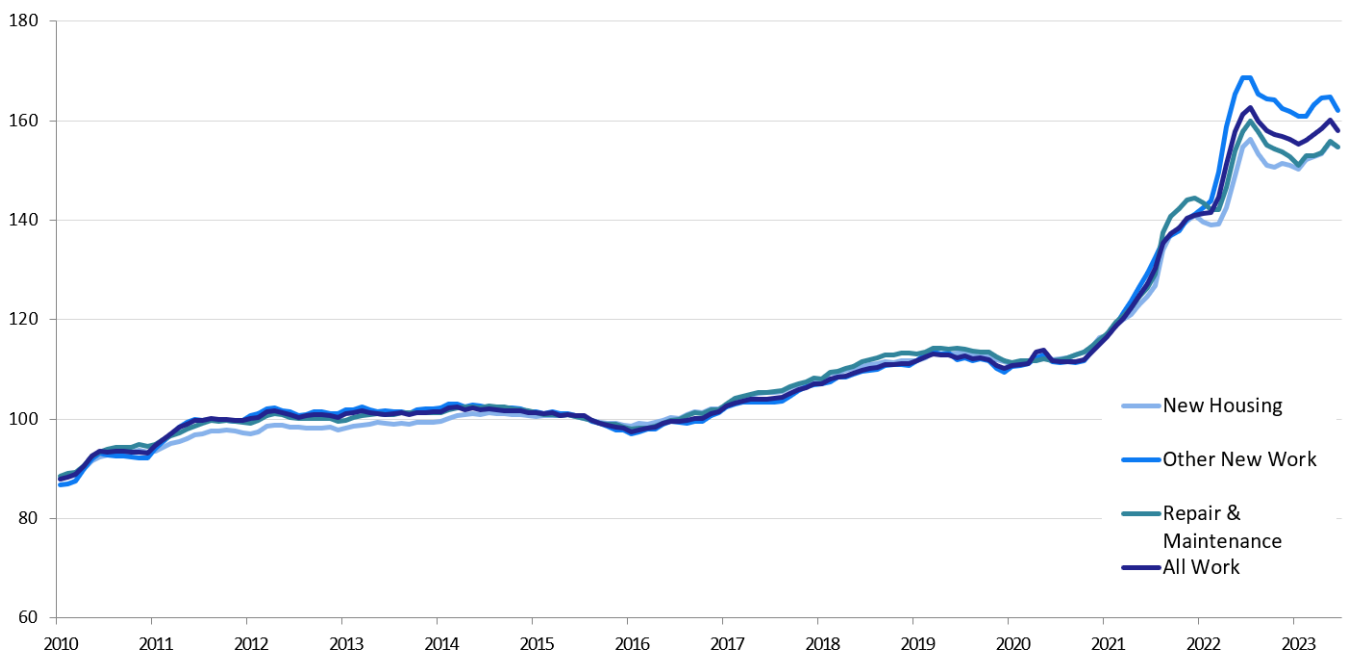
National Statistics

Headline Findings

- The material price index for **'All Work'** decreased by **2.0%** in June 2023 compared to the same month the previous year.
- There was a **14.7% decrease** in brick deliveries in June 2023 compared to June 2022, according to the seasonally adjusted figures.
- Cement production **decreased by 6.8%** to 8.4 million tonnes in 2022, compared to 9.0 million tonnes the previous year.

Publication of blocks data for June 2023 has been postponed to allow for further quality assurance following the identification of reporting errors. We are planning to resume the series in the next publication with an expected revision of past data.

Chart 1: Construction Material Price Indices, UK
Index, 2015 = 100



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

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Introduction

This commentary accompanies the latest Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components data tables, published on the Building Materials and Components [web page](#) on 2nd August 2023. It provides an overview of recent trends in the data presented in the tables.

The data tables present the latest detailed information on selected building materials and components. They cover 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](#).

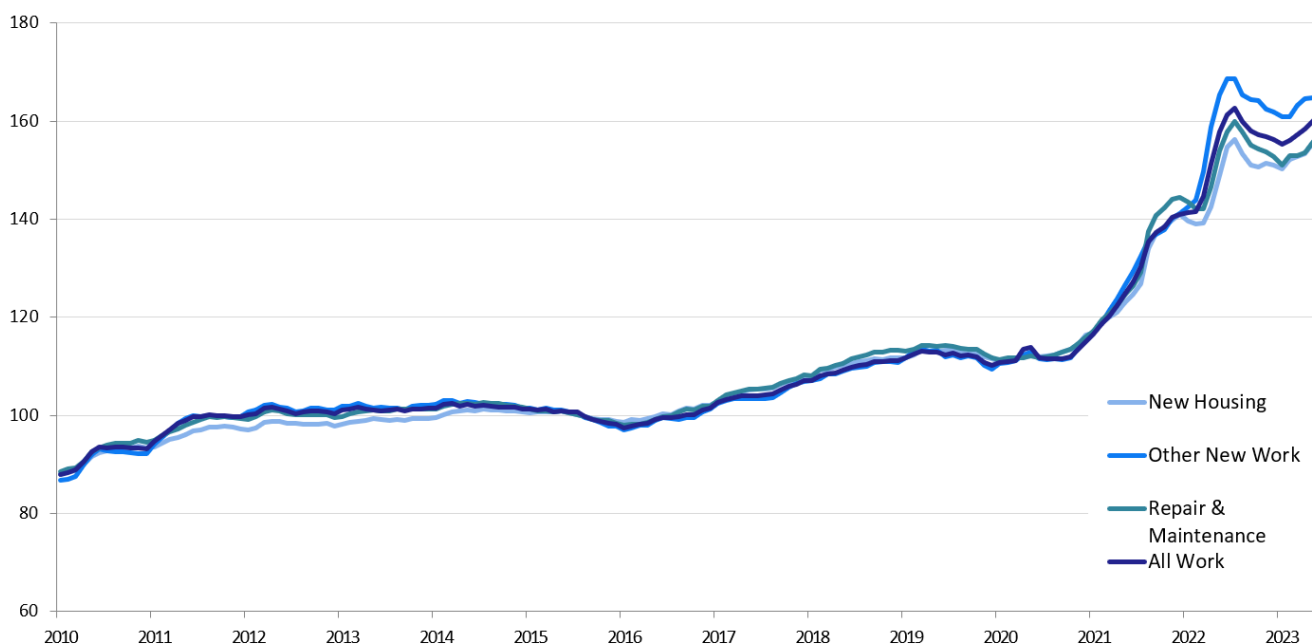
Seasonal Adjustment Review

Seasonally adjusted series for deliveries of bricks, concrete blocks, ready-mixed concrete and sales of sand and gravel are published in the data tables. 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 2: Construction Material Price Indices, UK
Index, 2015 = 100



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

Table 1: Construction material price indices, year-on-year and month-on-month percentage change.

Material price indices	June 2022 – June 2023 (% change)	May 2023 – June 2023 (% change)
New Housing	0.1	-0.5
Other New Work	-4.0	-1.6
Repair & Maintenance	-2.0	-0.8
All Work	-2.0	-1.3

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

- The material price index for **'All Work'** decreased by **2.0%** in June 2023 compared to the same month the previous year. This followed an increase of 1.5% in May 2023 compared to May 2022.
- Looking at the year-on-year changes, the **'Other New Work'** price index had the largest decrease (-4.0%).
- The material price index for **'All Work'** decreased by **1.3%** in June 2023 compared to May 2023. This followed an increase of 1.1% in May 2023 compared to April 2023.
- Looking at the month-on-month changes, the **'Other New Work'** price index had the greatest decrease (-1.6%).

Table 2: Construction materials experiencing the greatest price increases and decreases in the 12 months to June 2023, UK

Construction Materials	Year-on-year change
Greatest price increases	% increase
Insulating materials (thermal or acoustic)	27.9
Screws etc.	24.8
Ready-mixed concrete	19.0
Greatest price decreases	% decrease
Concrete reinforcing bars	-29.4
Imported sawn or planed wood	-28.8
Fabricated structural steel	-27.9

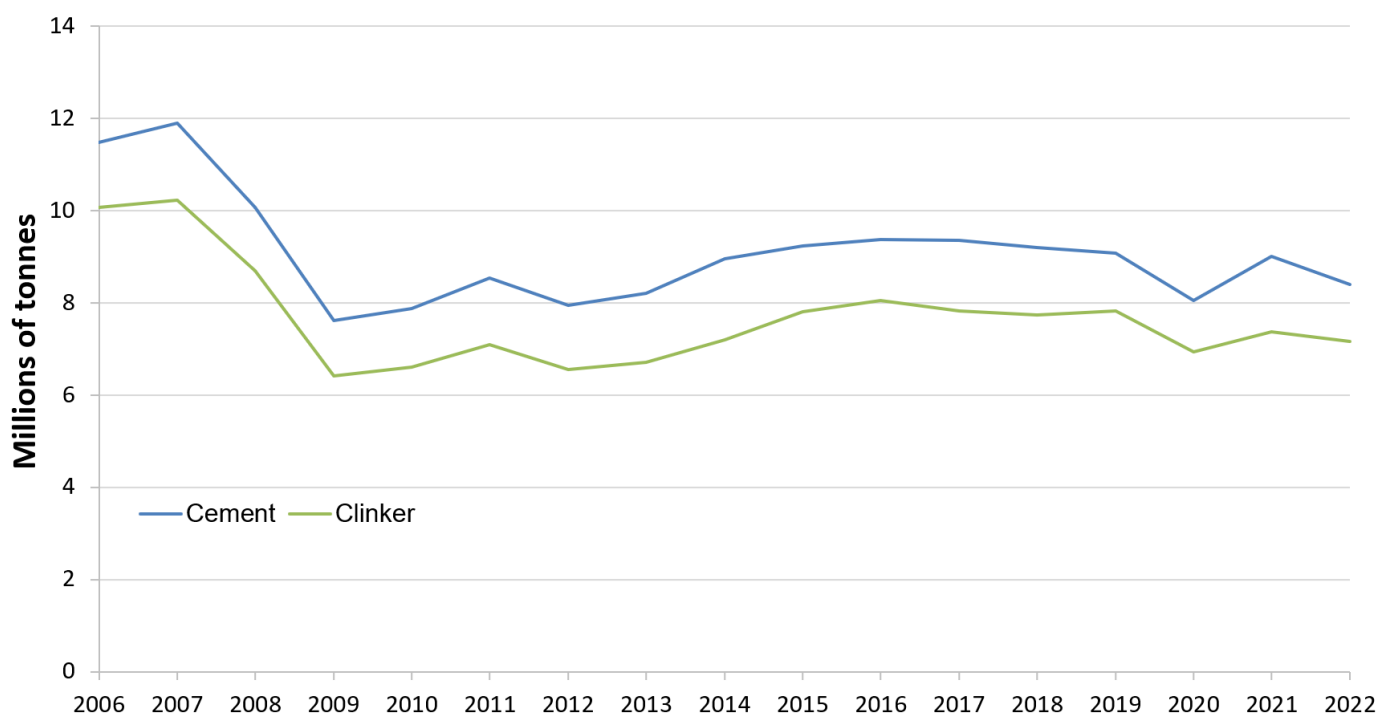
The aggregated construction material price indices hide larger price movements for some specific products and materials. The three largest increases and the three largest decreases are presented here.

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

Cement and Clinker

Chart 3: Production of Cement and Clinker, GB

Weight of cement & clinker



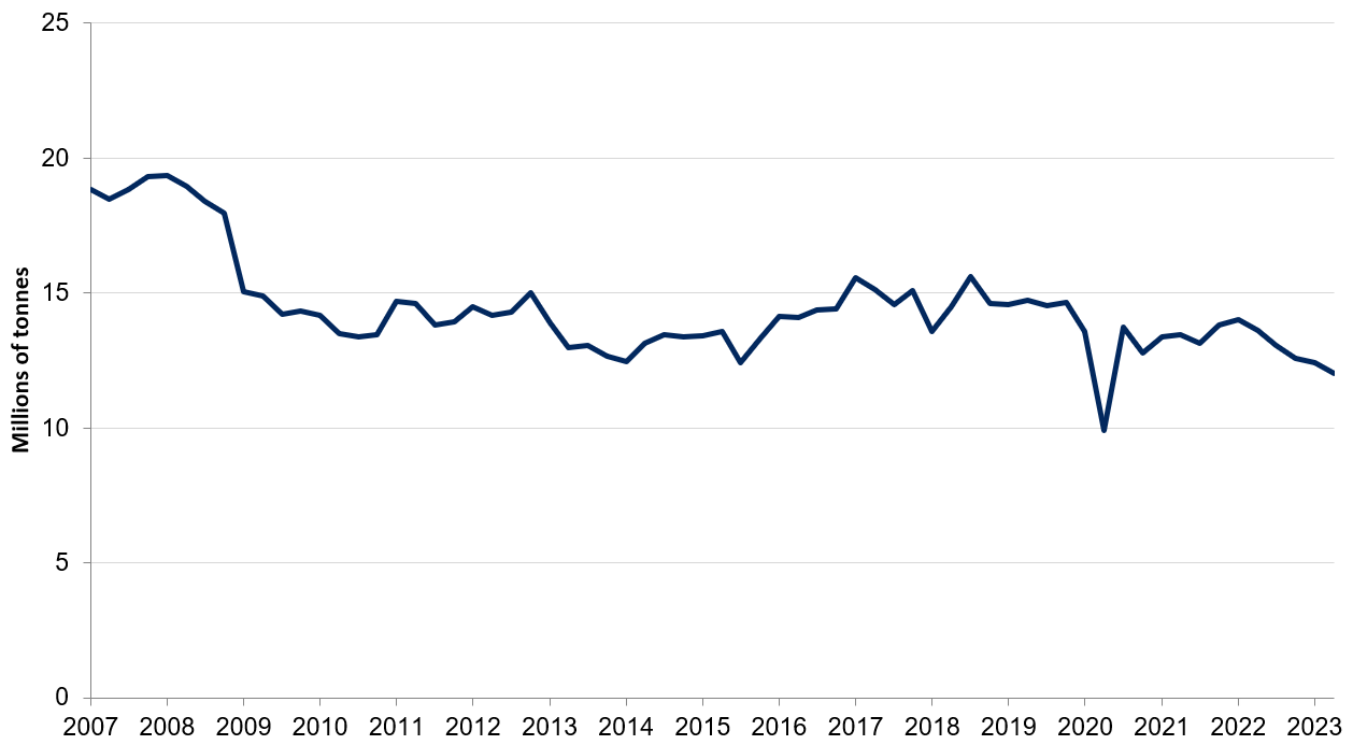
Source: Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 8

- Cement production **decreased by 6.8%** to 8.4 million tonnes in 2022, compared to 9.0 million tonnes the previous year. This follows an increase of 12.0% in 2021 compared to 2020. In 2007, prior to the recession of 2008 - 2009 production stood at 11.9 million tonnes.
- Production of clinker **decreased by 2.8%** to 7.2 million tonnes in 2022, compared to 7.4 million tonnes the previous year. This follows an increase of 6.1% in 2021. In 2007, prior to the 2008 - 2009 recession production stood at 10.2 million tonnes.

Sand & Gravel

Chart 4: Seasonally Adjusted Sales of Sand & Gravel, GB

Weight of sand & gravel



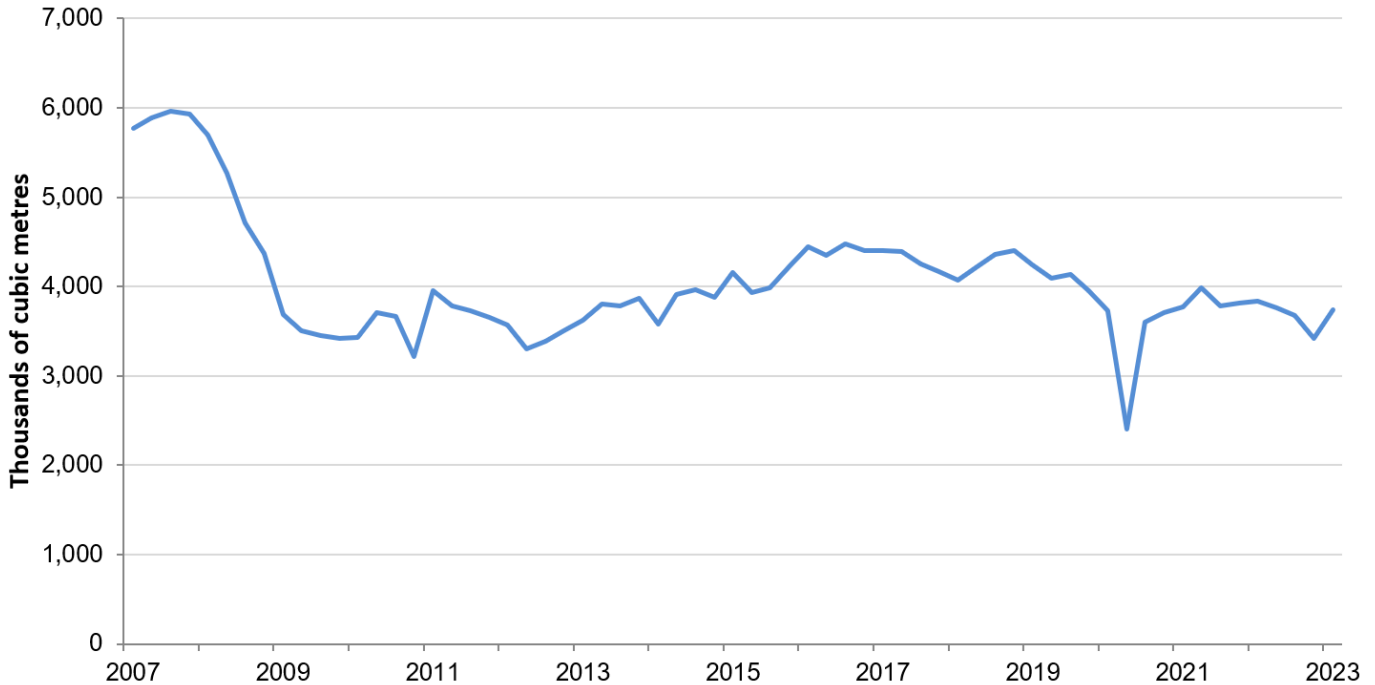
Source: Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 4

- Sales of sand & gravel **decreased** by **3.1%** in Quarter 2 2023 compared to Quarter 1 2023, according to the seasonally adjusted data. This followed a decrease of 1.2% in Quarter 1 2023 compared to Quarter 4 2022.
- Comparing year-on-year changes, Quarter 2 2023 sales have **decreased** by **11.5%** compared to Quarter 2 2022. This followed a decrease of 11.4% in Quarter 1 2023 compared with Quarter 1 2022.
- Seasonally adjusted sales of sand & gravel have consistently remained below levels typically seen before the recession of 2008 to 2009 and have dropped recently due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- From Quarter 1 2019, sand and gravel data reported in this publication includes recycled material.

Concrete

Chart 5: Seasonally Adjusted Sales of Ready-Mixed Concrete, GB

Volume of concrete



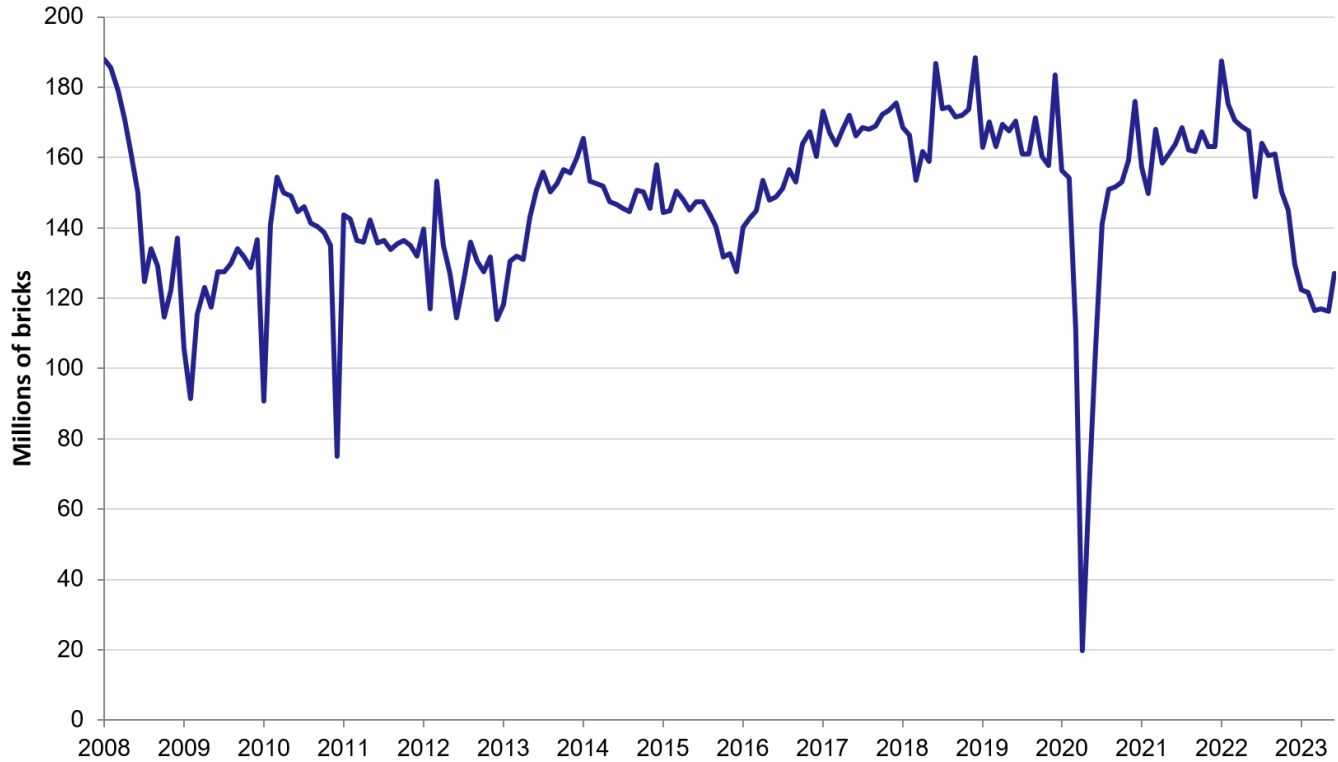
Source: Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 13

- Ready-mixed concrete sales **increased** by **9.6%** in Quarter 1 2023 compared to Quarter 4 2022, according to the seasonally adjusted data.
- This followed a 7.0% decrease in Quarter 4 2022 compared to Quarter 3 2022.
- Sales in Quarter 1 2023 **decreased** by **2.4%** compared to Quarter 1 2022.
- After the 2008 to 2009 recession, seasonally adjusted sales of ready-mixed concrete recovered steadily since Quarter 2 2012, until the drop due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bricks

Chart 6: Seasonally Adjusted Deliveries of Bricks, GB

Number of bricks



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

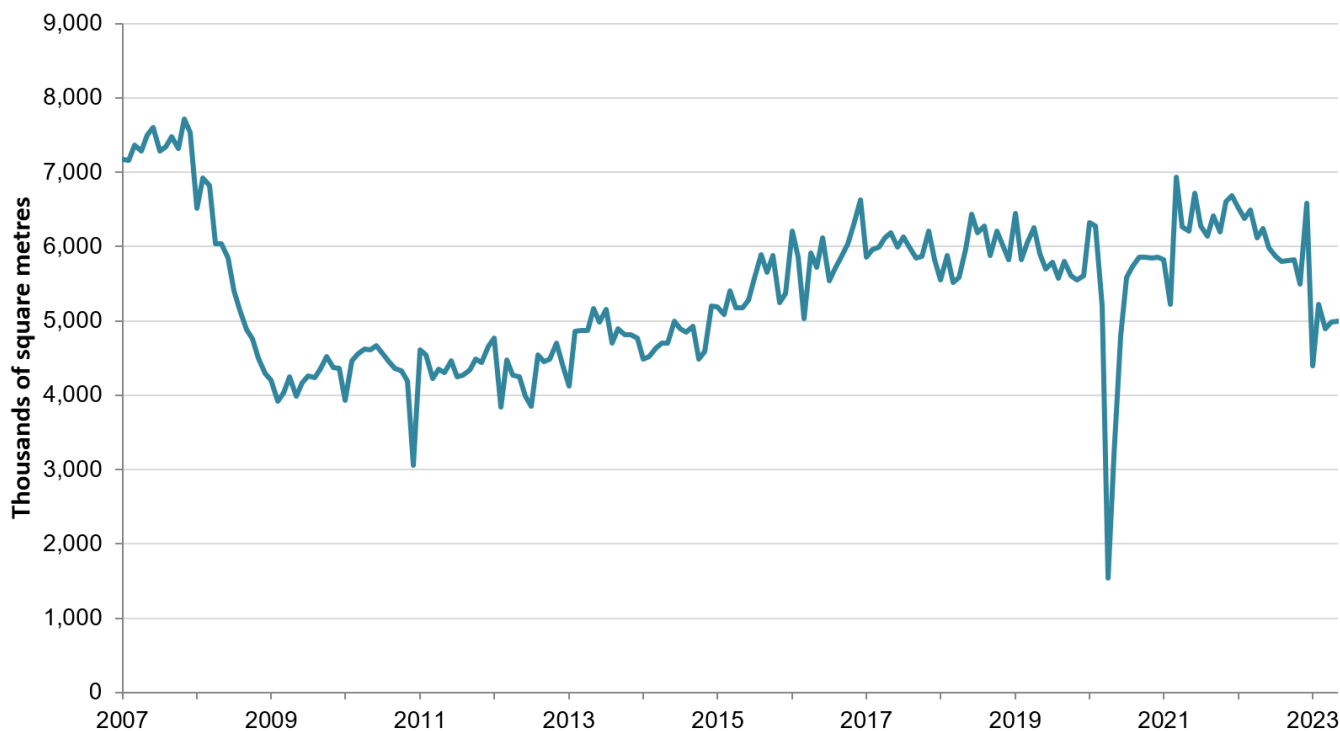
- There was a **14.7% decrease** in brick deliveries in June 2023 compared to June 2022, according to the seasonally adjusted figures.
- This followed a 30.6% decrease in May 2023, compared to May 2022.
- The month-on-month change shows a **9.2%% increase** in June 2023.
- This followed a 0.7% decrease in May 2023, compared to April 2023.
- Deliveries of bricks declined during the recession of 2008 to 2009. They have recovered slowly since 2013, until the plunge in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Blocks

Blocks Publication of blocks data for June 2023 has been postponed to allow for further quality assurance following the identification of reporting errors. We are planning to resume the series in the next publication with an expected revision of past data.

Chart 7: Seasonally Adjusted Deliveries of Concrete Blocks, GB

Area of concrete blocks



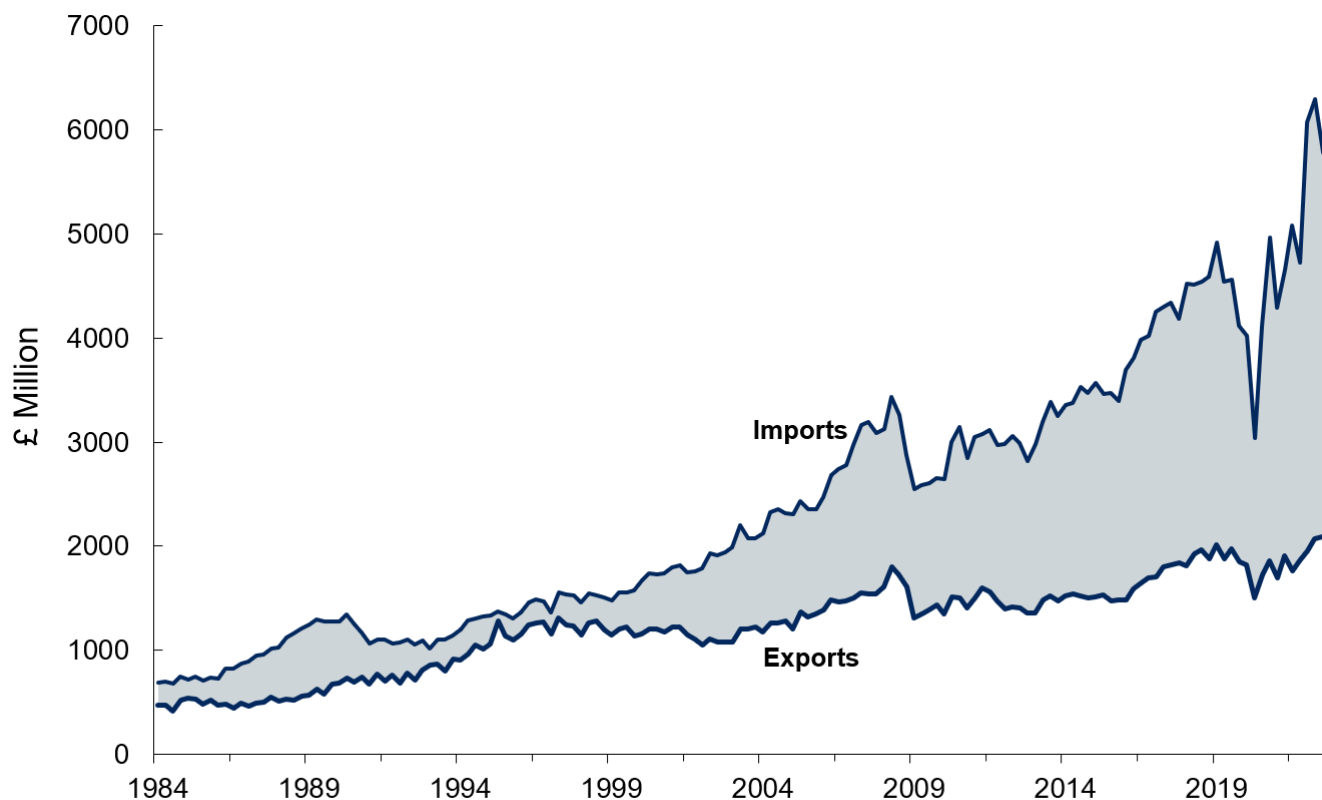
Source: Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 11

- There was a **20.0% decrease** in concrete block deliveries in May 2023 compared to May 2022, according to the seasonally adjusted figures.
- This followed a 18.6% decrease in April 2023, compared to April 2022.
- The month-on-month change shows a **0.2% increase** in May 2023.
- This followed a 1.9% increase in April 2023, compared to March 2023.
- Concrete block deliveries declined during the recession of 2008 to 2009. The general trend has been one of growth since 2013, interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Imports and Exports of Construction Materials

Chart 8: Quarterly Exports and Imports of Construction Materials, UK

Value in pounds sterling



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

- **Imports** of construction materials **decreased** by £148 million in Quarter 4 2022 compared to the previous quarter, a **decrease** of 2.6%.
- **Exports** of construction materials **decreased** by £3 million in Quarter 4 2022 compared to the previous quarter, a **decrease** of 0.2%.
- As a result, between Quarter 3 2022 and Quarter 4 2022, the **quarterly trade deficit decreased** by £145 million to £3,546 million, a **decrease** of 3.9%.
- Over the whole of 2022, **imports** of construction materials **increased** by **27.8%** compared to 2021, from £18,621 million to £23,798 million.
- In the same period **exports** of construction materials **increased** by **16.9%**, from £7,029 million to £8,215 million.
- In 2022, the **annual trade deficit widened** by £3,991 million to £15,583 million, an **increase** of 34.4%.
- Over the period from Quarter 1 1984 to Quarter 4 2022, construction materials imports have increased, on average (per quarter), by 4.6%. Over the same period, exports increased by an average of 2.2% per quarter.
- The trade deficit was historically at its smallest throughout the 1990s, with a mean of £309 million over this period. This trade deficit was 23.5% of the value of imports. As of Quarter 4 2022, the trade deficit is £3,546 million, 62.9% of the value of imports.

- As of January 2022, goods imports from EU to GB are being collected using custom declarations (as with UK imports from rest of the world) rather than using the Intrastat survey. We advise caution when interpreting 2022 EU imports compared with earlier periods. The change marks an improvement in coverage, as trade below the Intrastat value threshold (estimated at around 7% of trade by value) is now included (previously estimated). Additionally, customs declarations include trade by non-VAT-registered businesses, private individuals, and parcel post, which was not previously captured. Goods imports from EU to Northern Ireland continue to be collected using the Intrastat survey.
- For more information on the 2022 changes to data collection methods, see the following four pages: [i\) methodology release from HMRC](#), [ii\) impact of changes from HMRC](#), [iii\) article from ONS](#), [iv\) blog post from ONS](#).

Table 3: Top-5 Exported and Imported Construction Materials in 2022

Top-5 Exported Materials	<i>£ million</i>	Top-5 Imported Materials	<i>£ million</i>
Electrical Wires	956	Electrical Wires	2,811
Paints & Varnishes	869	Sawn Wood > 6mm thick	1,326
Plastic Pipes	392	Air Conditioning Equipment	842
Air Conditioning Equipment	365	Structural Units (steel)	783
Linoleum Floor Coverings	360	Linoleum Floor Coverings	747

The top five exported materials in 2022 accounted for 36% of total construction material exports.

The top five imported construction materials in 2022 accounted for 27% of total construction material imports.

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

Table 4: UK Trade of Construction Materials with EU and Non-EU Countries, 2022

<i>£ million (% of total trade in italics)</i>	EU	Non-EU
Imports	13,303 <i>56%</i>	10,495 <i>44%</i>
Exports	5,014 <i>61%</i>	3,200 <i>39%</i>

Source: *Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 15*

Compared to pre-recession levels in 2007, the share of total UK construction material exports going to the EU has declined from 70% to 61%.

Due to an error in the production process some countries' imports/exports previously fed into incorrect EU/non-EU categories. The error has been corrected and data revised. The changes affect all imports/exports in Table 15.

Table 5: Top 5 UK Export and Import Markets for Construction Materials in 2022

Top-5 Export Markets		Top-5 Import Markets	
	£ million		£ million
Ireland	1,457	China	4,855
USA	862	Germany	2,250
Germany	768	Italy	1,335
Netherlands	665	Spain	1,293
France	556	Turkey	1,240

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](#).

The top five export markets comprised 52% of total construction materials exports in 2022. Ireland remains the largest market, despite having shrunk from a pre-recession peak of 27% of total exports in 2007, to 18% in 2022.

The top five import markets comprised 46% of total construction materials imports in 2022. Around 20% of all imports are from China.

Economic Background

Business Insights

The **Office for National Statistics** published further information from their fortnightly [Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#) publication on 27 July 2023, which was live from 10 July to 23 July 2023.

Key points:

- Weighted by count, 5.4% of construction businesses that had not permanently stopped trading reported that their employees' hourly wages had increased in June 2023 compared with May 2023, 80.2% reported wages had stayed the same, while 5.2% reported wages had decreased.
- Weighted by count, 19.6% of construction businesses that had not permanently stopped trading, were experiencing worker shortages in mid-July 2023, whilst 54.1% were not experiencing worker shortages.

Construction Output

The **Office for National Statistics** published estimates of construction output for [May 2023](#) on 13 July 2023.

Key points:

- Monthly construction output is estimated to have decreased 0.2% in volume terms in May 2023; this is the third consecutive fall in the month-on-month series, with the monthly value in level terms at £15,360 million.
- The decrease in monthly output came solely from a decrease in new work (0.4% fall), with repair and maintenance being flat (0.0%) on the month.

- At the sector level, four out of the nine sectors saw a fall in May 2023, with the main contributors to the monthly decrease seen in non-housing repair and maintenance and private housing new work, which decreased 2.5% and 1.7%, respectively.
- Anecdotal evidence continued to indicate a slow-down in private housing, referencing customers' economic worries; however, some businesses across other sectors continued to report an easing in inflation.
- An additional bank holiday was held for the coronation of King Charles III on 8th May 2023; while adjustments are made for regular calendar effects, there was no explicit adjustment for this ad hoc event; the timing of the bank holiday indirectly affects the number of trading days, which could affect construction monthly estimates.
- Alongside the monthly decrease, construction output saw an increase of 0.2% in the three months to May 2023; this is the ninth period of consecutive growth in the three-month-on-three-month series; however, this is the weakest growth since the decrease in the three months to August 2022 (0.1% fall).
- The increase in the three-month-on-three-month series came solely from a rise in repair and maintenance (2.5%), as new work saw a decrease of 1.3%; despite the increase, total repair and maintenance has weakened compared with the strength at the start of the year; the largest positive contributor was private housing repair and maintenance (3.9%); non-housing repair and maintenance (1.6%) was the other main contributor to the three-month-on-three-month increase, despite the decrease on the month.

Bank of England Summary of Business Conditions

The **Bank of England** published its most recent update to the [Agents' Summary of Business Conditions](#) on 22 June 2023, covering intelligence gathered between mid-April and late May 2023.

Key points:

- Construction output volumes continued to fall, driven by softer demand from the public sector and in housing. Higher costs and planning constraints also affected output.
- The decline in output volumes continued as homebuilders slowed build rates in response to weaker demand. Construction of social housing was also slow owing to the increased cost of upgrading the existing housing stock. Contacts continued to report a fall in home improvement spending reflecting the squeeze on household incomes.
- Construction of office and commercial property remained weak as both high funding and building costs reduced potential returns, even as the demand for office refurbishment remained good. Public sector demand has slowed as project budgets were constrained by higher costs.

Gross Domestic Product Estimate

The **Office for National Statistics** published estimates of GDP for [May 2023](#) on 13 July 2023.

Key points:

- Monthly real gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have fallen by 0.1% in May 2023 after growth of 0.2% in April 2023, which is unrevised from the previous publication.
- Looking at the broader picture, GDP has shown no growth in the three months to May 2023.
- Production output fell by 0.6% in May 2023 after a fall of 0.2% in April 2023, revised up from a fall of 0.3% in the previous publication; this sector was the main contributor to the fall in monthly GDP in May.
- Services output showed no growth in May 2023 following growth of 0.3% in April 2023, unrevised from the previous publication.
- Output in consumer-facing services fell by 0.2% in May 2023 following growth of 1.1% in April 2023, revised up from growth of 1.0% in the previous publication.
- Revisions for the period January to April 2023 are included in this publication.

Gross Domestic Product Forecast

The latest monthly **Consensus Economics** [forecast survey](#) (which uses an average of private sector forecasts) results were published in July 2023.

Key points:

- The mean GDP forecast for 2023 is 0.1%, unchanged from the previous month's forecast.
- The mean GDP forecast for 2024 is 0.4%, down from 0.8% from the previous month's forecast.

The **Office for Budget Responsibility** published a new [Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#) on 15 March 2023.

- GDP is expected to contract by 0.2% in 2023 (up from -1.4% in the previous forecast) and to grow by 1.8% in 2024 and 2.5% in 2025.

Construction Output Forecasts

Experian published their Spring 2023 [forecasts](#) for the construction sector in May 2023.

Key points:

- Construction output is set to decline by 1.3% in 2023 as weakness in the housing sector, both in terms of new work and RM&I, dampen the outlook. While headwinds in the form of elevated inflationary pressures, a cost-of-living crisis, rising interest rates and economic uncertainty continue to collectively weigh on construction going forward, the UK backdrop has brightened compared with the previous forecast and it is largely the fate of the residential sector which is hampering prospects. As the UK economic landscape continues to improve and the housing market recovers towards the end of the year there is a return to construction output growth of 1.0% and 2.6% in 2024 and 2025 respectively.
- The housing sector is expected to decline by 7.1% in 2023, then increase by 2.5% in 2024 and 4.8% in 2025. The near-term outlook for housebuilding is undeniably weak. The driver of growth in the overall sector –private housebuilding – is under renewed pressure. At the same time, no compensating momentum is forthcoming from the public side. On the private sector side, the cost-of-living crisis, rising interest rates, economic uncertainty and the rolling back of supportive schemes are weighing on buyer demand. As a result, buyer enquiries and house prices have both fallen for several consecutive months. In this backdrop, there is little incentive for private housebuilders to undertake new work. On the public sector side, local authorities face the double whammy of ongoing budgetary constraints and further funding cuts as well as heightened pressure to redirect existing funding from new construction towards RM&I.
- Housing Repair Maintenance & Improvement (RM&I) is forecast to decline by 1.9% in 2023, stay flat (0.0%) in 2024 and grow by 1.0% in 2025. The public and private Repair Maintenance & Improvement (RM&I) sectors have had notably divergent experiences in the recovery from the pandemic. While private housing RM&I enjoyed a swift bounce back from a sharp decline to hit a record high of £28.7bn in 2022, up 12.9% year over year, growth in public housing RM&I failed to establish momentum and fell back once again in 2022 as output shrank to £7bn marking.
- The new infrastructure sector is expected to grow by 2.4% in 2023, 1.8% 2024 and 2.6% in 2025. Infrastructure output fell by 4.8% in 2020 weighed down by pandemic related disruption but saw a strong rebound of 28% in 2021. While momentum has faltered, with the sector experiencing a marginal decline of 0.6% in 2022, the recent PMI data points towards a relative outperformance this year. Forecasts for 2025 will also see a new record high for infrastructure at £29.7bn.
- The private industrial sector is expected to grow by 2.1% in 2023, decline by 0.5% in 2023 and rise by 2.2% in 2025. The industrial construction sector was the star performer of the construction industry in 2022, posting growth of 42%, taking output up to £6.75bn (2019 prices), its highest level since 2007. The weaker economic prognosis for the economy is expected to impact manufacturing output negatively and consequently the demand for manufacturing facilities.
- The Public Non-residential sector is forecast to grow by 1.7% in 2023, 1.6% in 2024 and 3.1% in 2025. The public non-residential sector experienced its sixth consecutive year of

decline in 2022, with output falling by over 9% in 2022. There were multiple announcements in the Spring 2023 Budget which should benefit the public non-residential sector, including £200m for local regeneration projects in England, a further £161m for mayoral combined authorities and Greater London, £400m for new 'levelling up partnerships', and another £11bn added to the defence budget over the next five years, some of which will be construction related. It remains the case that the strongest growth over the next three years is likely to be in the agriculture & miscellaneous sector, driven by work on the Defence Estate and the prison building programme.

The **Construction Products Association** published their [Construction industry forecasts](#) for Summer 2023 in July 2023.

Key points:

- The construction industry is expected to experience an acute recession this year driven by double-digit falls in the two largest construction sectors: private housing new build and private housing repair, maintenance, and improvement (rm&i). The CPA forecasts construction output to fall by 7.0% in 2023 before recovering slowly in 2024 with growth of just 0.7%.
- Private housing output is worth £41 billion per year to the UK economy and is forecast to be the worst-affected construction sector in 2023. In this sector, activity was already forecast to fall due to the lagged impacts of the government's calamitous Mini Budget and the resultant spike in mortgage rates last year, which led to a 30-40% fall in demand in 2022 Q4. Whilst demand started to recover during the first quarter of this year as mortgage rates fell, this proved to be a mere blip and over the Summer, the Bank of England raised interest rates once again, in turn raising market expectations of peak interest rates beyond 6.0%. Given the impact of this on mortgage rates, demand will be badly affected in both the general housing market and house building sector. private housing starts are forecast to fall by 25.0% in 2023. Completions and output are expected to fall by 19.0% before a recovery starting in the second half of next year, which will see a rise of 2.0% in 2024 overall.
- Private housing rm&i is worth £29 billion each year to the UK economy and activity reached historic highs between 2020 and early 2022 due to increased working from home and a 'race for space'. Since March 2022, however, activity has been falling due to persistent inflation, rising interest and mortgage rates, and falling real wages. Larger home improvements activity remained strong last year but planning applications for new larger home improvements fell by 19.0% in 2022 as a result of homeowners being hit by rising mortgage payments and falling real wages. As a result, this is likely to lead to a fall in activity this year. Overall, private housing rm&i output is forecast to fall by 11.0% this year before growth of 2.0% next year in line with a recovery in household finances.
- Infrastructure activity down on the ground remains strong due to major projects such as HS2, the Thames Tideway Tunnel and Hinkley Point C. These projects are all late and over budget but continue to provide growth to a sector worth £28 billion per year. Higher activity from these projects is likely, however, to be offset by government delays to new roads and rail projects. Higher activity from these projects is likely, however, to be offset by government delays to new roads and rail projects. In addition, budgetary constraints for councils, combined with cost inflation issues, are likely to mean a decline in the volume of local transport work. Infrastructure output is expected to fall, albeit by only 0.5% in 2023, before growth of 1.0% in 2024.

Manufacturing

The latest **Index of Production** data for May 2023 were [published](#) on 13 July 2023 by the Office for National Statistics.

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

- When comparing May 2023 with May 2022, **output decreased by 8.7%**.
- When comparing May 2023 with April 2023, **output increased by 1.3%**.

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

- When comparing May 2023 with May 2022, **output decreased by 26.4%**.
- When comparing May 2023 with April 2023, **output decreased by 1.8%**.

Accompanying tables

The most recently published data tables (available in Excel and ODS format) can be found on the *Building Materials and Components* [website](#). The list of tables 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)

Past editions of the statistics from [2005 to 2010](#), [2011](#) and [2012 onwards](#) can be found at the National Archives website.

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

Technical information

1. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) replaced the following price indices for construction materials from the November 2020 release of this publication (published on 4th December 2020) onwards; Sand & Gravel excluding/including levy, Crushed rock excluding/including levy, and Bituminous materials. This affects Tables 1, 2 and 3 in the bulletin and Table 1 in the commentary. Further information is provided in the footnotes of each table. A back series of both the previous and replacement indices was published alongside the November 2020 release of this publication.
2. 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 often obscure features of interest in data, such as long-term trends and 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 initial publication of seasonally adjusted data, data from 1983 onwards was seasonally adjusted. Subsequently, for each monthly publication, data up to 12 months or 4 quarters prior to the new data point is revised. Upon the completion of each year's data series, data for the previous 12 years is revised. The department publishes both non-seasonally adjusted and seasonally adjusted data in the tables of this publication. From the June 2015 edition this publication has used seasonally adjusted data in the commentary for these series. The most recent annual review of seasonal adjustment was carried out in June 2023.

3. 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 *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).

4. 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.
5. 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 *Building Materials and Components* webpage. Separately, HM Revenue and Customs also have a Statement of Administrative Sources which covers Overseas Trade Statistics.
6. The pre-announcement of any major changes to samples or methodology also details some methodological changes to the collection of data.
7. 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	66%
Quarterly Sand and Gravel – Land Won	4, 5 & 6	66%
Quarterly Sand and Gravel – Marine Dredged	4, 5 & 6	71%
Quarterly Slate	7	100%
Quarterly Concrete Roofing Tiles	13	57%
Monthly Bricks Provisional data	9	96%
Monthly Bricks Final data	9 & 10	96%
Monthly Concrete Blocks	11 & 12	85%

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 (for 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 6 September 2023.

Pre-release access

[Pre-release access](#) is not granted for this publication.

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 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 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 the department, 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 building materials web page.

The department 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 DLUHC's (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly MHCLG) 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
- rebased all price indices series to 2015 = 100 in the November 2020 publication

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This publication is available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/building-materials-and-components-monthly-statistics-2012>

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