



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Statistical Digest of Rural England:

2 - Housing

March 2024





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Cover photos

		Ward 2011	Rural-Urban Classification
TL	Helmsley marketplace	Helmsley	Rural Village and Dispersed in a sparse setting
TC	Horton-in-Ribblesdale train station with Penyghent behind	Penyghent	Rural Village and Dispersed in a sparse setting
TR	St Giles Church, Skelton	Rural West York	Rural Town and Fringe
CL	Fishing Boat, Marske-by-the-Sea with Hunt cliff in the distance	St Germain's; Saltburn	Rural Town and Fringe
CR	Thornton Force Waterfall, Ingleton Waterfalls Trail	Ingleton and Clapham	Rural Village and Dispersed in a sparse setting
BL	Farmer working the fields in Knapton	Rural West York	Rural Town and Fringe
BC	Remote pub at Ribblehead viaduct	Ingleton and Clapham	Rural Village and Dispersed in a sparse setting
BR	Glamping pod in the North York Moors	Pickering East	Rural Town and Fringe in a sparse setting

All cover photos provided by Martin Fowell.

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About the Statistical Digest of Rural England

The Statistical Digest of Rural England (hereafter the Digest) is a collection of statistics on a range of social and economic topics and provides broad comparisons between Rural and Urban areas by settlement type. For more information on our classifications, including maps and diagrams explaining the classification, see Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas.

The Digest has been restructured into thematic reports and incorporates the previously separate publication the [Rural Economic Bulletin](#).

The Digest consists of the following thematic reports:

1. Population
2. Housing
3. Health and Wellbeing
4. Communities and Households
5. Connectivity and Accessibility
6. Education, Qualifications and Training
7. Rural Economic Bulletin
8. Energy

In March 2024 the content relating to energy that was previously split across the Housing and Communities and Households chapters has been consolidated into a new Energy report. Appendix 1, shows the sub-themes within each of the 8 Digest reports. Thematic reports will be updated individually and not every report will be updated every month. The most recent updates for this theme are shown in Table 1.

Please note: all subsections were refreshed with new summaries in late 2023 to be more convenient for users.

Table 1: Update monitor for Housing subsections

where “✓” indicates the topic has been updated, “✗” indicates the topic has not been updated, and “New” indicates a new topic with analysis not previously included within the Digest.

Section	April 2023	August 2023	November 2023	February 2024
Housing stock: age and type	New	✗	✗	✗
Housing stock: additions	✓	✗	✗	✗
House prices	✓	✓	✓	✗
Housing stock: affordable housing	✓	✗	✗	✗
Second and empty homes	✓	✗	✗	✗
Homelessness	✓	✗	✗	✓
Land use change for housing	✗	✗	New	✗

Official Statistics

These statistics have been produced to the high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which sets out eight principles including meeting user needs, impartiality and objectivity, integrity, sound methods and assured quality, frankness and accessibility.

More information on the Official Statistics Code of Practice can be found at: [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

This publication has been compiled by the Rural Statistics Team within the Rural and Place Team in Defra:

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There is a 2011 Census version of the Digest which looks at the data from the 2011 Census and where possible makes comparisons to the 2001 Census results.

This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2011-census-results-for-rural-england>

Analysis of the 2021 Census will follow the release of a 2021-based Rural-Urban Classification.

Housing

This part of the Statistical Digest of Rural England focuses on Housing, and covers the following:

- housing stock by age and type (Section A)
- housing completions, transactions, and additions for residential purposes (Section B).
- house prices (unadjusted for inflation) (Section C).
- house affordability, and the availability of “affordable housing” (Section D).
- second homes and empty dwellings (Section E).
- people who are homeless, in priority need or “sleeping rough” (Section F).
- land use change statistics for new residential addresses (Section G)

The key findings from this chapter are summarised with the following set of headline clouds:

Housing stock: age and type - key findings

Almost half of homes in rural areas are detached

1 in every 14 rural homes is a flat; for urban homes it is closer to 1 in every 4

Over 1 million rural homes are pre-1919

Proportionally the amount of post-1990 housing is similar in rural and urban areas

Housing stock: additions - key findings

More new Rural dwellings were started in 2021/22 than in any of the last 15 years

Rural housing completion rates are higher in the private sector; than in the social sector

The more rural the area, the higher the proportion of new builds that are detached and the lower the proportion that are flats

Proportionally, the housing stock is growing faster in Rural areas than in Urban areas

9 out of 10 additions to the housing stock in Rural areas are new builds

House prices - key findings

The average residential property sale price in Rural areas was £424,000 in the first 3 months of 2023

In early 2023 the average residential property sale price in Rural areas was £125,000 more than in Urban areas outside London

Average residential property sale prices have been consistently higher in Rural areas for more than a decade

The least expensive Rural and Urban areas were both in the Tees Valley Combined Authority

The most expensive Rural area was Radlett in Hertfordshire

Housing stock: affordable housing - key findings

County Durham is the only Rural Local Authority where a single person on a low wage has a good chance of getting a mortgage to purchase a property in the lower end of the housing market

In 7 out of 10 Rural Local Authorities areas the average lower quartile house price was more than 8 times the average lower quartile earnings

Usually in Rural areas rental and purchasing affordability are aligned

Homes are generally more affordable to buy or rent in the North of England than they are in the South

Second and empty homes - key findings

Almost 100 thousand second homes in Predominantly Rural areas

3 in every 100 homes are second homes in Predominantly Rural coastal areas

1 in 10 homes in the North Norfolk Local Authority is a second home

Almost 200 thousand rural homes are second homes or are empty

Proportionally there are most empty homes in the North East and fewest in the South East

Homelessness - key findings

Homeless rate in Rural areas is less than half the rate in London!

Proportionally more homeless Rural households in 2022/23 than in 2018/19

1 in every 227 Rural households were homeless in 2022/23

Over the last decade levels of rough sleeping in Rural areas have been lower and more stable than in Urban areas

Levels of rough sleeping are lower than immediately prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in both Rural and Urban areas

Land use change for housing - key findings

There were almost double the number of new residential addresses per population in Rural areas than Urban areas

Rural areas account for 29% of new residential addresses in England but only 18% of England's population

More than half of new Rural addresses were on land previously in agricultural use

In Rural areas, around 2 in 3 new addresses were on previously non-developed land

A. Housing stock: age and type

In 2020, there were proportionally more rural homes that were either detached or pre-1919 than in urban areas and these two characteristics have the potential to make homes less energy efficient and therefore harder to keep adequately warm.

Summary

It is important to understand the distribution of the housing stock in rural and urban areas and how they differ because this provides the necessary context to understand some of the reasons behind the findings in later sections such as the sections covering house prices, housing affordability and housing energy efficiency.

At the last census there was 23 million homes in England and 31% of them were semi-detached, but in the most Rural areas (Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets) the majority of properties were detached. Also, the proportion of properties that were flats decreased with increased rurality.

In 2020 there was a much higher proportion of 'detached' properties in rural areas than in urban areas (49% versus 16%) and a much lower proportion of 'flats' in rural areas than in urban areas (7% versus 26%). The average urban terrace was 50% longer than the average rural terrace, and so had proportionally more mid-terraced properties which, with all other things being equal, are more energy efficient.

There are over 1 million Pre-1919 homes in rural areas, in 2020 this accounted for 28% of rural homes; in urban areas only 18% of homes were Pre-1919. Whilst there was a similar proportion of Pre-1945 homes in rural and urban areas, it is the Pre-1919 homes that are more likely to have features that are harder to update and improve from an energy efficiency perspective, for example solid walls. Post-1990 properties are likely to be the most energy efficient and there was a similar proportion of these in rural and urban areas in 2020.

Housing stock in 2011

The 2011 Census provides detailed Rural-Urban information on the stock of housing by type. More recent data can be compared against this to determine whether the addition of new housing has changed the overall housing stock profile.

In 2011, there were just under 23 million residential properties in England (Table A-1). The most common property type was 'semi-detached' (31%). There was a similar number of 'flats' and 'detached' properties with both accounting for 22% of the residential properties in England.

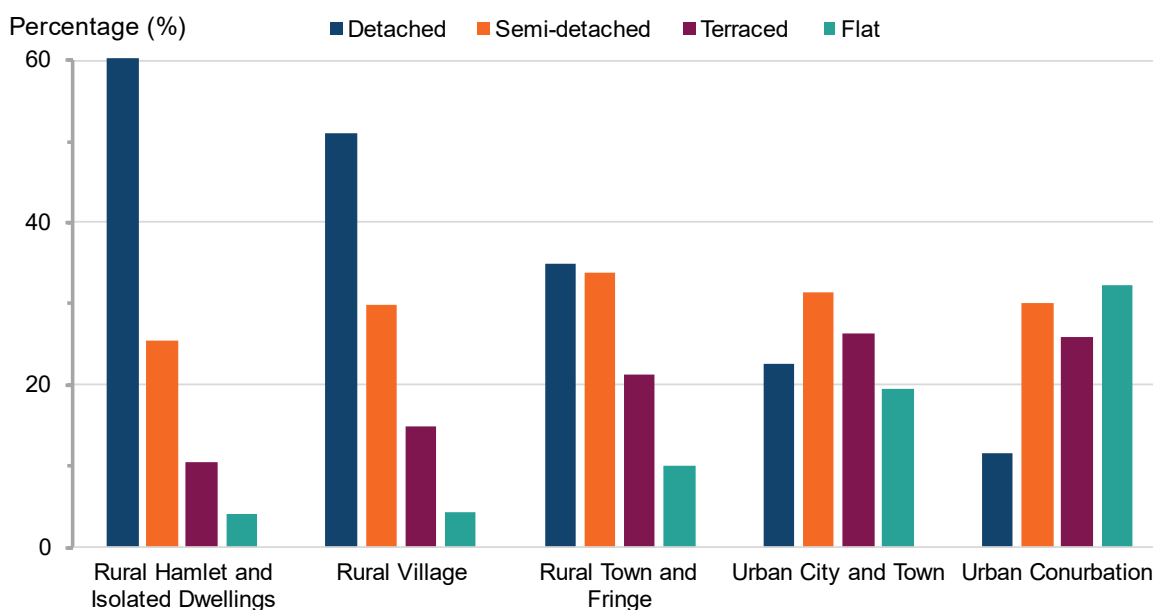
Table A-1: Number (millions) and proportion (%) of residential properties, by housing type, Census 2011

Property type	Total number	Proportion
Detached	5.1	22%
Semi-detached	7.1	31%
Terraced	5.6	25%
Flats	5.1	22%
All properties	22.9	100%

Figure A-1 shows that in 2011 the majority of dwellings in both Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings were 'detached' properties. The proportion of dwellings which were 'flats' decreases as the settlement becomes more rural, falling from 32% in Urban Conurbations to only 4% in both Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings. A similar, but less pronounced pattern is observed for 'terraced' housing. 'Semi-detached' properties are marginally more common in Rural Town and Fringe areas (34%) than in other areas.

Figure A-1: Percentage of residential properties, by building type, by Census Output Area Rural-Urban Classification, in England, at 2011 Census (Note A-2)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns. The clusters are presented in order of rurality with the most Rural on the left and most Urban on the right.



Housing stock by type in 2020

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) is a national survey commissioned by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) that has been conducted since 1967. It collects information about people’s housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England. One of the components of the survey is a physical inspection of a sub-set of the properties within the main survey sample.

It should be noted that the EHS does not provide results for the Rural-Urban Classification definitions used elsewhere within this document. As explained in Note A-4, in the EHS a dwelling is assigned to one of 6 categories (3 rural and 3 urban) based on the immediate area surrounding the dwelling. This is therefore reliant on the perception of the surveyor conducting each dwelling surveyed.

Like the Census data, the EHS data (Figure A-2) show that there is:

- a much higher proportion of ‘detached’ properties in rural areas than in urban areas (49% versus 16%);
- a much lower proportion of ‘flats’ in rural areas than in urban areas (7% versus 26%); and
- a similar proportion of ‘semi-detached’ properties in both rural and urban areas.

In absolute numbers, this equates to 2 million ‘detached’ homes and 1 million ‘semi-detached’ homes in rural areas in 2020 (Table A-2).

EHS data distinguishes between end-terraced and mid-terraced properties. As Figure A-2 shows the proportion of properties that are end-terraced in rural and urban areas is similar, but the proportion of properties that are mid-terraced is more than double in urban areas than it is in rural areas. 20% of the properties in urban areas are mid-terraced compared to 9% in rural areas, suggesting that terraces tend to be longer in urban areas.

Figure A-2: Percentage of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.

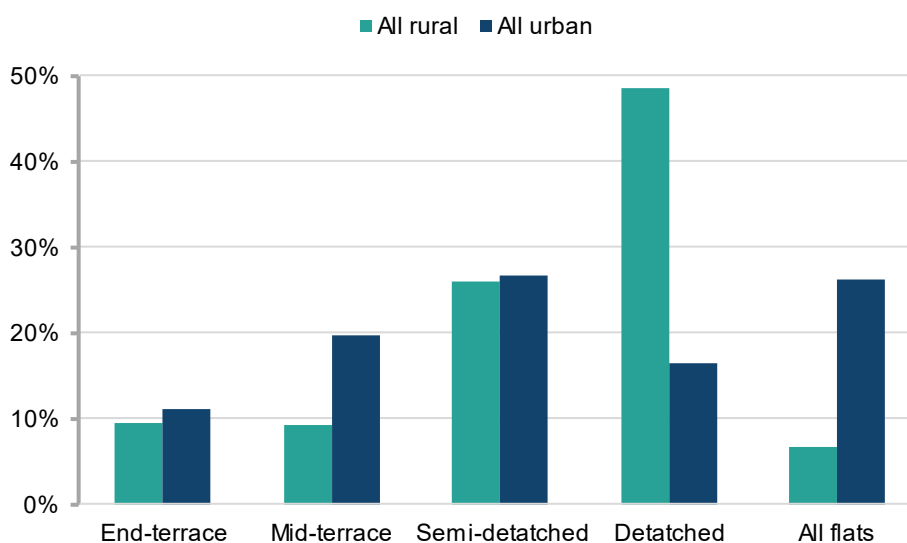


Table A-2: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

Property type	End-terrace	Mid-terrace	Semi-detached	Detached	All houses	All flats
All rural	0.36	0.35	0.99	1.85	3.54	0.25
All urban	2.19	3.87	5.28	3.23	14.57	5.17
England	2.55	4.22	6.27	5.08	18.12	5.42

In urban areas there are 2.2 million end-terrace properties (Table A-2) and therefore approximately 1.1 million terraces; and by extension with 360,000 end-terrace properties in rural areas there are around 180 thousand terraces.

With 3.9 million urban mid terrace properties and the 350 thousand rural mid-terrace properties there is an average terrace length (including the end-terraces) of 5.5 houses in urban areas and 3.9 houses in rural areas. In other words, the average urban terrace is 50% longer than the average rural terrace. All other things being equal, a mid-terraced property will be more energy efficient than an end-terraced property simply by having an adjacent property on either side of it. Figure 3.5 of the DESNZ / BEIS fuel poverty statistics publication shows that a higher proportion of those living End-terrace properties are in fuel poverty than those living mid-terrace properties (Note A-6).

Housing stock by age in 2020

The EHS collects information on the age of the properties. At the physical survey, the properties are assigned to one of six age bands (Table A-3). There are over 1 million Pre-1919 homes in rural areas. This accounts for 28% of rural residential properties, whereas in urban areas only 18% of the residential properties are Pre-1919 (Figure A-3).

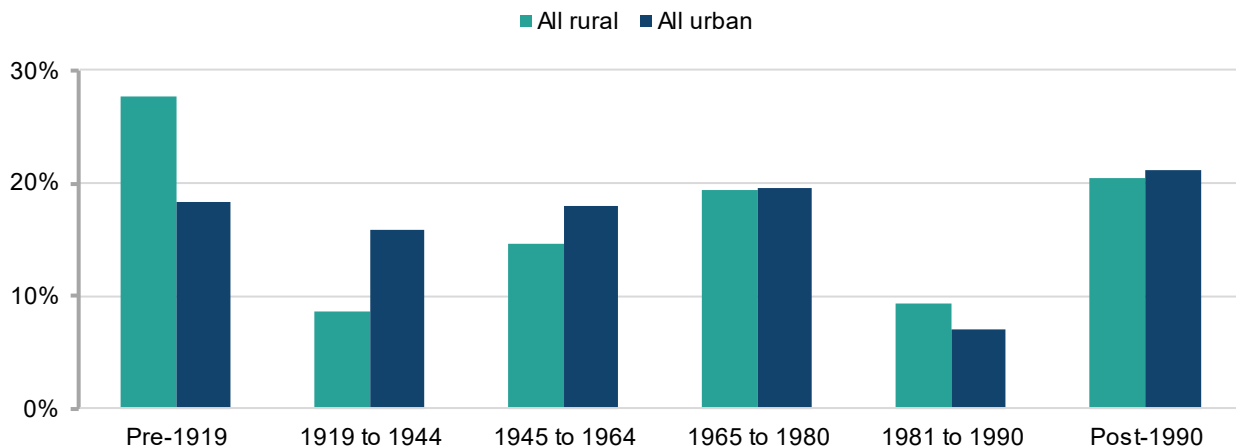
Figure A-3 also shows that there is a greater proportion of urban properties (16%) dating from the period 1919-1945 than rural properties (9%). There is a similar proportion of residential properties originating from the periods 1965 to 1980 and post-1990 in both rural and urban areas but there is a marginally higher proportion in rural areas that date from the period 1981 to 1990 than in urban areas (Figure A-3).

Table A-3: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

Property age	Pre-1919	1919 to 1944	1945 to 1964	1965 to 1980	1981 to 1990	Post-1990
All rural	1.05	0.32	0.55	0.74	0.35	0.78
All urban	3.63	3.12	3.55	3.87	1.39	4.17
England	4.68	3.45	4.11	4.60	1.75	4.95

Figure A-3: Percentage of residential properties, by building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.



It is a commonly held belief that there is a higher proportion of old, and therefore inefficient to heat, homes in rural areas than in urban areas. Whether or not this is true depends entirely on how one defines old homes. As a starting point we could define Pre-1945 residential properties as 'old' since these were at least 75 years old at the time of the 2020 EHS. The remaining properties can then be divided into two further categories: (1) 1945 to 1990 (30 to 75 years old) for the mid-aged properties and (2) Post-1990 (less than 30 years old) for the most modern residential properties. Doing so shows that there is a slightly higher proportion of 'Old' homes in rural areas than in urban areas, but the difference is only 2 percentage points (Figure A-4). Using this 3-tier classification leads to a slightly higher proportion of 1945 to 1990 properties in urban areas than rural areas whilst there is a similar proportion of Post-1990 properties in both rural and urban areas.

An alternative approach is to have a 4-tier scale and consider only those buildings that are more than 100 years old (Pre-1919) as 'Old'. This approach has been applied in Figure A-5, and it shows that rural areas have a higher proportion of Pre-1919 residential buildings than urban areas. Figure A-5 also shows that urban areas have a much higher proportion of 1919 to 1964 residential buildings than rural areas, whilst the proportion of 1965 to 1990 residential buildings is slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

In summary, modern buildings usually offer the highest energy efficiency standards (unless older ones have been significantly improved since construction) and the proportion of these in rural and urban areas is similar. There is a similar proportion of Pre-1945 homes in rural and urban areas, but rural areas have a higher proportion of Pre-1919 homes; and these are more likely to have features that are harder to update and improve from an energy efficiency perspective such as solid walls. Figure 3.4 of the DESNZ / BEIS fuel poverty statistics publication shows that a higher proportion of those living properties with Solid uninsulated walls are in fuel poverty than those living mid-terrace properties (Note A-6). Section [G. Energy Performance Certificates](#) discusses the energy efficiency of homes in more detail.

Figure A-4: Percentage of residential properties, by 3-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.

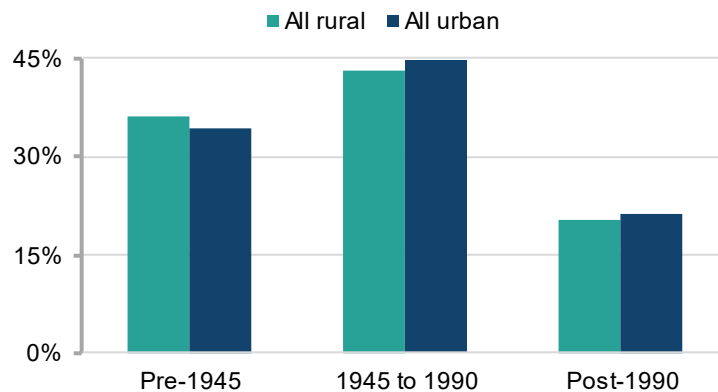
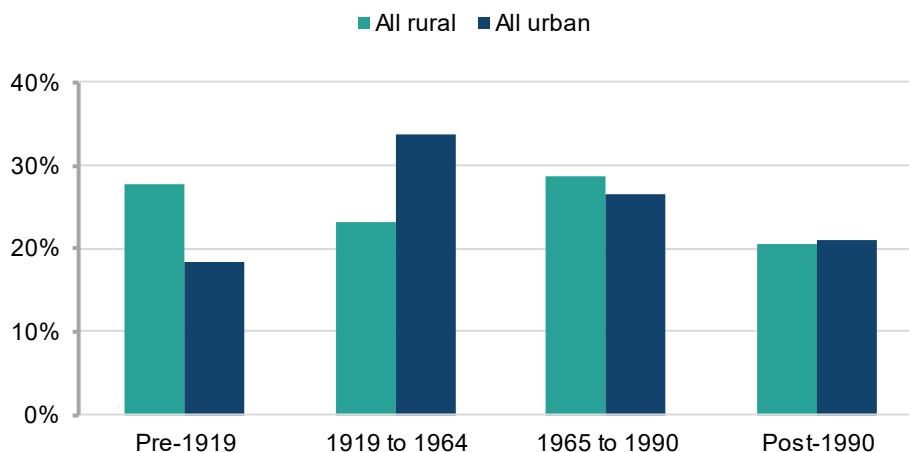


Figure A-5: Percentage of residential properties, by 4-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.



Housing stock: age and type - explanatory notes

- **Note A-1**

A table showing the data expressed in Figure A-1 is available in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note A-2**

“Urban Conurbation” refers to the combination of two categories within the [Rural-Urban Classification](#): “Urban with Minor Conurbation” and “Urban with Major Conurbation”.

- **Note A-3**

The analysis on 2011 Census is drawn from the 2011 Census results for Rural England [publication](#).

- **Note A-4**

The [English Housing Survey](#) collects data in 2 ways. The first is an interview with the household and the second is a physical survey of a sub-sample of the properties. As part of the physical survey an assessment of the nature of the surrounding area is made.

As explained in the English Housing Survey Surveyors’ handbook, prior to coding the nature of the area, surveyors need to decide whether the area is either urban or rural. This assessment is based on their

perception at the time of the inspection, it is not based on pre-populated information using the Rural-Urban Classification for the Output Area where the property is located.

Surveyors are instructed to consider the area as either **urban** (codes 1 to 3) if it is a built-up area such as a city or a town (either large or small) or **rural** (codes 4 to 6) for very small towns and villages and other rural type locations. They then assess the area surrounding the dwelling and code it from 1 to 6.

- 1 **Commercial City/Town Centre** – this is the area that would constitute part/all of the centre of a city or town. Areas do not have to be run down to be coded as city or town centre. It is likely that these areas will have a high percentage of commercial properties such as shops and businesses.
- 2 **Urban** – this is the area around the core of towns and cities, and also older urban areas which have been swallowed up by a metropolis. Areas would be largely but not exclusively residential.
- 3 **Suburban residential** – this is the outer area of towns or cities, and would include large, planned housing estates on the outskirts of towns or larger areas of older residential stock.
- 4 **Rural residential** – these can be free standing residential areas or suburban areas of villages, often meeting the housing needs of people who work in nearby towns and cities.
- 5 **Village centre** – these are traditional English villages or the old heart of villages which have been suburbanised.
- 6 **Rural** – these areas are predominantly rural e.g., agricultural with isolated dwellings or small hamlets.

- **Note A-5**

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) does not define rurality according to the RUC, in uses a looser definition as explained in Note A-4. Therefore, where this data source has been used in this section, we refer to rural and urban instead of Rural and Urban to denote that these are not using the strict RUC definition. To minimise the inconsistency between figures collected according to the EHS definitions and those collected according to the RUC we only analyse EHS data in terms of all rural (categories 4 to 6) and all urban (categories 1 to 3) rather than using the 6 detailed categories

- **Note A-6**

Chapter 3 of the DESNZ / BEIS fuel poverty statistics provides a more detailed analysis looking at fuel poverty by dwelling characteristics such as size, type, age and fuel type

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-statistics

B. Housing stock: additions

In 2021/22 there was a much higher rate of housing completions in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas (10.3 dwelling completions per 1,000 households compared to 5.4 dwelling completions per 1,000 households) and in Rural areas more than half of the new builds were detached homes.

Summary

The availability of housing is a challenge in both Rural and Urban areas, and to understand the development of new housing we track housing completions and the net additions to the housing stock.

In 2021/22, there were 11.3 permanent dwellings started per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas compared to 5.4 per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas. There was also a higher rate of completions in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas (10.3 dwelling completions per 1,000 households compared to 5.4 dwelling completions per 1,000 households). The dwellings completed per 1,000 households had been growing at a faster rate throughout the 2010s until the COVID-19 pandemic hit, when a sharp downturn was experienced, before the rate of completions returned to pre-pandemic levels in Predominantly Rural areas (but not in Predominantly Urban areas).

In 2021/22, there were 60,900 net new dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas (11.5 per 1,000 households) and 134,400 net new dwellings (8.4 per 1,000 households) in Predominantly Urban areas. New-build dwelling completions accounted for 91% of net additions to the housing stock in Predominantly Rural areas compared with 86% in Predominantly Urban areas. Over the last decade there have been consistently more net new dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas, although net additions in Predominantly Rural areas have fallen since 2018/19.

In Rural areas, 57% of new-build residential transactions in 2019 were 'detached' properties and only 5% were flats. By contrast, in Urban areas the proportion of new-build residential transactions that were 'flats' and 'detached' was similar and stood at 34% and 32% respectively. The property registration process can take time for new build properties; so we have presented 2019 figures rather than the more recent provisional 2021 figures to account for this lag.

Housing starts and completions

- In order to compare levels of house building, comparisons are made based on the number of households in the area. See Note B-1 for more information.

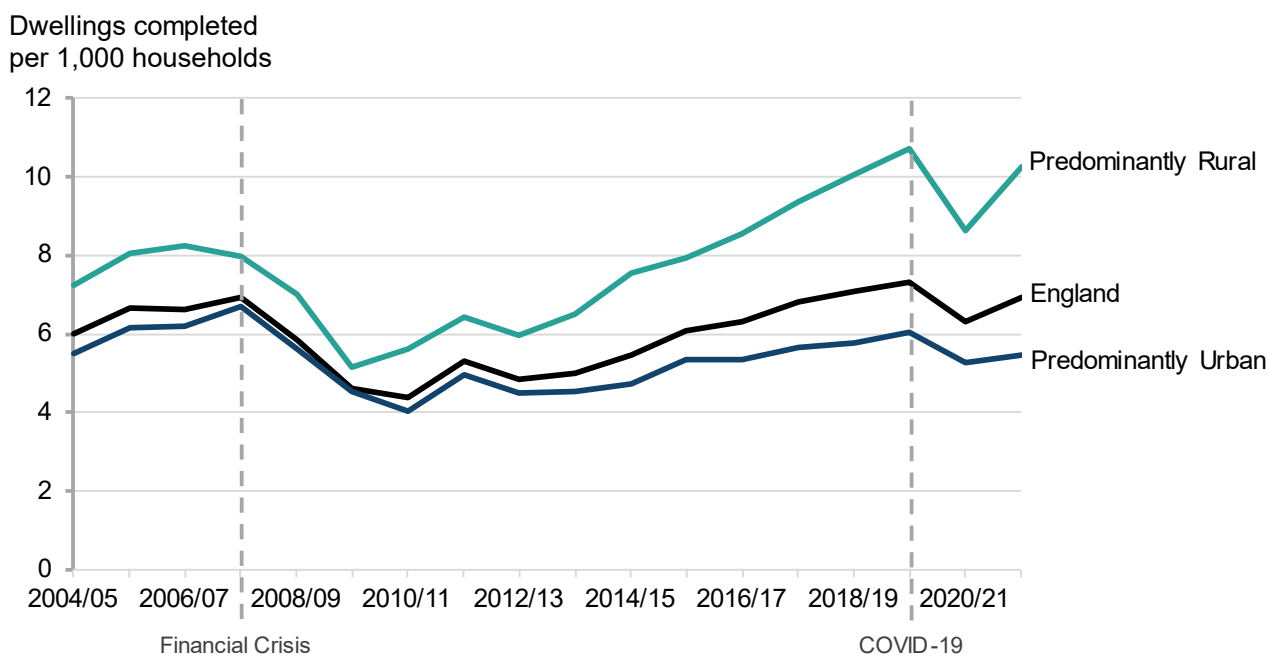
More permanent dwellings were **started** in 2021/22 than in previous years, resulting not only in a recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also the highest rate of dwelling starts since data began (2004/05). In 2021/22, there were 11.3 permanent dwellings started per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, and 5.4 per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas (see Table B-1). A decline in both housing completions and starts seen previously reflects restrictions imposed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table B-1: Rate of permanent dwelling starts per 1,000 households, by broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2020/21 and 2021/22

Rural-Urban Classification	2020/21	2021/22	Change
Predominantly Rural	8.5	11.3	2.8 ↑
Predominantly Urban	4.5	5.4	0.9 ↑
England	5.7	7.1	1.4 ↑

More new dwellings are **completed** per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas, as shown in Figure B-1. In 2021/22 there were 10.3 dwelling completions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas; this compares with 5.4 completions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas.

Figure B-1: Permanent dwellings completed per 1,000 households, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2004/05 to 2021/22



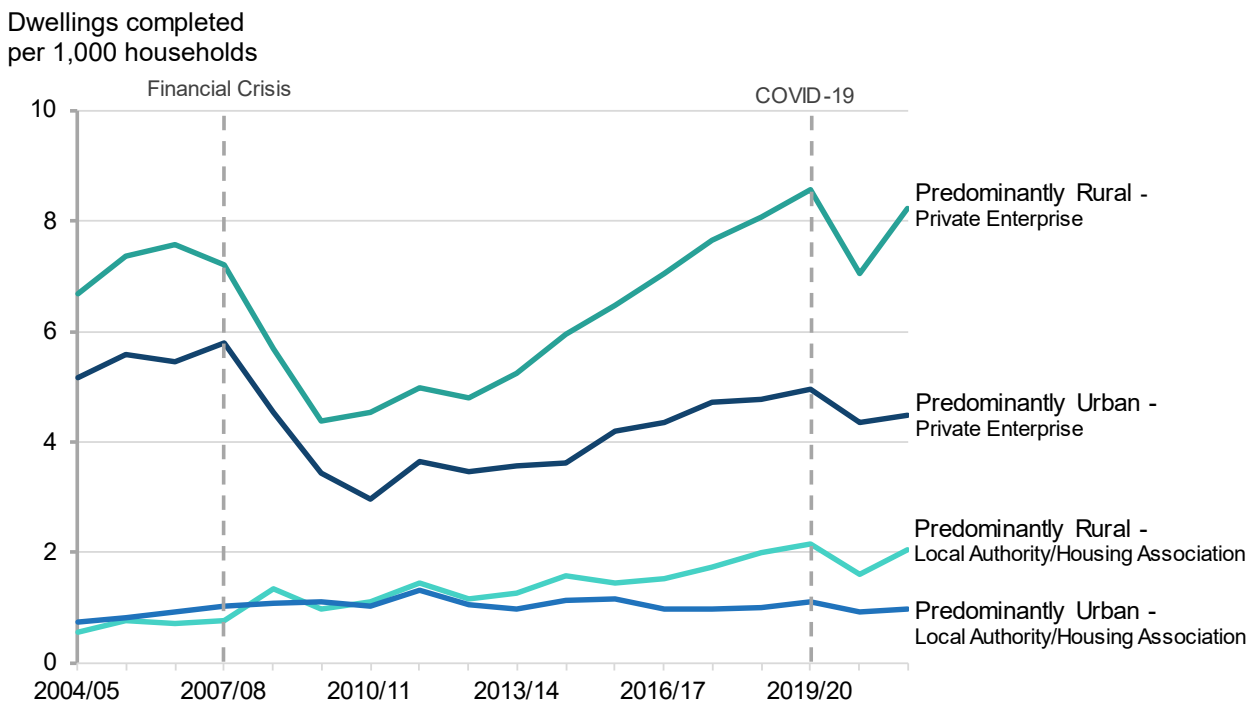
The rate of permanent dwelling completions per 1,000 households was stable until 2007/08 but dropped following the financial crisis in 2008. Rates were recovering from 2009/10 but declined sharply between 2019/20 and 2020/21 - more so in Predominantly Rural areas (falling by 2.1 dwellings per 1,000 households) than in Predominantly Urban areas (falling by 0.8 dwellings per 1,000 households). The rate of completions then quickly recovered between 2020/21 and 2021/22,

increasing by 1.6 dwellings per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, and by 0.2 dwellings per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas.

In absolute terms this translates to 7,000 more dwelling completions in 2021/22 than in 2020/21 in Predominantly Rural areas, and 3,000 more in Predominantly Urban areas. The rate of completions has returned to pre-pandemic levels in Predominantly Rural areas, but still falls short in Predominantly Urban areas.

The private sector was affected more immediately by the economic downturn of 2008, with a sharp downturn in house building, but figures for 2017/18 in Predominantly Rural areas showed a return to the levels prior to the downturn as seen in Figure B-2. Rates declined sharply between 2019/20 and 2020/21 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they began to recover in 2021/22 with an increase of 1.2 completions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas. Nevertheless, the completion rates seen in 2021/22 was still lower than those in 2019/20 (pre-pandemic) across all areas and types of enterprise.

Figure B-2: Permanent Private Enterprise and Local Authority / Housing Association dwellings completed per 1,000 households, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2004/05 to 2021/22



In 2021/22, 8.2 dwellings were completed by private enterprise per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 4.5 per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas. In 2021/22, 2.0 dwellings were completed by Local Authorities or housing associations per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 1.0 per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas.

Dwelling completions in the private sector were affected more by the COVID-19 pandemic than completions for Local Authorities/housing associations in both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas. The decrease in the completion rate between 2019/20 and 2020/21 was sharper for Predominantly Rural than Predominantly Urban areas for both private sector builds and Local Authority / housing association builds. See Note B-2 for more information regarding the data used in this section.

Notes:

- Data included within this section refers to financial years rather than calendar years (e.g., 2021/22 refers to the period from April 2021 to March 2022).

Net additions to housing stock

In order to compare the number of new dwellings arising from new build, conversions or change of use, comparisons are made using household numbers. See Note B-4 for more information.

In 2021/22, there were 60,900 net new dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas, which was 11.5 per 1,000 households. In Predominantly Urban areas there were 134,400 net new dwellings in the same year, which was 8.4 per 1,000 households.

New-build dwelling completions accounted for 91% of net additions to the housing stock in Predominantly Rural areas in 2020/21 (Figure B-3: top chart), compared with 86% in Predominantly Urban areas (Figure B-3: bottom chart). A further 7% of net additions came from change of use of buildings in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 11% of such net additions in Predominantly Urban areas.

Figure B-3: Proportion of net additions arising from new build, conversions and change of use between 2017/18 and 2021/22 for Predominantly Rural areas (top chart) and Predominantly Urban areas (bottom chart).

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacks in the bars

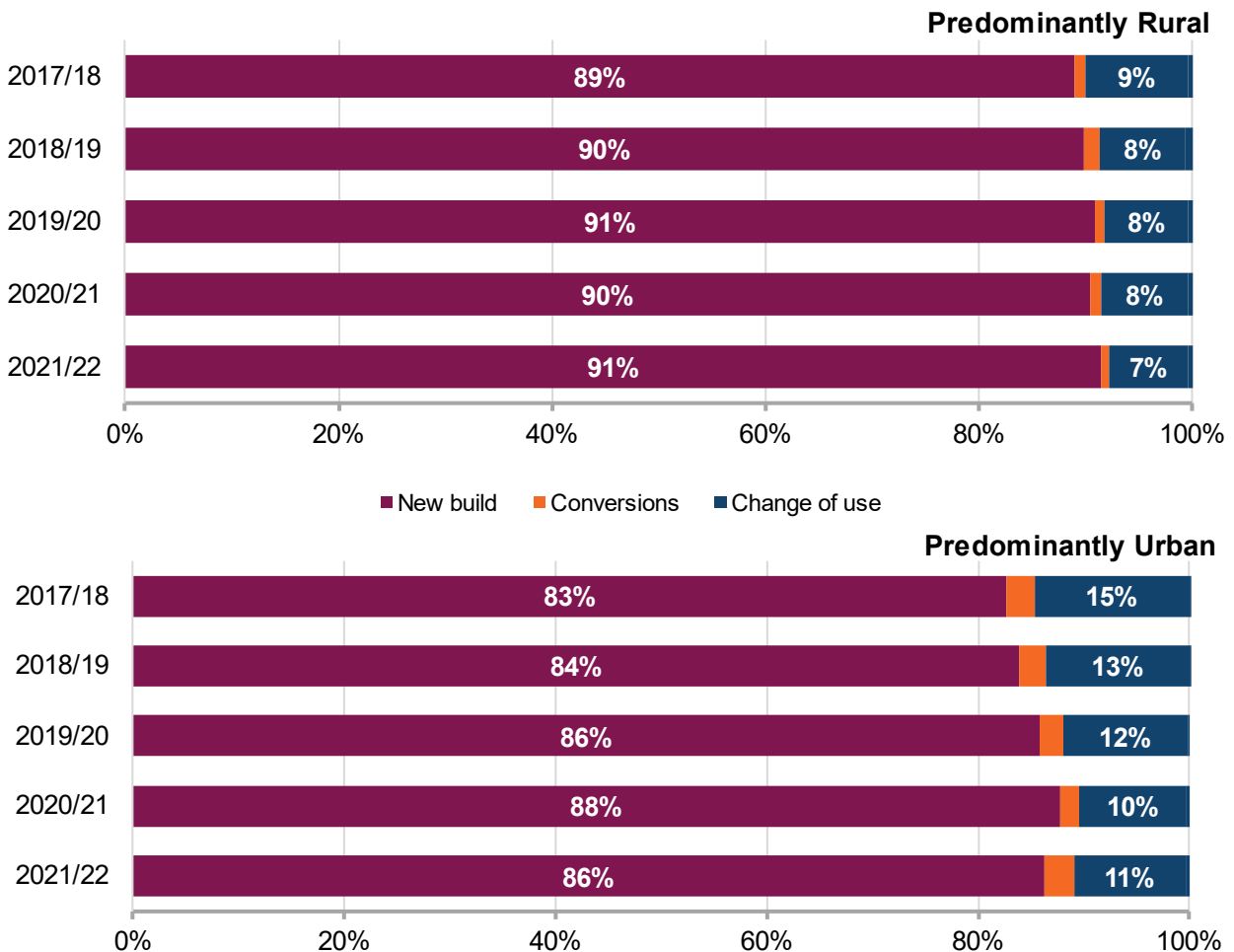


Table B-2 shows the breakdown of housing gains and losses in 2021/22 based on new builds, conversions, change of use and demolitions. New-build dwelling completions per households in Predominantly Rural areas are higher than in Predominantly Urban areas. In 2021/22 there were 10.7 new-build dwelling completions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 7.4 in Predominantly Urban areas. In 2021/22, the net number of dwellings arising from change of use in Predominantly Rural areas was 0.9 per 1,000 households – the same as in Predominantly Urban areas.

Table B-2: Net additions to housing stock per 1,000 households, by broad Rural-Urban Classification, 2021/22

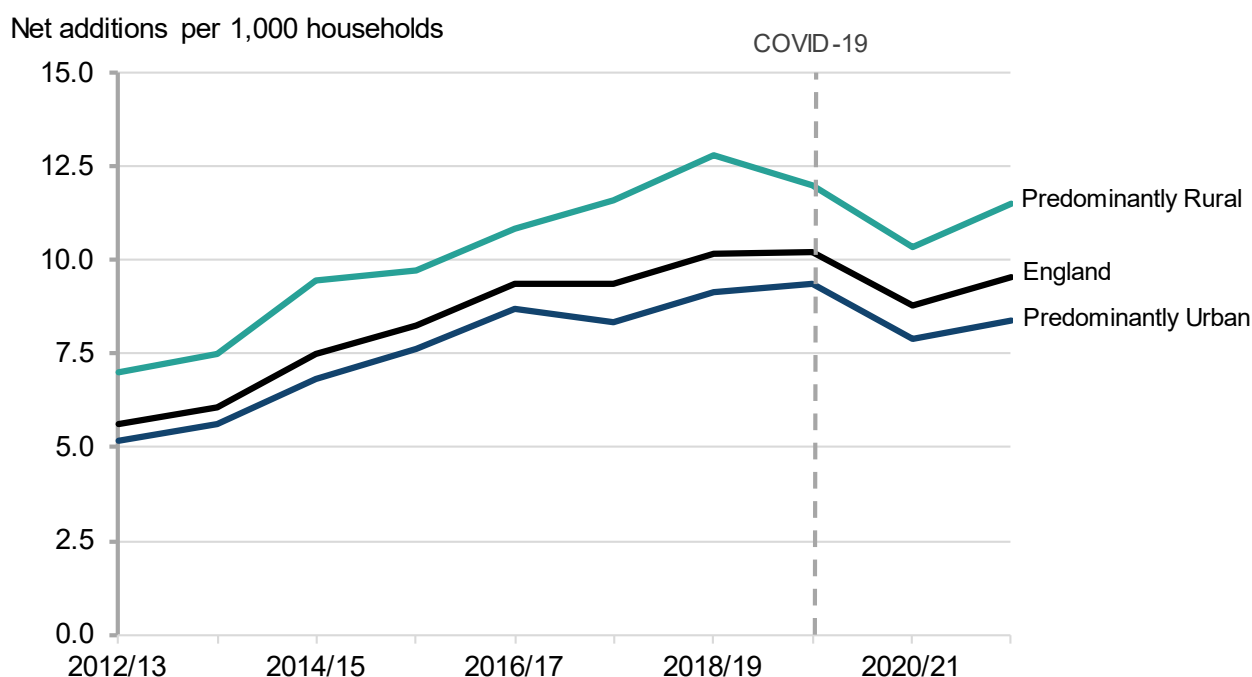
Rural-Urban Classification	New builds	Conversions	Change of use	Demolitions	Overall changes
Predominantly Rural	10.7	0.1	0.9	0.2	11.5
Predominantly Urban	7.4	0.2	0.9	0.2	8.4
England	8.6	0.2	0.9	0.2	9.6

There were consistently more net new dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas between 2012/12 and 2021/22.

In all areas, the rate of net additions to housing stock was highest in 2018/19 and 2019/20, and then fell in 2020/21 due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. A partial recovery was seen in 2021/22, as shown in Figure B-4 (although the rates did not return to pre-pandemic levels).

In Predominantly Rural areas, the rate of net additions was highest in 2018/19 at 12.8 per 1,000 households in 2018/19. Following this, rates decreased to 10.3 per 1,000 households in 2020/21, before increasing again to 11.5 per 1,000 households in 2021/22; this is an increase of 1.2 net new dwellings per 1,000 households between 2020/21 and 2021/22. Predominantly Urban areas saw similar trends, but instead peaked in 2019/20 with 9.3 net new dwellings per 1,000 households. In 2021/22, the rate of net additions in Predominantly Urban areas was 8.4 per 1,000 households.

Figure B-4: Overall net additions to housing stock, by broad Rural-Urban Classification, 2012/13 to 2021/22



Notes:

- Data included within this section refers to financial years rather than calendar years (e.g., 2021/22 refers to the period from April 2021 to March 2022).

Residential housing transactions

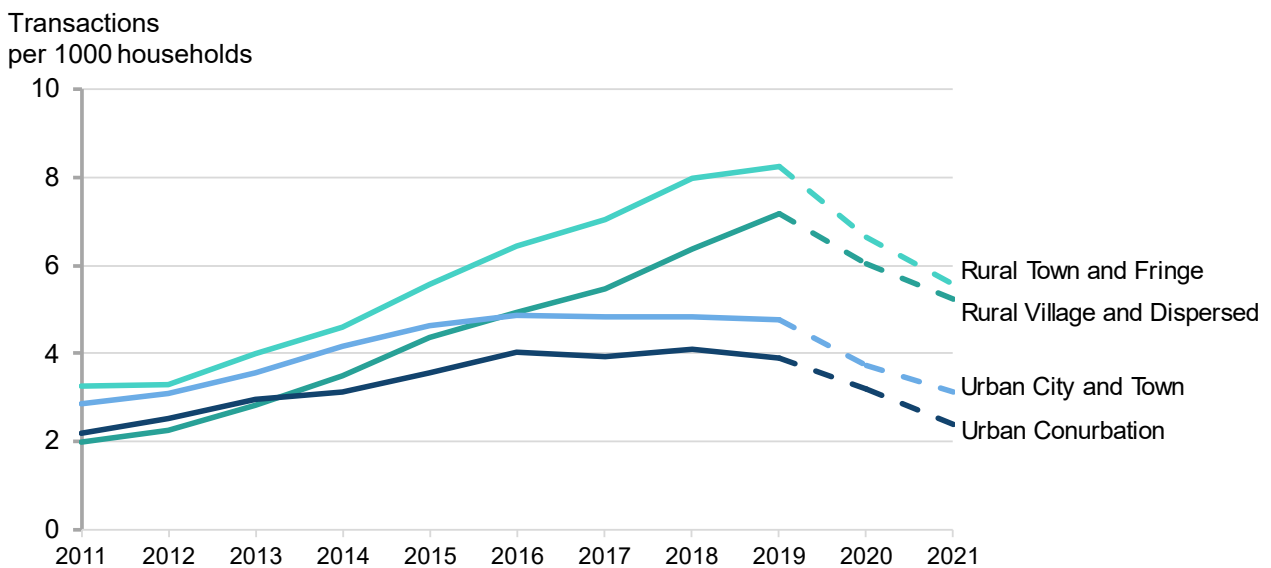
New-build residential housing transactions can be used to assess house building and the type of housing being built in Rural and Urban areas. After every house sale, the transaction must be registered with HM Land Registry (LR), along with an array of characteristics about the house (Note B-7). Looking at transactions of new-build housing provides further insight on housing development in Rural areas and complements our analysis on housing completions. This analysis covers the number of new-build transactions, as well as the proportion of new-build transactions by housing type / the change in the number of transactions by housing type over time. The underlying data are available for small geographical areas with a population of 5,000 to 7,200 people and are classified using the Rural-Urban Classification (Note B-5).

In 2019 there were 8.2 new-build residential transactions per 1,000 households in Rural Town and Fringe, compared with 3.9 in Urban Conurbations (Note B-6). The provisional figures for 2021 show that there were 5.6 new-build residential transactions per 1,000 households in Rural Town and Fringe areas, and 5.2 per 1,000 households in Rural Village and Dispersed areas; however, these values are subject to upward revision due to the ongoing registration process (Note B-7).

The number of new-build residential transactions per 1,000 households has increased in all areas between 2011 and 2018. Between 2012 and 2019 the number of new-build residential transactions has increased more in Rural areas than in Urban areas each year, as shown in Figure B-5.

Figure B-5: Total number of residential transactions of new-builds, per 1,000 households, by Middle Super Output Area Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2011 – 2021

Totals for residential transactions in more recent years are provisional (Note B-7), and have been indicated with a dashed line where revisions may occur.



Residential housing transactions can be broken down by type; in 2019, a larger proportion of new-build housing transactions were for ‘detached’ and ‘semi-detached’ houses in Rural areas, as well as a smaller proportion of ‘flats’, than in Urban areas. This is shown in Figure B-6.

In Rural areas overall, 57% of new-build residential transactions were ‘detached’ properties in 2019, compared to 32% in Urban areas.

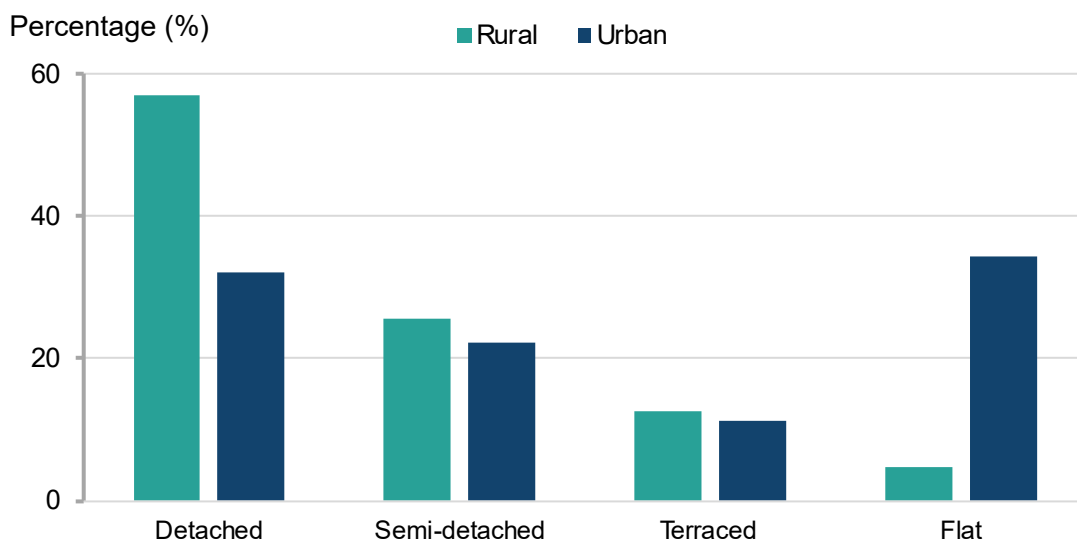
The proportion of new-build ‘semi-detached’ property transactions was 4 percentage points higher in Rural areas than Urban areas.

The proportion of new-build ‘terraced’ property transactions were similar between Rural and Urban areas, with there being 2 percentage points more in Rural.

Just 5% of new-build residential housing transactions were for ‘flats’ in Rural areas, compared to 34% in Urban areas.

Figure B-6: Proportion of new-build residential housing transactions (%), by housing type, by Middle Super Output Area broad Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2019

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns. The clusters are presented by property type, with ‘detached’ houses on the left and ‘flats’ on the right.



This trend continues even when breaking down the Rural-Urban Classification; the more rural an area is, the greater the percentage of ‘detached’ new-build properties, and the lesser the percentage of ‘flats’. This is shown in Figure B-7.

In both Rural Village and Dispersed areas and Rural Town and Fringe areas, more than half of new-build residential transactions were ‘detached’ properties, representing 60% and 55% of transactions respectively in 2019. Comparatively, just 20% of properties were ‘detached’ in Urban Conurbation areas.

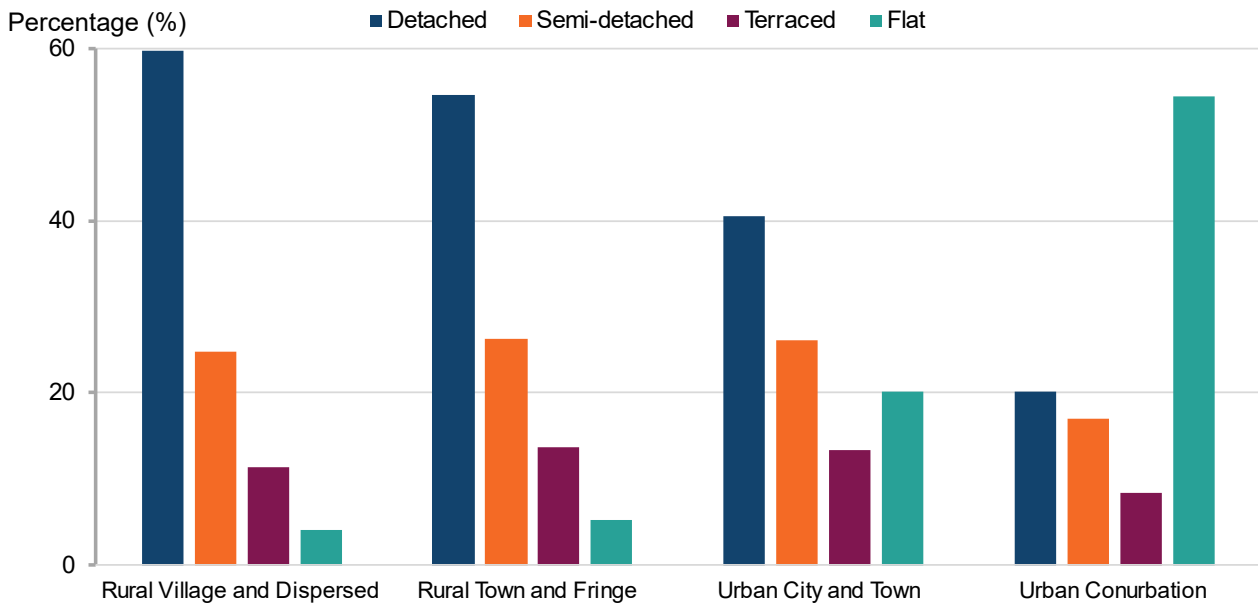
‘Flats’ made up the smallest proportion of new-build housing transactions in Rural areas (4-5%), but more than half (54%) in Urban Conurbations.

‘Semi-detached’ and ‘terraced’ properties were the most consistent of the building types, with less variation by rurality; for example, 26% of new-build properties were ‘semi-detached’ in both Rural Town and Fringe areas and Urban City and Town areas. 14% of new-builds were ‘terraced’ in Rural Town and Fringe areas, compared with 13% in Urban City and Town areas.

Urban City and Town areas had the most even dispersion of types of new-builds in 2019, with 40% of properties being ‘detached’, 26% being ‘semi-detached’, 13% being ‘terraced’ and 20% being ‘flats’.

Figure B-7: Proportion of new-build residential housing transactions (%), by housing type, by Middle Super Output Area detailed Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2019

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns. The clusters are presented in order of rurality with the most Rural on the left and most Urban on the right.

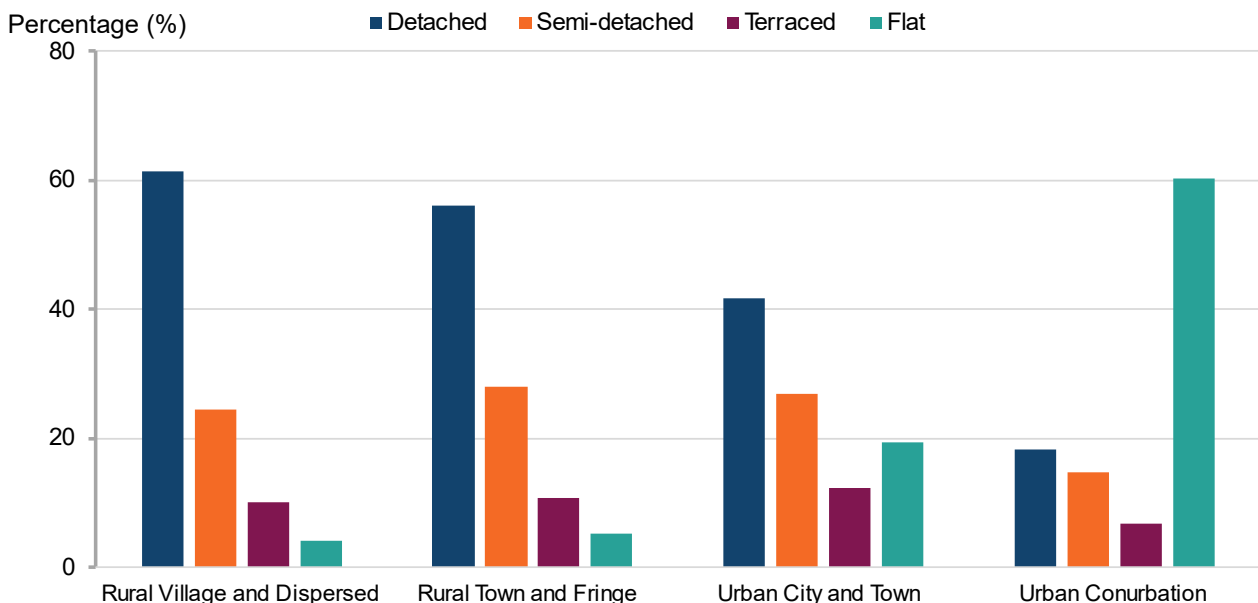


Provisionally, in 2021, we see the same trends emerging (as shown in Figure B-7):

- More than half of Rural new-build residential transactions were ‘detached’ properties,
- ‘Flats’ represented fewest new-builds in Rural areas but the most in Urban Conurbations.
- So far, proportions of new ‘semi-detached’ and ‘terraced’ properties were the most consistent across all areas.

Figure B-8: Percentage of new-build residential housing transactions, by housing type, by Middle Super Output Area Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2021

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns. The clusters are presented in order of rurality with the most Rural on the left and most Urban on the right.



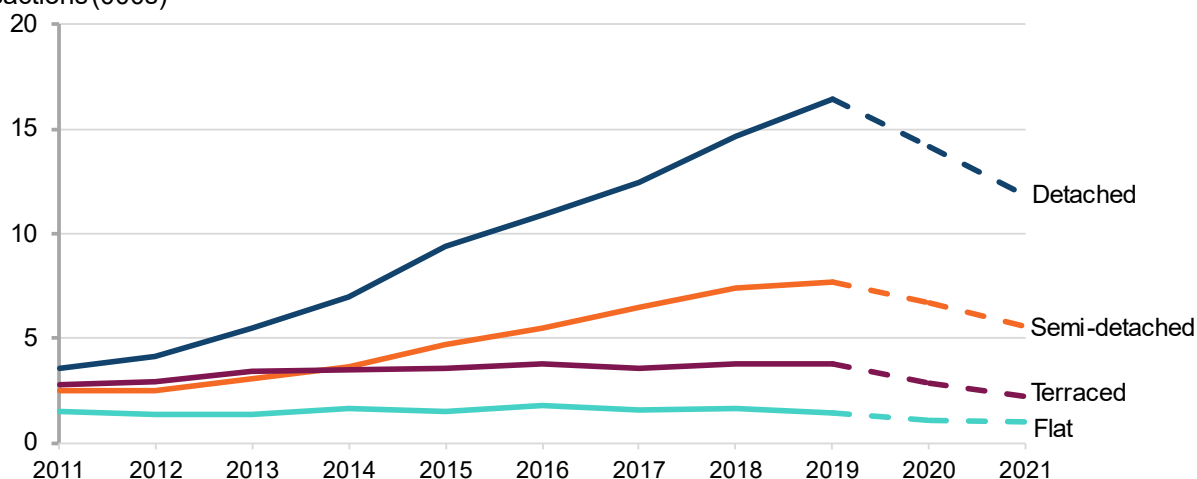
Data for new-build residential transactions in Rural areas in 2020 and 2021 is provisional and is likely to change as more properties are registered (Note B-7). The apparent decrease in the number of new-build residential transactions across all building types might not materialise once data are finalised. Furthermore, specific analysis is taken from 2019:

Residential transactions for ‘detached’ properties increased more than any other building type in Rural areas between 2011 (where there were 3,600 transactions) and 2019 (where there were 16,400 transactions). ‘Semi-detached’ new-build property transactions also increased between 2011 and 2019, but at a lesser rate. The number of new-build residential transactions in Rural areas for ‘terraced’ housing and ‘flats’ have remained relatively unchanged between 2011 and 2019, as shown in Figure B-8.

Figure B-9: Total number of new-build residential transactions in Rural areas (based on MSOA Rural-Urban Classification), by housing type, in England, 2011 – 2021

Totals for residential transactions in more recent years are provisional (Note B-7), and have been indicated with a dashed line where revisions may occur.

Total new build residential transactions (000s)



Notes:

- Data for both 2019 and 2021 is given for the detailed analysis of transactions by type and year (Figure B-6 and Figure B-7); due to the lengthy registration process, figures for 2021 are provisional but the overall distribution of this provisional data remains robust.

Housing stock: additions - explanatory notes

• **Note B-1**

Tables showing the data expressed in this section are available in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

• **Note B-2**

Figures on housing starts and completions are from records kept for building control purposes. It is sometimes difficult for data providers to identify whether a dwelling is being built for a housing association or for a private developer. This may lead to an understatement of housing association starts and completions recorded in these tables, and a corresponding overstatement of private enterprise figures. This problem is more likely to occur with starts than completions. Further information available on the [House building; new build dwellings data: notes and definitions page, gov.uk](#).

- **Note B-3**

Figure B-1 and Figure B-2 exclude a significant number of Local Authorities for which data on building starts and completions is not available. The number of missing Local Authorities varies from 54 in 2004/05 to 37 in 2010/11. The total England figures shown in the tables do not include estimates for missing data. From 2011/12 estimates are included for missing values. Source: [Live tables on housing supply, DLUHC](#).

- **Note B-4**

Statistics on the net supply of housing, also known as ‘net additions’, track changes in the size of dwelling stock due to: New builds (completions), conversions (e.g., a house converted to a number of flats), changes of use (e.g., a residential house to an office), demolitions, and other net gains and losses. Source: [Live tables on dwelling stock, DLUHC](#).

- **Note B-5**

For the Middle layer Super Output Area (MSOA) Rural-Urban Classification (RUC), a small area geography is an aggregation of smaller Rural-Urban geographies into a single Rural-Urban figure. As such, some generalisation occurs in these statistics. Additionally, these statistics aggregate multiple MSOA classifications together, producing a reduced number of classifications for comparison. Large numbers rounded to nearest 10, unless otherwise stated.

- **Note B-6**

“Urban Conurbation” refers to the combination of two categories within the [Rural-Urban Classification](#): “Urban with Minor Conurbation” and “Urban with Major Conurbation”. “Rural Village and Dispersed” refers to the combination of “Rural Village” and “Rural Hamlet and Isolated Dwellings”.

- **Note B-7**

The property registration process can take time, particularly for new build properties. Therefore, the datasets we use may not fully reflect all transactions that have taken place in the reference period and may be subject to revision. The ONS suggests that users should use caution when drawing conclusions from these data.

- **Note B-8**

The 2008/09 housing market related recession helps explain the very low number of transactions, and subsequent rise in number of transactions, for the 10-year time series’.

- **Note B-9**

Source: [Residential property sales by middle layer super output area: HPSSA dataset 1 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

C. House prices

The average sale price of residential properties in Rural areas is higher than in Urban areas and has increased continuously across England over the last decade.

Summary

The average price paid for residential properties sold in each quarter, which will be affected by the types of dwelling such as detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, and flats/maisonettes, can be used to indicate changes in the housing market.

In Quarter 1 of 2023, the average residential property sale price in Rural areas was £424,200, and in Urban areas outside of London it was £299,900. Average sale prices in Rural areas were 41% higher than in Urban areas outside of London in year ending Q1 2023. When comparing Q4 2022 to Q1 2023, the average property sale price (not adjusting for inflation) increased by 1.2% in Rural areas and 1.1% in Urban areas outside of London.

When comparing between year ending Q1 2022 and year ending Q1 2023, the average property sale price (not adjusting for inflation) increased by 13.1% in Rural areas and 11.6% in Urban areas outside of London.

Between Q1 2007 and Q1 2023, average residential property sale price (not adjusting for inflation) increased by 68% in Rural areas and 77% in Urban areas outside of London. This translates to an increase in average sale price of £171,900 in Rural areas and £123,900 in Urban areas outside of London.

In Q1 2023, the most expensive Rural area was Radlett in Hertsmere, where the average price paid for properties sold in the quarter was £1,347,600. The least expensive Rural area was Loftus and Skinningrove - part of the Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority – where the average price paid for properties sold in the quarter was £80,100.

This section analyses changes in average property sale prices over time, as well as between areas. These should be used with caution since estimates do not account for differing sales compositions (i.e., the types of properties) between time periods or areas. Changes over time are not adjusted for inflation.

Short-term residential property price trends

Residential property prices, which includes all types of dwelling such as detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, and flats/maisonettes, are reported quarterly by the ONS. Comparisons over time and between areas should be treated with caution as the composition of properties sold will differ between periods and between areas. (Note C-6).

When comparing Quarter 4 2022 to Quarter 1 2023, the average residential property sale price (not adjusted for inflation) increased by 1.2% in Rural areas but did not increase significantly in Urban areas; this is shown in Table C-1.

Table C-1: Quarterly average sale price of residential properties, by broad Rural-Urban Classification in England, Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 (not adjusted for inflation)

Rural-Urban Classification	Q4 2022 (£)	Q1 2023 (£)	Quarterly change (%)	Direction of change
Rural	419,000	424,200	1.2	↑
Urban	366,200	368,500	0.6	—
England	375,500	378,300	0.7	—

The greatest quarterly change was seen in Rural Village and Dispersed areas (Note C-5), with a 1.6% increase on the average prices seen in the final quarter of 2022; the smallest change was in London, where there was a slight but not significant decrease in average property prices. This is shown in Table C-2.

Outside of London, the last quarter-on-quarter decrease was seen between Q4 2011 (£259,700 for Rural, £176,700 for Urban excluding London) and Q1 2012 (£257,400 for Rural, £176,000 for Urban excluding London). However, neither of these decreases nor that seen in London between Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 were significant. In general, average property prices have increased almost every quarter since 2010.

Table C-2: Quarterly average sale price of residential properties, by detailed Rural-Urban Classification in England, Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 (not adjusted for inflation) (Note C-5)

Rural-Urban Classification	Q4 2022 (£)	Q1 2023 (£)	Quarterly change (%)	Direction of change
Rural Town and Fringe	368,800	371,900	0.8	—
Rural Village and Dispersed	471,100	478,500	1.6	↑
Urban (excluding London)	296,700	299,900	1.1	↑
London	692,700	690,900	-0.3	—
England	375,500	378,300	0.7	—

Notes

- Sale prices are rounded to the nearest £100, and percentage change is rounded to the nearest 0.1%.
- The percentage change in average sale price is described with symbols for where it increased (↑), decreased (↓) or stayed the same (—). Indication of change is based on a ±1.0% threshold. Multiple arrows (↑↑,↓↓) indicate a change of ±3.0% or more.
- Caution should be used when comparing average house prices since these estimates do not account for differing sales compositions between two time periods or between areas.

Annual change in residential property prices

Residential properties prices (including sale of detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, and flats/maisonettes) are reported quarterly by the ONS. Comparisons over time and between areas should be treated with caution as the composition of properties sold will differ between periods and between areas. (Note C-6).

The average residential property sale price increased by 13.1% in Rural areas and 10.0% in Urban areas between year ending Q1 2022 and year ending Q1 2023 (not adjusted for inflation), as shown in Table C-3.

Table C-3: Annual average sale price of residential properties, by broad Rural-Urban Classification in England, Q1 2022 to Q1 2023 (not adjusted for inflation)

Rural-Urban Classification	Year ending Q1 2022 (£)	Year ending Q1 2023 (£)	Annual change (%)	Direction of change
Rural	375,200	424,200	13.1	↑↑
Urban	334,900	368,500	10.0	↑↑
England	342,000	378,300	10.6	↑↑

Average prices in Rural areas have been consistently above the average found in Urban areas excluding London (by 41% in year ending Q1 2023) and higher than the overall average for Urban areas when including London (by 15% for the same period).

In year ending Q1 2023 average property prices in Rural Town and Fringe areas were 24% higher than the average found in Urban areas excluding London (and 1% higher than the Urban overall average), while average property prices in Rural Village and Dispersed areas were 60% higher than in Urban areas excluding London (and 30% higher than the Urban overall average). The annual changes in average sale prices of properties are given in Table C-4.

Table C-4: Annual average sale price of residential properties, by detailed Rural-Urban Classification in England, Q1 2022 to Q1 2023 (not adjusted for inflation) (Note C-5)

Rural-Urban Classification	Year ending Q1 2022 (£)	Year ending Q1 2023 (£)	Annual change (%)	Direction of change
Rural Town and Fringe	334,600	371,900	11.1	↑↑
Rural Village and Dispersed	417,500	478,500	14.6	↑↑
Urban (excluding London)	268,700	299,900	11.6	↑↑
London	645,800	690,900	7.0	↑↑
England	342,000	378,300	10.6	↑↑

Notes

- Sale prices are rounded to the nearest £100, and percentage change is rounded to the nearest 0.1%.
- The percentage change in average sale price is described with symbols for where it increased (↑), decreased (↓) or stayed the same (—). Indication of change is based on a ±3.0% threshold, which differs from the previous section ([Short-term house price trends](#)). Multiple arrows (↑↑, ↓↓) indicate a change of ±6.0% or more, which differs from the previous section.
- Caution should be used when comparing average house prices since these estimates do not account for differing sales compositions between two time points.

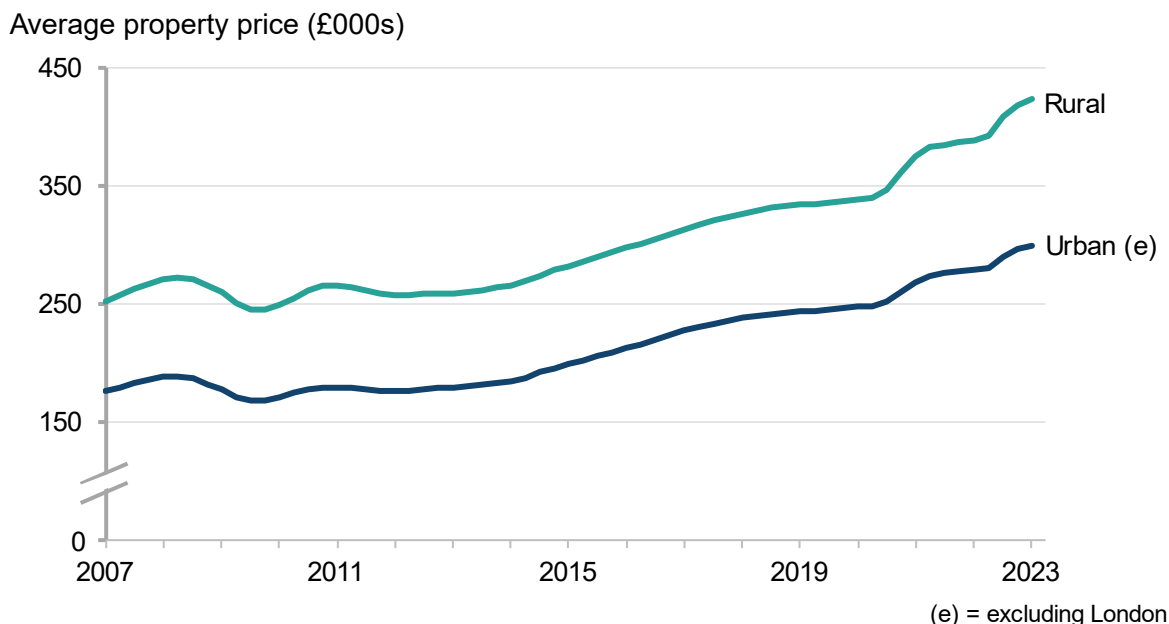
Long-term residential property price trends

Figure C-1 shows the quarterly average residential sale price trends between 2007 and 2023 (not adjusted for inflation). Comparisons over time and between areas should be treated with caution as the composition of properties sold will differ between periods and between areas.

In all areas outside of London, average sale prices of residential properties have increased almost continuously since 2007, although the rate of increase was slightly greater in Rural areas; the only recent decrease was seen in a slight dip between 2009 and 2010 in both Rural and Urban areas outside of London. For the long-term trend (not adjusted for inflation), average property sale prices have increased by £171,900 in Rural areas (68%), and £123,900 in Urban areas outside of London (70%) between Q1 2007 and Q1 2023; in London, average sale prices have increased by £384,900 since Q1 2007, meaning there has been a 126% increase (not adjusted for inflation) (Note C-1).

Figure C-1: Quarterly average sale price of residential properties (£000s), by broad Rural-Urban Classification in England, year ending Q1 2007 to year ending Q1 2023

Values based on current prices and are not adjusted for inflation or type of property.



Notes:

- In Figure C-1, “Urban (e)” represents the Urban areas of England outside of London.
- Sale prices are rounded to the nearest £100.
- Caution should be used when comparing average house prices since these estimates do not account for differing sales compositions between two time periods or between areas.

Residential property price distribution

To get a more complete picture of residential properties prices in Rural and Urban areas, the spread of prices as well as the average price needs to be considered. This can be done by disregarding areas with the least and most expensive average property prices. If we exclude those areas in the 1st quartile (i.e., with the 25% cheapest average property prices) and those areas in the 4th quartile (i.e., with the 25% most expensive average property prices), then the difference

between the lower and upper cut-offs (i.e., where the 1st quartile ends and the 4th quartile starts) is known as the interquartile range (IQR). Table C-5 shows the IQR for average property prices in Rural and Urban areas (excluding London).

The IQR of average property prices in Rural areas was £193,000 in Q1 2023; this is £26,200 higher than the IQR of Urban areas (excluding London), meaning there was a wider spread of average property prices in Rural areas. 26% of Rural areas had an average property price of at least £500,000 in Q1 2023, compared with 9% of Urban areas outside of London. 63% of areas within London had an average property price of at least £500,000.

Table C-5: Interquartile range (IQR) of average residential property prices in Q1 2023

Rural-Urban Classification	1 st quartile (£)	Median (£)	3 rd quartile (£)	IQR (£)
Rural	313,000	399,400	506,100	193,000
Urban (excluding London)	193,800	263,800	360,500	166,800

As well as the IQR, we can also evaluate the most and least expensive areas to live based on their average property prices; these are given in Table C-6 and Table C-7.

The least expensive Rural area in Q1 2023 was Loftus and Skinningrove, part of the Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority (with an average property price of £80,100). In Urban areas (excluding London) the least expensive area was Ayresome in Middlesbrough (£67,500). The least expensive area in terms of average property prices in London was Barking Central in Barking and Dagenham (£230,400).

Table C-6: Least expensive areas based on average residential property prices in Q1 2023

Rural-Urban Classification	Area	Average price (£)
Rural	Loftus & Skinningrove, Redcar and Cleveland	80,100
Urban (excluding London)	Ayresome, Middlesbrough	67,500
London	Barking Central, Barking and Dagenham	230,400

In Q1 2023, the most expensive Rural area in terms of average property prices was Radlett in Hertsmere (£1,347,600), whilst the most expensive Urban area (excluding London) was Virginia Water in Runnymede (£1,973,400). The most expensive area in London in terms of average property prices was Knightsbridge, Belgravia & Hyde Park in Westminster (£5,108,300) – this was the most expensive area overall in England.

Table C-7: Most expensive areas based on average residential property prices in Q1 2023

Rural-Urban Classification	Area	Average price (£)
Rural	Radlett, Hertsmere	1,347,600
Urban (excluding London)	Virginia Water, Runnymede	1,973,400
London	Knightsbridge, Belgravia & Hyde Park, Westminster	5,108,300

Notes:

- In Table C-6 and Table C-7, “Area” refers to the Middle-layer Super Output Area (MSOA); the Local Authority containing this MSOA is also given.
- Caution should be used when comparing average house prices since these estimates do not account for differing sales compositions between two areas.

House prices explanatory notes

- **Note C-1**

House prices stated in this section are based on the prices that were current at the time rather than constant prices, and therefore have not been adjusted for inflation. 2023 figures use prices from the latest quarter.

- **Note C-2**

Change is calculated using unrounded figures whereas prices are shown rounded to the nearest £100.

- **Note C-3**

There are a total of 983 London MSOAs, all of which are classified as Urban except for Hillingdon which is classified as Rural Town and Fringe and is excluded from the Rural figures.

- **Note C-4**

Statistics are reported for all types of dwelling, including: detached, semi-detached, terraced houses and flats/maisonettes.

- **Note C-5**

“Rural Village and Dispersed” refers to the combination of “Rural Village” and “Rural Hamlet and Isolated Dwellings”.

- **Note C-6**

Source: [ONS small area house price statistics](#)

D. Housing stock: affordable housing

In 2022, houses in Predominantly Rural areas were less affordable to purchase for those in the bottom 25% of earners in Predominantly Rural areas than houses in Predominantly Urban areas for the bottom 25% of earners in those areas; but rental affordability was similar in Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas.

Summary

There is a formal definition of affordable housing, and it relates to homes provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the housing market. An example could be rental properties where the rent is less than 80% of market rate. This is different to the more generic issue of housing affordability which is also tackled in this section.

In 2021/22 there were 3.2 additions to affordable housing stock per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 2.1 additions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas. In each year over the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 the additions to the affordable housing stock per 1,000 households were greater in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas.

Housing in Predominantly Rural areas is, on average, less affordable than in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). In 2022, in Predominantly Rural areas the average lower quartile house price was 8.8 times the average lower quartile earnings, compared with 7.6 times in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). Housing affordability for the bottom 25% of earners in Predominantly Rural areas varies greatly and in 2022 ranged from a ratio of 3.5 in County Durham to a ratio of 14.5 in Uttlesford. County Durham is potentially the only Predominantly Rural Local Authority where a single individual amongst the lowest quartile of earners in the area is likely to be able to access a mortgage to purchase a home within the cheapest 25% of homes in that area. Only 2 other Predominantly Rural Local Authorities have a ratio less than 5.

In 2022, in both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, a person might have expected to pay 32% of their income on private rent. Rental affordability also varies greatly across Predominantly Rural areas with the most affordable in 2022 being High Peak (20% of income needed for rent) and the least affordable was Sevenoaks (55% of income needed for rent). For both purchasing and renting a house, in 2022 it was generally more affordable to do so in the North of England than the South.

These affordability ratios are based on lower quartile residence-based earnings and lower quartile rental/house purchase prices; so the most affordable areas are not necessarily the areas with the cheapest homes to buy or rent.

Additions to affordable housing stock

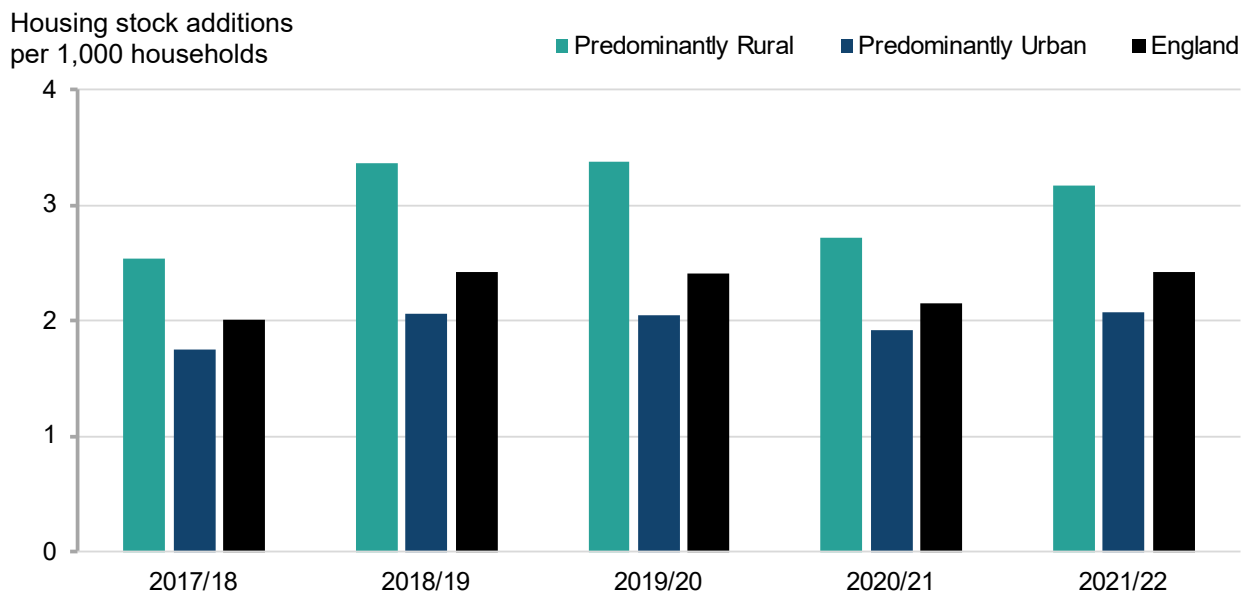
In this section, affordable housing refers to housing units provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market (Note D-1). This definition is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, published 27 March 2012 (Note D-2). Affordable housing can be affordable rented housing (where rent is less than 80% of market rate), London affordable rented housing (rent is set by the Greater London Authority), social rented housing (where rents are determined by national rent regime or an equivalent rental agreement) and intermediate housing (includes intermediate rent, affordable home ownership and shared ownership).

In 2021/22 there were 3.2 additions to affordable housing stock per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas, compared with 2.1 additions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Urban areas. This is shown in Figure D-1. In each year over the period 2017/18 to 2021/22 the additions to the affordable housing stock per 1,000 households were greater in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas; the largest difference was in 2019/20, where there were 1.3 more additions per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas.

In 2021/22, the total number of additions to affordable housing stock were 16,200 in Predominantly Rural areas (compared with 12,550 in 2017/18) and 33,000 in Predominantly Urban areas (compared with 26,670 in 2017/18).

Figure D-1: Additions to affordable housing stock per 1,000 households, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2017/18 to 2021/22

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns



Notes:

- Data included within this section refers to financial years rather than calendar years (e.g., 2021/22 refers to the period from April 2021 to March 2022).
- Data used in this section are at Local Authority level. Caution should be used when considering these results as the data do not distinguish where within an Authority the affordable housing has been provided such that affordable housing could be within the Urban areas of Predominantly Rural Local Authorities and vice versa. It should be also noted that Rural areas are less densely populated than Urban areas, and therefore when calculating rates of affordable housing provision per household these rates are likely to be higher in Rural areas.

Housing affordability

The ratio between the lowest quartile (25%) house prices and the lowest quartile earnings can be used to give an indication of whether someone in a lower earnings band could afford to buy a house.

As shown in Figure D-2, housing in Predominantly Rural areas is, on average, less affordable than in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). See Note D-5 for more information about the housing affordability ratio calculations.

In 2022, in Predominantly Rural areas the average lower quartile house price was 8.8 times the average lower quartile earnings, compared with 7.6 times in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). This does not take account of a household with more than one income from earnings – for example when a couple combine their earnings to buy a house.

The house price disparity remained consistent between Predominantly Rural areas and Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London) between 2011 and 2022, whilst London showed a particularly large increase from 2013 to 2017. There was a slight decrease in ratio of house prices to earnings seen in 2022 across all areas following the particularly high ratios seen in 2021, however they were still similar or slightly above 2020 figures.

Figure D-2: Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings (residence-based), by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2011 to 2022

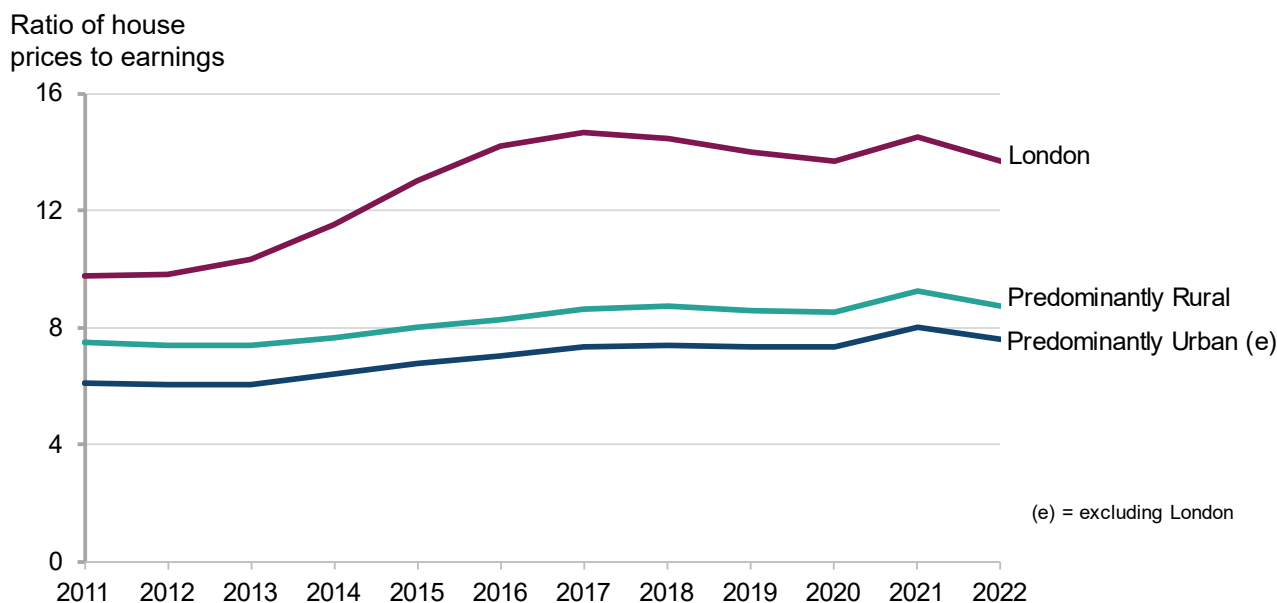


Table D-1 shows the most and least affordable Local Authorities across England. The Local Authority with the lowest ratio (most affordable) was County Durham; here, the lower quartile house price was 3.5 times the average earnings seen in the lower quartile. The Local Authority with the highest ratio (least affordable) was Kensington and Chelsea; here, the lower quartile house price was 28.6 times the average earnings seen in the lower quartile. Outside of London, the least affordable Local Authority was Hertsmere, where the lower quartile house price was 16.0 times the average earnings seen in the lower quartile.

In Predominantly Rural areas, the Local Authority with the lowest ratio in 2022 (and therefore most affordable to buy) was County Durham; the highest ratio was seen in Uttlesford, where the lower quartile house price here was 14.5 times the average earnings in the lower quartile.

Table D-1: Most and least affordable Local Authorities based on ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile residence-based earnings, in England, 2022 (Note D-5)

Rural-Urban Classification	Most Affordable		Least Affordable	
	Local Authority	Ratio	Local Authority	Ratio
Mainly Rural	Copeland	4.1	Uttlesford	14.5
Largely Rural	County Durham	3.5	Sevenoaks	14.5
Urban with Significant Rural	Barrow-in-Furness	4.2	Mole Valley	14.2
Urban with City and Town	Burnley	3.7	St Albans	13.7
Urban with Minor Conurbation	Barnsley	4.8	Gedling	8.0
Urban with Major Conurbation (e)	Sunderland	4.3	Hertsmere	16.0
London	Croydon	11.1	Kensington and Chelsea	28.6
England	County Durham	3.5	Kensington and Chelsea	28.6

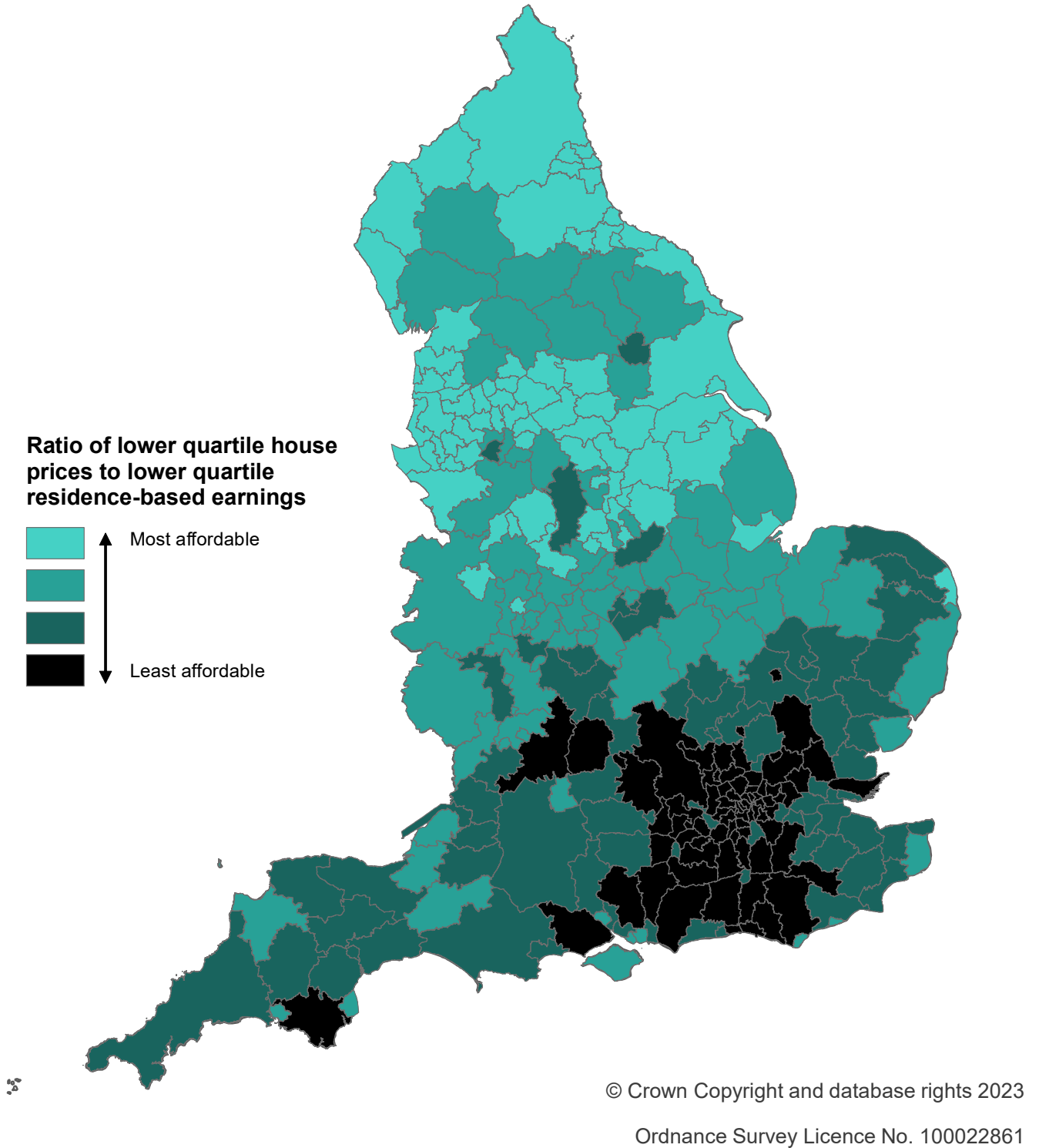
(e) = excluding London

The difference in affordability varies greatly for the bottom 25% of earners within each Local Authority. In the most affordable scenario, a single individual amongst the lowest quartile of earners within their Local Authority is likely to be able to access a mortgage in order to purchase a home within the cheapest 25% of homes in that area. In the least affordable scenario, it could need the combined wages of at least 6 individuals earning amongst the lowest quartile of earners within their Local Authority in order to be able to access a mortgage to purchase a home within the cheapest 25% of homes in that area.

Whilst Table D-1 shows a clear difference in house affordability in Rural and Urban areas, this combines with a difference between the North and South of the country. Based on the ratios of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile residence-based earnings, homes are generally more affordable to buy in the North of England than they are in the South, as shown in Figure D-3. There are a few Local Authorities which are the exception to this pattern, such as York (ratio = 9.85) and Trafford (ratio = 9.51), which were less affordable than their surrounding areas.

Figure D-3: House affordability by Local Authority, 2022

The darker the colour, the higher the ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings, and therefore the less affordable a house is on average within a Local Authority.



Notes:

- In Figure D-2, “Predominantly Urban (e)” represents the Predominantly Urban areas of England outside of London. Similarly, in Table D-1, “Urban with Major Conurbation (e)” means Urban with Major Conurbation areas of England outside of London.

Rental affordability

The ratio between the lowest quartile (25%) rental prices and the lowest quartile earnings can be used to give an indication of whether someone in a lower earnings band could afford to rent a property. See Note D-6 for more information.

In 2022, in both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, a person might have expected to pay 32% of their income on private rent. This does not take account of a household with more than one income from earnings – for example when a couple combine their earnings to afford to rent.

Table D-2 shows the most and least affordable Local Authorities across England. The Local Authority with the lowest ratio (most affordable) was High Peak; here, a person might have expected to pay 20% of their income on rent. The Local Authority with the highest ratio (least affordable) was Kensington and Chelsea; here, a person might have expected to pay 70% of their income on rent in 2022. Outside of London, the least affordable Urban Local Authority was Hertsmere, where a person might have expected to pay 51% of their income on rent.

In Predominantly Rural areas, the Local Authority with the lowest ratio (and therefore most affordable) was High Peak; the least affordable was Sevenoaks, where a person might have expected to pay 55% of their income on rent in 2022.

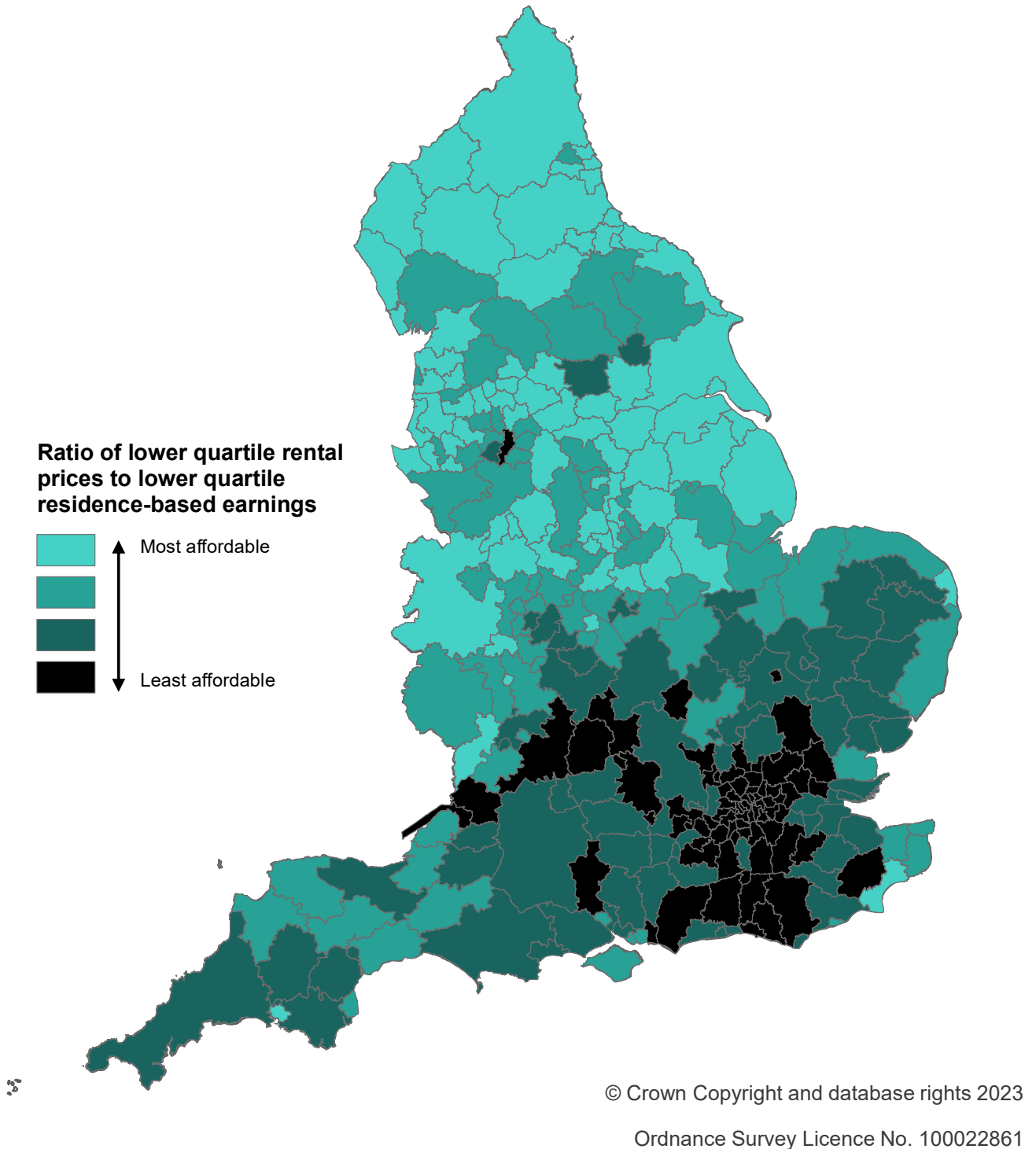
Table D-2: Most and least affordable Local Authorities based on ratio of lower quartile private rental prices to lower quartile residence-based earnings, in England, 2022 (Note D-6)

Rural-Urban Classification	Most Affordable		Least Affordable	
	Local Authority	Ratio (%)	Local Authority	Ratio (%)
Mainly Rural	Allerdale	22	Uttlesford	44
Largely Rural	High Peak	20	Sevenoaks	55
Urban with Significant Rural	Carlisle	22	Epping Forest	44
Urban with City and Town	Middlesbrough	21	Oxford	46
Urban with Minor Conurbation	Barnsley	22	Gedling	32
Urban with Major Conurbation (e)	Wirral	23	Hertsmere	51
London	Hillingdon	38	Kensington and Chelsea	70
England	High Peak	20	Kensington and Chelsea	70

Whilst Table D-2 shows a clear difference in rental affordability in Rural and Urban areas, this combines with a difference between the North and South of England. Based on the ratios of lower quartile rental prices to lower quartile residence-based earnings, properties are generally more affordable in the North of England than they are in the South, as shown in Figure D-4. There are a few Local Authorities which are the exception to this pattern, such as Manchester (ratio = 40%) and York (ratio = 36%), which were less affordable than their surrounding areas.

Figure D-4: Rent affordability by Local Authority, 2022

The darker the colour, the higher the ratio of lower quartile rental prices to lower quartile earnings, and therefore the less affordable a property is on average within a Local Authority.



Notes:

- In Table D-2, “Urban with Major Conurbation (e)” means Urban with Major Conurbation areas of England outside of London.

Comparing affordability

Generally, an affordable area in terms of renting might be similarly affordable in terms of buying a property; this is because the same factors would affect the affordability i.e., house prices and/or average income. However, there are some cases where this relationship is not consistent – for instance, some cities with large student populations will have high rent prices due to the increased demand, but property purchase prices will not be as strongly affected.

Comparison between Table D-1 and Table D-2 show that, whilst Kensington and Chelsea was the least affordable area in England to rent or buy a property in 2022, the most affordable area differs; to rent, the most affordable area in England was High Peak, and to buy it was County Durham.

These affordability ratios are based on lower quartile residence-based earnings and lower quartile rental/house purchase prices. In High Peak, the average rent was one of the lowest in England (£395 pcm) – but not the lowest; that would be Middlesbrough or Barnsley, both with an average lower quartile rent price of £390 pcm in 2022. The average lower quartile earnings in High Peak in 2022 were £23,200 – around £1,550 higher than other areas with similar average rental prices, so the rent prices were more affordable. However, despite having one of the cheapest average rent prices in England, the average (lower quartile) purchase price of houses in High Peak was more expensive than in some other areas; County Durham (along with other Authorities such as Burnley) had the lowest average house price in 2022 at £80,000. Table D-3 shows examples of Local Authorities which differ in their relative rental and purchase affordability, as well as including the cheapest and most expensive areas for comparison.

Table D-3: Affordability statistics for selected Local Authorities to showcase outliers, 2022 where quartile 1 = the most affordable and quartile 4 = the least affordable of areas.

Local Authority	House price (£)	Affordability ratio	Quartile	Rent price (£pcm)	Affordability ratio	Quartile
County Durham	80,000	3.54	1	400	21%	1
High Peak	171,000	7.37	2	395	20%	1
Folkestone and Hythe	235,000	9.65	3	525	26%	1
Leeds	160,000	6.64	1	650	32%	3
Manchester	170,000	7.75	2	725	40%	4
Kensington and Chelsea	830,000	28.61	4	1,700	70%	4

Housing stock: affordable housing - explanatory notes

- **Note D-1**

Can include traveller pitches, and bed spaces when describing a shared dwelling such as a hostel.

- **Note D-2**

Data Source: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- **Note D-3**

Tables showing data given in Figure D-1 and Figure D-2 can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note D-4**

Figure D-1 contains data from Table 1008C within the DLUHC [live tables on affordable housing supply](#).

- **Note D-5**

The housing affordability ratio is calculated by dividing the average lower quartile house price by the average lower quartile earnings. The 'lower quartile' property price/earnings is determined by ranking all property prices/incomes in ascending order. The lowest 25% of prices/earnings are below the lower quartile; the highest 75% are above the lower quartile.

The ratio is calculated for each Local Authority in England. Residence based earnings data are used so that both the average house price and average earnings data used in the ratio calculation refer to the same Local Authority. The resulting ratio is weighted by Local Authority household count projections published by the ONS to allow comparison of Local Authorities according to their 'Rural-Urban' classification. It should be noted that the England figure included in the table and graph is also weighted for the purpose of this analysis and will not match the original England data published by the ONS.

Data are reported from 2008 onwards as earlier years are incomplete due to structural changes to Local Authority District arrangements which mean direct comparisons are not possible.

The earnings data are from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings which provides a snapshot of earnings in April in each year. Earnings relate to gross full-time individual earnings on a place of residence basis. The house price statistics come from the House Price Statistics for Small Areas, which report the median and lower quartile price paid for residential property and refer to a 12-month period with April in the middle (year ending September).

Source: [ONS, Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile gross annual \(where available\) residence-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2019, Table 6c](#)

- **Note D-6**

The rental affordability ratio is calculated by dividing the average lower quartile private rental price by the average lower quartile earnings. The 'lower quartile' rental property price/earnings is determined by ranking all property prices/incomes in ascending order. The lowest 25% of prices/earnings are below the lower quartile; the highest 75% are above the lower quartile.

The ratio is calculated for each Local Authority in England. Residence based earnings data are used so that both the average rental price and average earnings data used in the ratio calculation refer to the same Local Authority.

The rent prices are a summary of monthly rents recorded between 1 April and 31 March each year. They do not include additional housing costs (such as service charges for flats) or rents paid for by housing benefit.

Source: [Private rental affordability, England, Wales and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\), Table 2.7](#)

E. Second and empty homes

In 2022, there was a similar number of Predominantly Rural dwellings classed as second homes or empty homes (100 thousand each); but whilst empty homes are fairly uniformly distributed across the country, there were 5 Rural areas where the proportion of properties that were second homes were particular high - at least 5.5% (more than 3 times the average proportion of second homes in Predominantly Rural areas).

Summary

Second homes and empty homes both attract a council tax discount thereby reducing the pot of money available to local authorities to spend on services for their residents. Further, if a property in a Rural area is being used as a second home it is then not available as a primary home for a Rural household.

In 2022 1.8% of dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas were classed as second homes, which is more than twice the proportion classified as second homes in Predominantly Urban areas (0.8%). The difference is more pronounced in coastal areas, where 2.9% of dwellings in Predominantly Rural coastal areas were classed as second homes, compared with 0.9% in Predominantly Urban coastal areas.

In 2022, there were 480,000 dwellings classed as empty homes in England and 100,000 of them were in Predominantly Rural areas. The rurality of an area has little impact on the percentage of dwellings classed as empty; in Predominantly Rural areas it was 1.8% of dwellings and in Predominantly Urban areas it was 2.0%. Instead, the geographical picture is one of a north south divide with proportionally more empty homes in the North than the South.

Second homes

Second homes are domestic dwellings owned by individuals who have another dwelling as their primary residence. Dwellings which are classified as second homes can receive a council tax discount of between 0% and 50% (Note E-3).

As shown in Table E-1 in 2022 there were 256,900 dwellings classed as second homes in England, with 96,100 (37%) in Predominantly Rural areas and 133,100 (52%) in Predominantly Urban areas. In Predominantly Rural areas 1.8% of dwellings are classed as second homes, which is more than twice that of Predominantly Urban areas (0.8%) and Urban with Significant Rural areas (0.8%).

Table E-1: Number and Percentage of second homes by 2011 broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, 2022

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of second homes	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes (%)
Predominantly Rural	96,100	1.8
Urban with Significant Rural	27,700	0.8
Predominantly Urban	133,100	0.8
England	256,900	1.0

The difference is more pronounced in coastal areas, where 2.9% of dwellings in Predominantly Rural coastal areas are classed as second homes, compared with 0.9% in areas that are Predominantly Urban coastal areas (see Note E-1).

Table E-2 analyses the number of second homes and percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes by detailed Rural-Urban classification. Mainly Rural areas have the highest rate of second homes, with 2.4% of dwellings classed as second homes, compared with 0.9% in Urban areas with Major Conurbation (the most urban areas).

Table E-2: Number and Percentage of second homes by 2011 Detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, 2022

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of second homes	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes (%)
Mainly Rural	50,700	2.4
Largely Rural	45,400	1.4
Urban with Significant Rural	27,700	0.8
Urban with City and Town	54,900	0.9
Urban with Minor Conurbation	3,300	0.3
Urban with Major Conurbation	74,900	0.9

The percentage of dwellings classed as second homes in all coastal areas was 1.7%, more than twice the rate in all non-coastal areas (0.8%). See Note E-2 for more information regarding coastal area definitions.

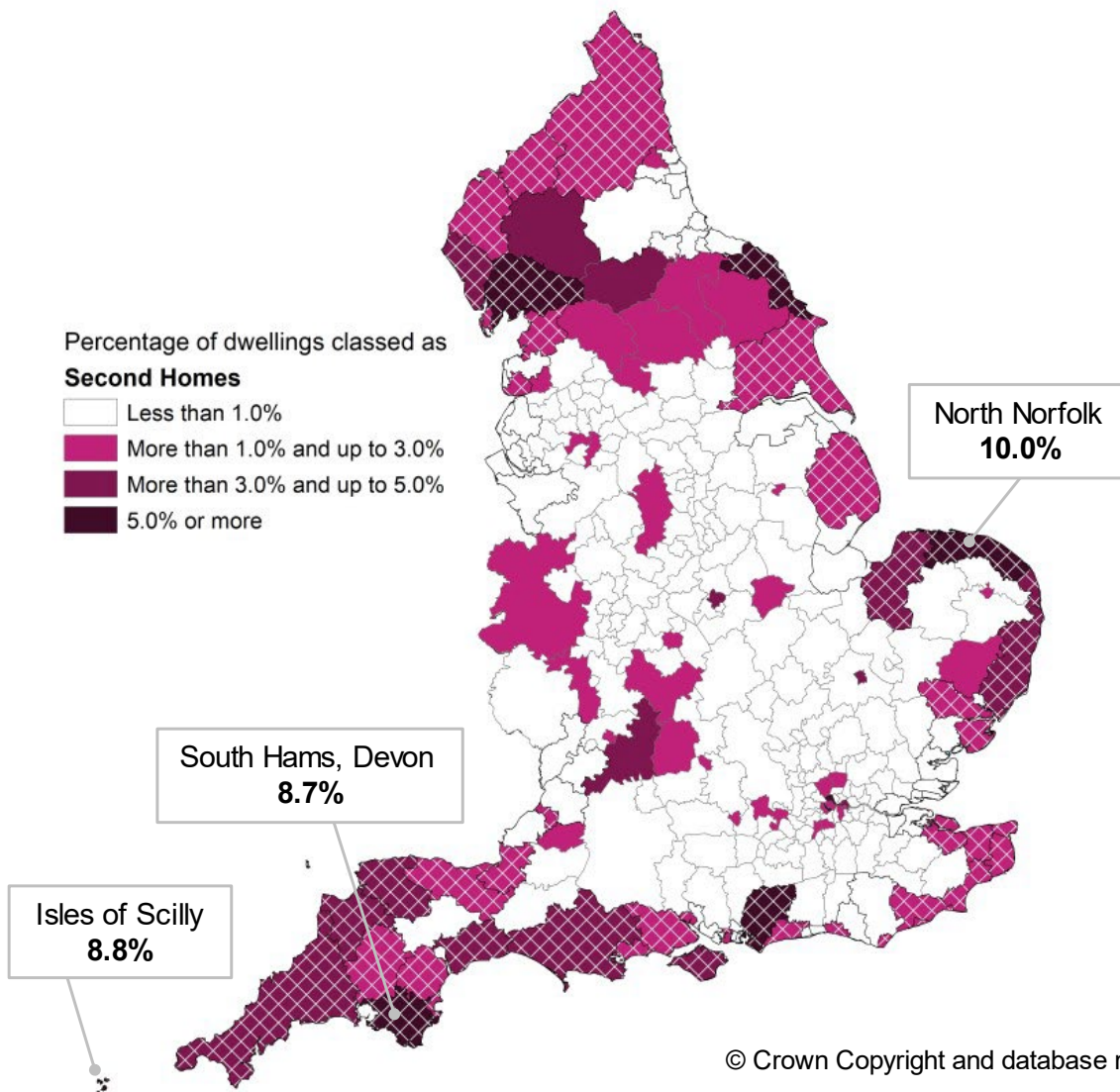
There were 5 Predominantly Rural areas where the proportion of properties that were second homes were particular high - at least 5.5% (more than 3 times the average proportion of second homes in Predominantly Rural areas). The areas with the highest percentage of dwellings classed

as second homes, outside of London, were North Norfolk (10.0%), Isles of Scilly (8.8%), and South Hams (8.7%), all of which are Mainly Rural areas as well as being coastal; this is shown in Figure E-1. The other Predominantly Rural areas with at least 5.5% of properties being classed as second homes are South Lakeland and Chichester.

There were no Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London with at least 5% of properties being classed as second homes in 2022. The only Local Authority classified as Urban with Significant Rural with at least 5% of properties being classed as second homes in 2022 was Scarborough.

Figure E-1: Percentage of dwellings classed as second homes, by Local Authority in England, 2022

Coastal areas are highlighted with white cross-hatching. The darker the colour of a Local Authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes.



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Empty homes

Empty Homes are domestic dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. Dwellings which are classified as empty homes can receive a council tax discount of between 0% and 100%; those which have remained empty for between 2 and 5 years can be subject to a premium of up to 100% of their council tax rate. Dwellings which have remained empty for over 5 years can receive a premium of up to 200%. This is all at the discretion of each Local Authority.

Table E-3 shows that in 2022, there were 478,900 dwellings classed as empty homes in England, with 98,800 (21%) in Predominantly Rural areas and 319,100 (67%) in Predominantly Urban areas.

The rurality of an area has little impact on the percentage of dwellings classed as empty across England, as Predominantly Rural areas have 1.8% of dwellings classed as empty homes, while Predominantly Urban areas (2.0%) and Urban with Significant Rural areas (1.8%) have similar or the same rates.

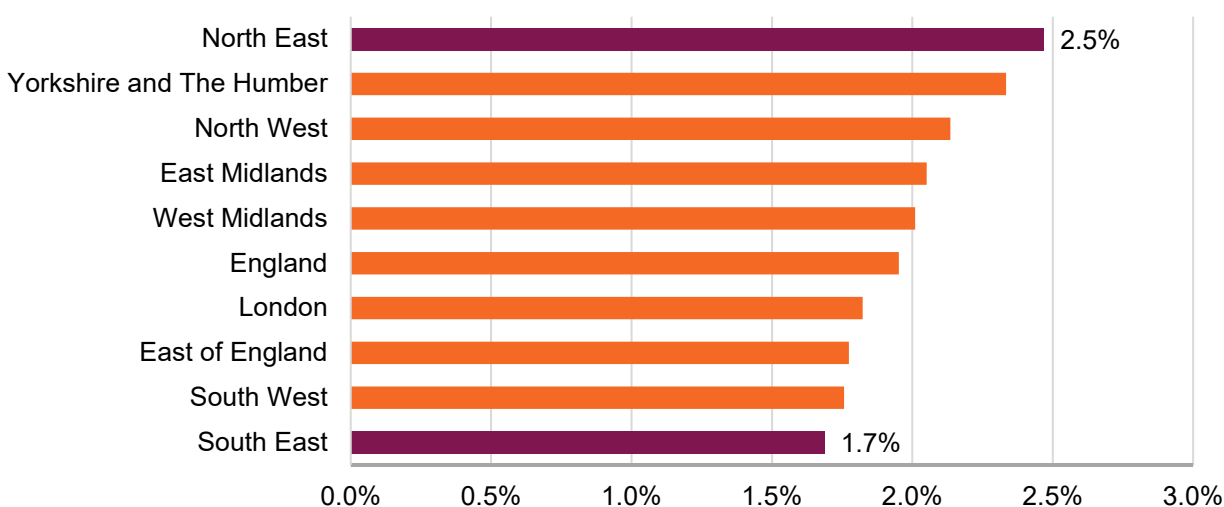
The differences are more pronounced across the regions of England, where 2.5% of dwellings are classed as empty in the North East, compared with 1.7% in the South East. This is shown in Figure E-2. The regions of England with the highest percentage of empty dwellings are in the north. The percentage of empty dwellings decreases the further south you get.

Table E-3: Number and Percentage of Empty Dwellings by 2011 Local Authority broad Rural-Urban Classification, 2022

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of empty dwellings	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as empty (%)
Predominantly Rural	98,800	1.8
Urban with Significant Rural	61,100	1.8
Predominantly Urban	319,100	2.0
England	478,900	2.0

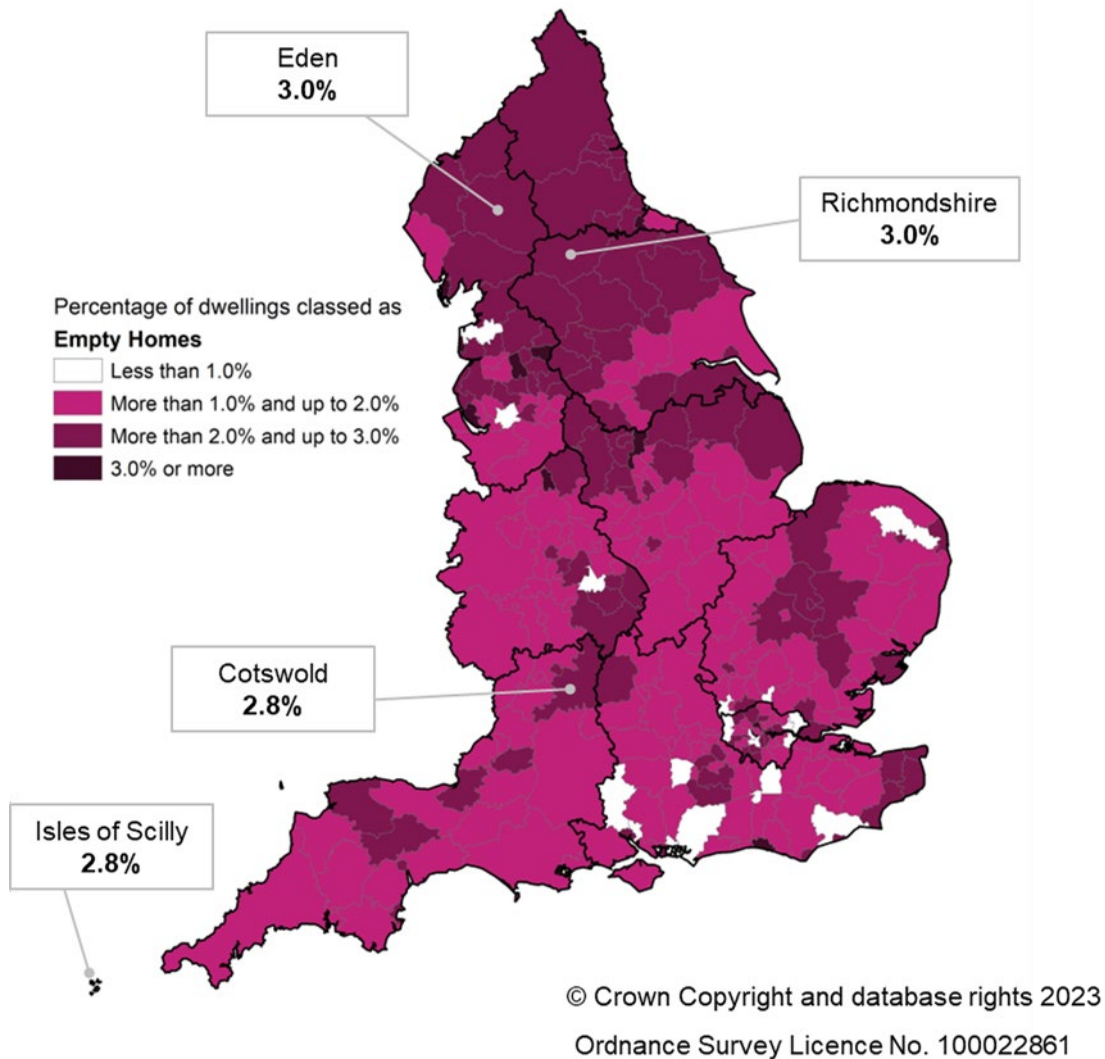
Figure E-2: Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as empty, by Region, England, 2022

Regional bars are given in descending size order, with the maximum and minimum values shown in purple.



The Local Authority areas with the highest percentage of dwellings classed as empty homes are City of London (4.3%), Barrow-in-Furness (3.9%), Liverpool and Camden (both 3.7%). The Predominantly Rural areas with the highest percentage of empty homes are Richmondshire, Eden (both 3.0%), Isles of Scilly and Cotswold (both 2.8%). See Note E-3 and Note E-4 for more information regarding reporting on empty dwellings used for Figure E-2 and Figure E-3.

Figure E-3: Percentage of dwellings classed as empty, by Local Authority in England, 2022
 Regions are highlighted with dark boundaries (Note E-6), and Predominantly Rural areas with the highest values are indicated. The darker the colour of a Local Authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as empty homes.



Second and empty homes explanatory notes

- **Note E-1**

Tables showing data given in Table E-2 and Table E-3 can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note E-2**

Local Authority Districts have been defined as a coastal area if they are within 1 kilometre (0.6 miles) of the coastline of England. Local Authority Districts 2020 boundary definition used.

- **Note E-3**

The data source is the [Local Authority Council Taxbase England 2020 dataset](#), which consists of self-reported information for each local authority area on the total number of dwellings subject to council tax by tax band, as well as any exemptions, discounts, or premiums subject to the dwellings.

- **Note E-4**

The second homes council tax discount was introduced in April 2013.

- **Note E-5**

In 2020, 300 out of 314 authorities reported they were charging the premium on some of their empty dwellings. This was the first year where authorities have been asked to report the premium based on the length of time the dwelling had been empty, so some caution should be taken when interpreting the split of data. 247 authorities reported premiums for dwellings that have been empty for 2 to 5 years and 5 years and over. 53 authorities did not report figures split between the two categories. In these cases, we have used the figures as reported.

- **Note E-6**

As of 1 January 2021, the internationally comparable regional geography for the UK is the International Territorial Levels (ITLs) geography. These regional boundaries have been used. This has replaced the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) geographies for the UK that were operational when the UK was a member of the European Union. See the ONS "[International, regional and city statistics](#)" page for more information.

F. Homelessness

In 2022/23, there were proportionally fewer homeless households needing assistance in securing permanent settled accommodation in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London).

Summary

In the context of this Digest Section, homelessness is more than just 'sleeping rough'; it also includes the statutorily homeless. These are households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation.

In 2022/23 the statutory homelessness rate was 4.4 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Rural areas and 7.1 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). These rates are both higher than they were in 2018/19.

In 2022 the proportion of people sleeping rough was 4.0 per 100,000 population in Predominantly Rural areas and 5.2 per 100,000 population in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London. Over the period 2010 to 2022 the highest rough sleeping rate in Predominantly Rural areas was seen in 2018, at 5.1 per 100,000 population.

Defining homelessness

The term ‘homelessness’ is often considered to apply only to people ‘sleeping rough’. However, most of our statistics on homelessness relate to the statutorily homeless, i.e., those households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation, and to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted by a Local Authority. See Note F-2 for further background information.

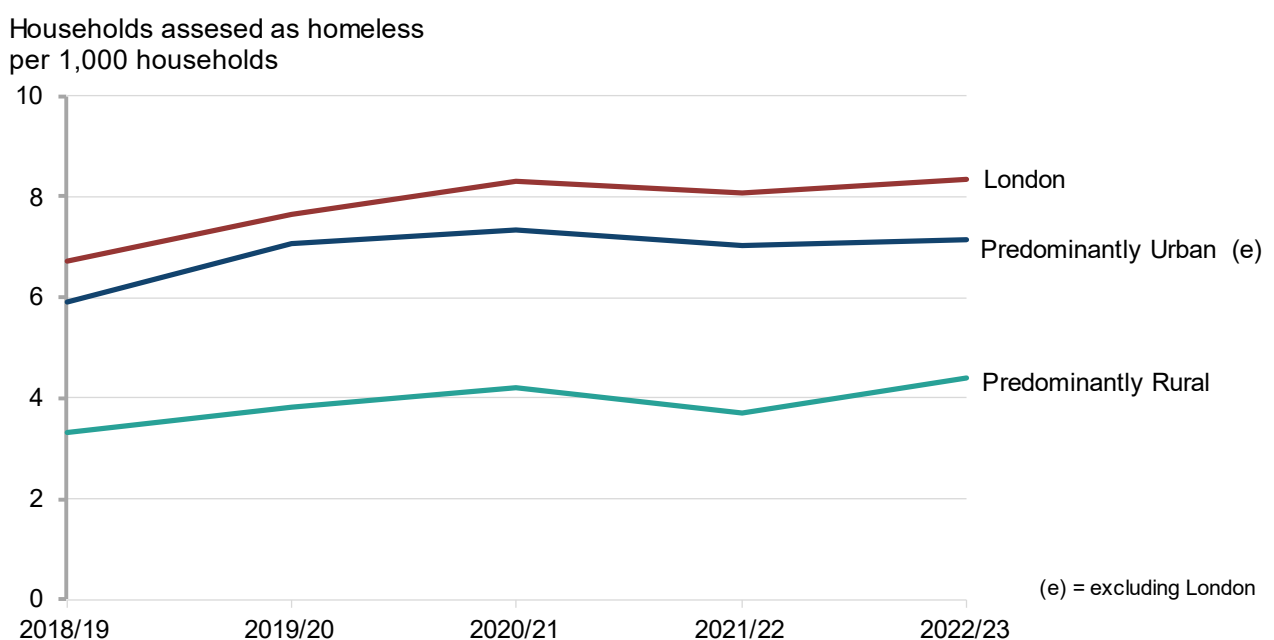
Statutory homelessness

Figure F-1 shows that in all areas the proportion of households accepted as being homeless and in priority need of assistance in securing permanent settled accommodation increased until 2020/21, followed by a slight decrease in 2021/22, but then continued to increase in 2022/23 (Note F-3, Note F-4).

In 2022/23 the homelessness rate was 4.4 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Rural areas and 7.1 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). In comparison, there were 3.3 households per 1,000 accepted as homeless in Predominantly Rural areas in 2018/19, and 5.9 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London). This means that overall, the homelessness rate has increased by 1.1 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Rural areas and 1.2 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London. The rate of homelessness was consistently highest in London between 2018/19 and 2022/23.

Although there were minor increases in the homelessness rate in all areas between 2021/22 and 2022/23, the greatest increase was seen in Predominantly Rural areas, as there were 0.7 more households per 1,000 accepted as homeless in 2022/23. In comparison, the homelessness rate increased by 0.1 households per 1,000 in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London) and by 0.3 households per 1,000 in London.

Figure F-1: Number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 households, by Local Authority broad Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2018/19 to 2022/23



The tables below highlight the Local Authorities with the lowest (Table F-1) and highest (Table F-2) homelessness rates in 2022/23, by Rural-Urban Classification.

In Mainly Rural areas, East Hampshire had the lowest rate of homelessness in 2022/23 (1.4 households per 1,000). In Largely Rural areas, Vale of White Horse had the lowest homelessness rate (1.2 households per 1,000). The lowest homelessness rate in England was seen in Cannock Chase (an Urban with Significant Rural authority), where there were 1.0 households per 1,000 accepted as homeless.

Table F-1: Number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 households, for the Local Authorities with the lowest rate of homelessness within their Classification group, by detailed Rural-Urban Classification in England, 2022/23

Rural-Urban Classification	Local Authority	Homeless households (per 000s)
Mainly Rural	East Hampshire	1.4
Largely Rural	Vale of White Horse	1.2
Urban with Significant Rural	Cannock Chase	1.0
Urban with City and Town	Eastleigh	1.4
Urban with Minor Conurbation	Gedling	2.1
Urban with Major Conurbation (e)	Three Rivers	1.7
London	Kingston upon Thames	2.7
England	Cannock Chase	1.0

In Mainly Rural areas, Melton had the highest homelessness rate in 2022/23 (7.7 households per 1,000). In Largely Rural areas, North Devon had the highest homelessness rate (9.0 households per 1,000). The highest rate of homelessness in England was seen in Manchester (Urban with Major Conurbation), where there were 19.1 households per 1,000 accepted as homeless.

Table F-2: Number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 households, for the Local Authorities with the highest rate of homelessness within their Classification group, by detailed Rural-Urban Classification in England, 2022/23

Rural-Urban Classification	Local Authority	Homeless households (per 000s)
Mainly Rural	Melton	7.7
Largely Rural	North Devon	9.0
Urban with Significant Rural	Bedford	10.4
Urban with City and Town	Portsmouth	16.7
Urban with Minor Conurbation	Sheffield	11.3
Urban with Major Conurbation (e)	Manchester	19.1
London	Islington	15.3
England	Manchester	19.1

Rough sleeping

Rough sleepers are defined for the purposes of rough sleeping counts and estimates as:

- people sleeping, about to bed down, or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments)

- people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or ‘bashes’ (Note F-7).

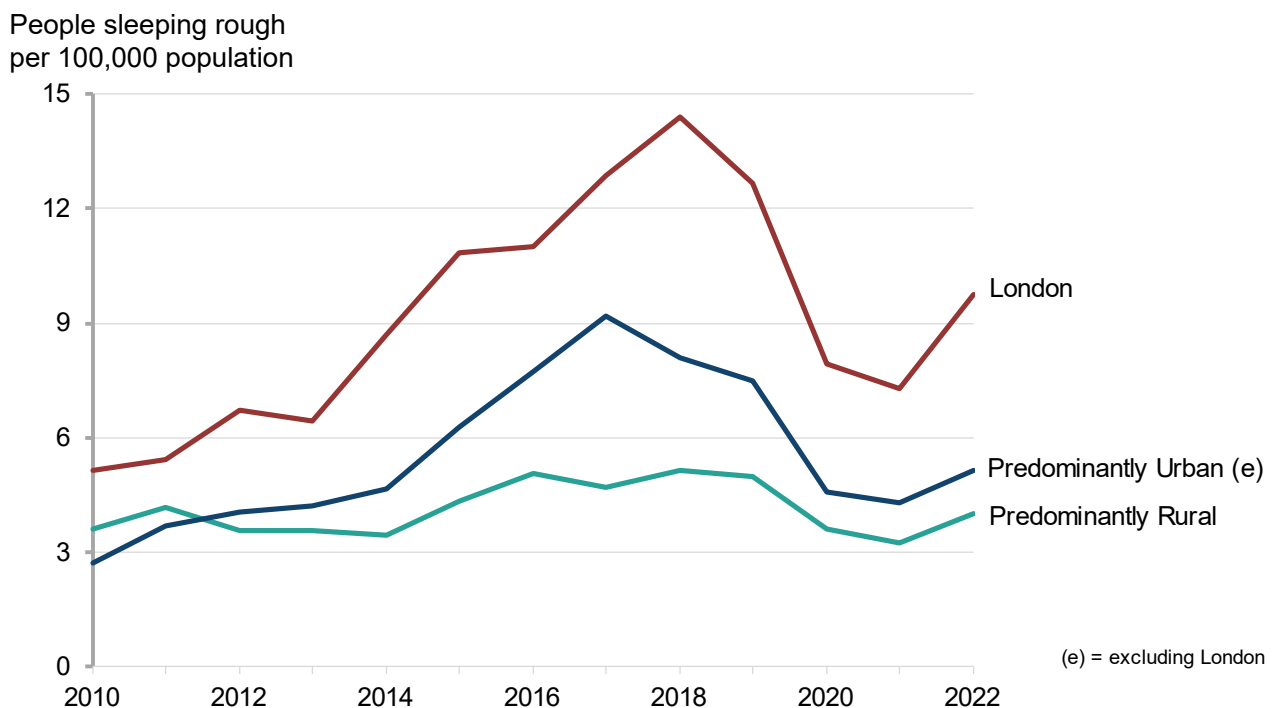
The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers. Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding. See Note F-2 for more information.

Figure F-2 shows that, in all areas, the proportion of people sleeping rough per 100,000 population increased between 2010 and 2016. In Predominantly Rural areas, the rough sleeping rate then stayed level until 2019, where it then decreased until 2021. In Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London), the rough sleeping rate continued to increase until 2017, then decreased until 2021. All areas have seen increases in rates since 2021.

The rough sleeping rate was consistently higher in London than any other area between 2010 and 2022; in 2022, the proportion of people sleeping rough in London was 9.8 per 100,000 population. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the rough sleeping rate was 5.2 per 100,000 population in 2022, and in Predominantly Rural areas it was 4.0 per 100,000 population.

The highest rough sleeping rate in Predominantly Rural areas was seen in 2018, at 5.1 per 100,000 population; in Predominantly Urban areas (excluding London), this was instead in 2017 at 9.2 per 100,000 population. The highest rate in London was seen in 2018, at 14.4 per 100,000 population.

Figure F-2: People sleeping rough per 100,000 population, by Local Authority broad Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2010 to 2022 (Note F-5)



The rough sleeping rate decreased drastically around 2020 due to the introduction of the “[everyone in](#)” policy at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, where there was a push to protect homeless people by offering temporary accommodation. Once lockdown restrictions began to ease and the risk of infection decreased, many Local Authorities closed this scheme due to the costs involved.

Notes:

- In Figure F-1 and Figure F-2, “Predominantly Urban (e)” represents the Predominantly Urban areas of England outside of London.
- In Table F-1 and Table F-2, “Urban with Major Conurbation (e)” represents the Urban with Major Conurbation areas of England outside of London.
- Data included in Figure F-1 refers to financial years rather than calendar years (e.g., 2021/22 refers to the period from April 2021 to March 2022).

Homelessness explanatory notes

- **Note F-1**

Tables showing data given in Figure F-1 and Figure F-2 can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note F-2**

Further information: www.gov.uk/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions

- **Note F-3**

Statistics in this section are not comparable with those reported previously, which used data prior to April 2018. This is because amendments to legislation, as introduced by the 2017 HRA, have introduced new duties that mean more people will be eligible for assistance out of homelessness from local authorities.

- **Note F-4**

The national totals in this section include imputed estimates for missing values based on previous submissions. 26 Local Authorities failed to provide accurate assessments data in 2022-23, estimated to comprise 12.1% of total assessments in England.

- **Note F-5**

Since rough sleepers would be difficult to track regularly, the data in this section is instead based on an annual single night snapshot of the number of people sleeping rough in Local Authorities in England to generate an estimate. As such, actual values will likely differ.

- **Note F-6**

Sources: DLUHC, Live tables on homelessness: [Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) and rough sleeping snapshot: [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- **Note F-7**

“Bashes” are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes.

G. Land use change for housing

In 2021/22, there were almost double the number of new residential addresses per population in Rural areas than Urban areas.

Summary

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) produces Land Use Change Statistics (Note G-1). From these data it is possible to look at new residential addresses (i.e., new dwellings) in Rural areas to complement our [Local Authority level housing completions analysis](#). The land use change data provide information on the previous land use and whether the resulting dwellings arise through new building (completions of new dwellings) or involve conversions and demolitions. The data also allow analysis using the most detailed Rural-Urban Classification.

Of 300,000 new residential addresses arising from new development or conversions in England in 2021/22, 87,000 or 29% were in Rural areas – a higher proportion than the 18% of England's population in Rural areas. This is equivalent to 9 new residential addresses per 1,000 population in Rural areas compared with 5 new residential addresses per 1,000 population in Urban areas.

In 2021/22 in Rural areas just under a third of new residential addresses were on previously developed land and just over two-thirds on previously non-developed land. In Urban areas it was close to the opposite, with just under two-thirds on previously developed land and just over a third on previously non-developed land.

In Rural areas, land previously in agricultural use provided the majority of land on which new residential addresses were developed, accounting for 53% of new addresses. There was a slightly higher proportion of this in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings than in Rural Villages or Rural Town and Fringe areas.

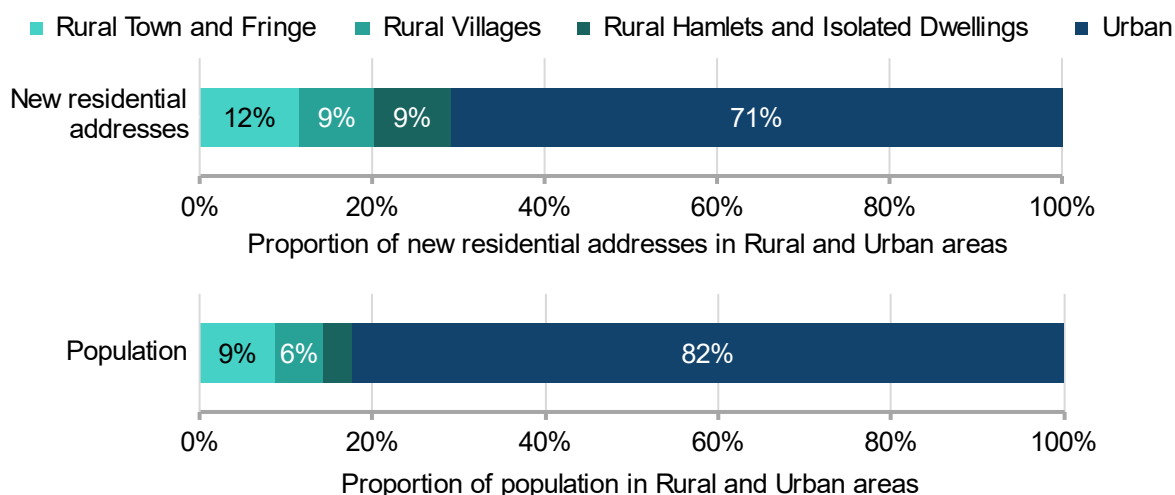
New residential addresses

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) produces Land Use Change Statistics (Note G-1). From these data it is possible to look at new residential addresses (i.e., newly built dwellings – “completions” - and conversions to residential use) in Rural areas to complement our [Local Authority level housing completions analysis](#). In 2021/22 in England there were almost 300,000 new residential addresses. 87,000 or 29% of these were in Rural areas. To put this in context, the Rural population accounts for under 18% of England’s population, so there were more new residential addresses relative to population in Rural areas than in Urban areas – 9 new dwellings per 1,000 population in Rural areas compared with 5 new dwellings per 1,000 population in Urban areas.

In Figure G-1 Rural Town and Fringe areas account for 9% of the population but 12% of the new residential addresses; Rural Villages account for 6% of the population but 9% of new residential addresses; Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings account for 3% of the population but 9% of new residential addresses; Urban areas account for 82% of the population but 71% of the new residential addresses.

Figure G-1: New residential addresses compared with population, by settlement type within the Rural Urban Classification, in England, 2021/22 (Note G-2)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacks of bars.



Notes

- Proportions smaller than 3% have not been labelled on the bar charts in Figure G-1.

New residential addresses on previously developed and non-developed land

In 2021/22 in Rural areas just under a third of new residential addresses was on previously developed land and just over two-thirds on previously non-developed land. In Urban areas it was close to the opposite, with just under two-thirds on previously developed land and just over a third on previously non-developed land.

Figure G-2 shows the proportion of new residential addresses by previously developed and previously non-developed land and whether the land had been vacant.

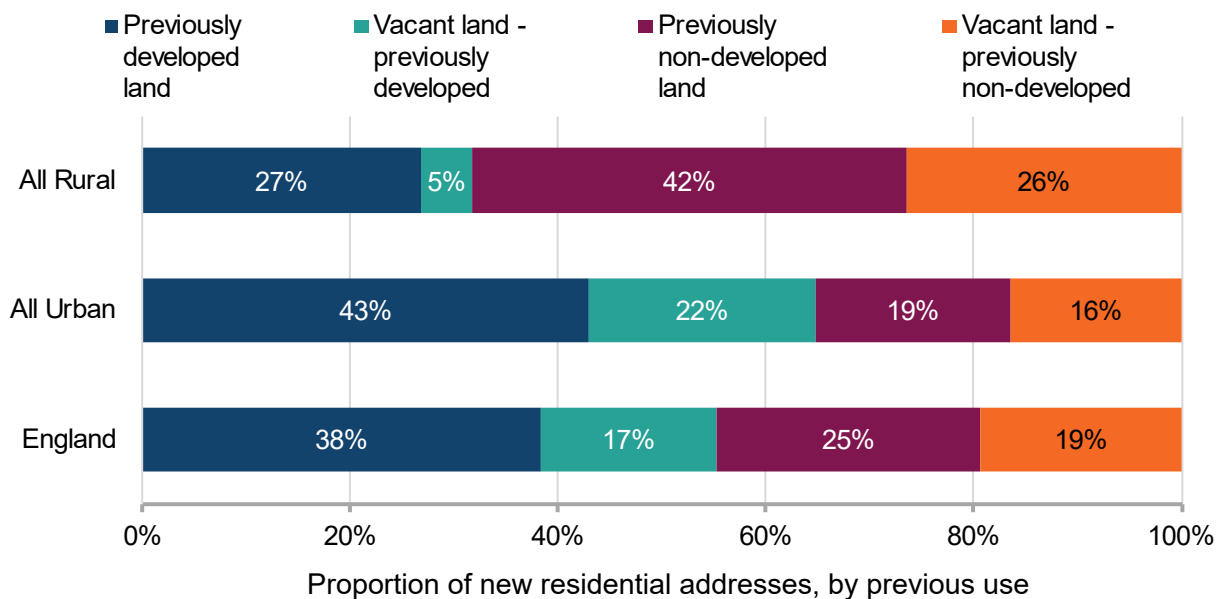
In England, 55% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (38% on land that was previously developed and 17% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 45% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (25% on land that was previously non-developed and 19% on land that was vacant but which had been previously non-developed) (Note G-3).

In Rural areas, 32% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (27% on land that was previously developed and 5% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 68% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (42% on land that was previously non-developed and 26% on land that was vacant but which had been previously non-developed).

In Urban areas, 65% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (43% on land that was previously developed and 22% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 35% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (19% on land that was previously non-developed and 16% on land that was vacant but which had been previously non-developed).

Figure G-2: Proportion of new residential addresses, by previous developed or non-developed land use, by Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2021/22

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacks of bars.

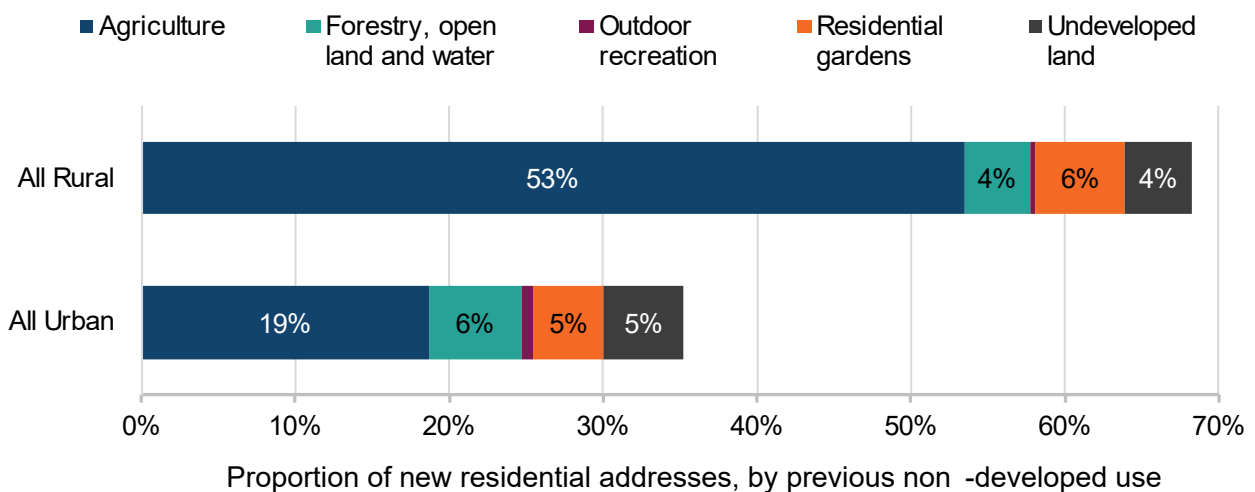
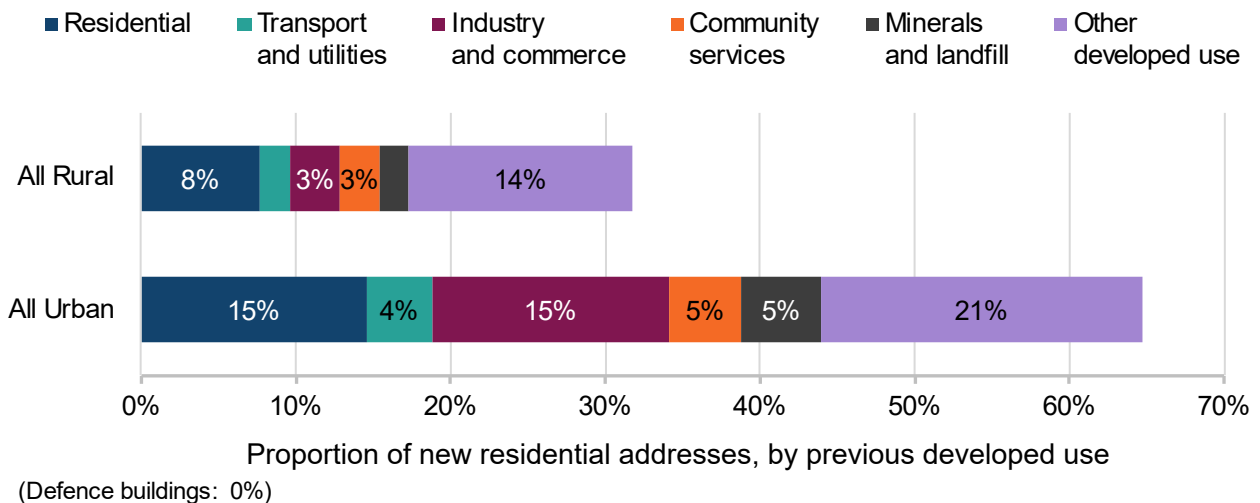


Previous land use

The Land Use Change Statistics include more detailed breakdowns of the previous land use, including the land use prior to land becoming vacant. In 2021/22 in Rural areas, land previously in agricultural use provided the majority of land on which new residential addresses were developed, accounting for 53% of new residential addresses (including land that was vacant, but which had been previously in agricultural use). Agricultural land also accounted for 19% of new residential addresses associated with Urban areas. Figure G-3 shows the proportions of new residential addresses by previous land use.

Figure G-3: Proportion of new residential addresses, by previous land use, by Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2021/22 (Note G-4)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacks of bars. 0% of new residential addresses were built on land previously used for defence buildings. Land that was previously developed is represented in the top chart, and not previously developed is in the bottom chart.



Of new residential addresses in 2021/21 the proportions on previously developed land uses (Figure G-3 – top stacked bar chart) were:

- **Residential:** 8% in Rural areas and 15% in Urban areas;
- **Transport and utilities:** 2% in Rural areas and 4% in Urban areas;
- **Industry and commerce:** 3% in Rural areas and 15% in Urban areas;
- **Community services:** 3% in Rural areas and 5% in Urban areas;
- **Minerals and land fill:** 2% in Rural areas and 5% in Urban areas;
- **Other developed use:** 14% in Rural areas and 21% in Urban areas.

Of new residential addresses in 2021/21 the proportions on previously non-developed land uses (Figure G-3 – bottom stacked bar chart) were:

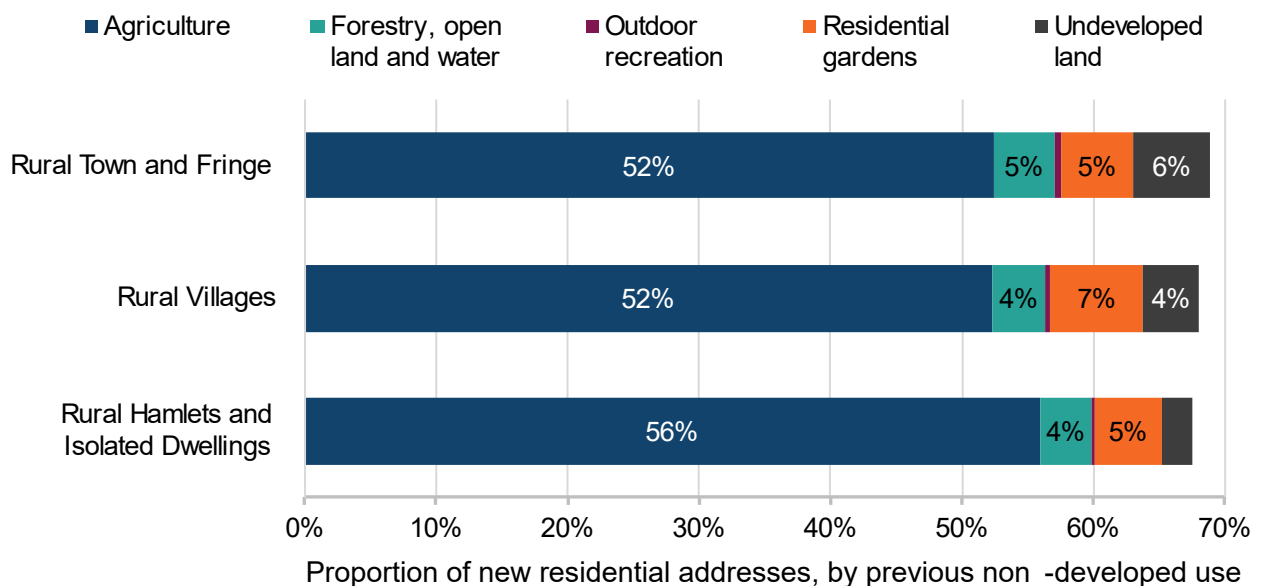
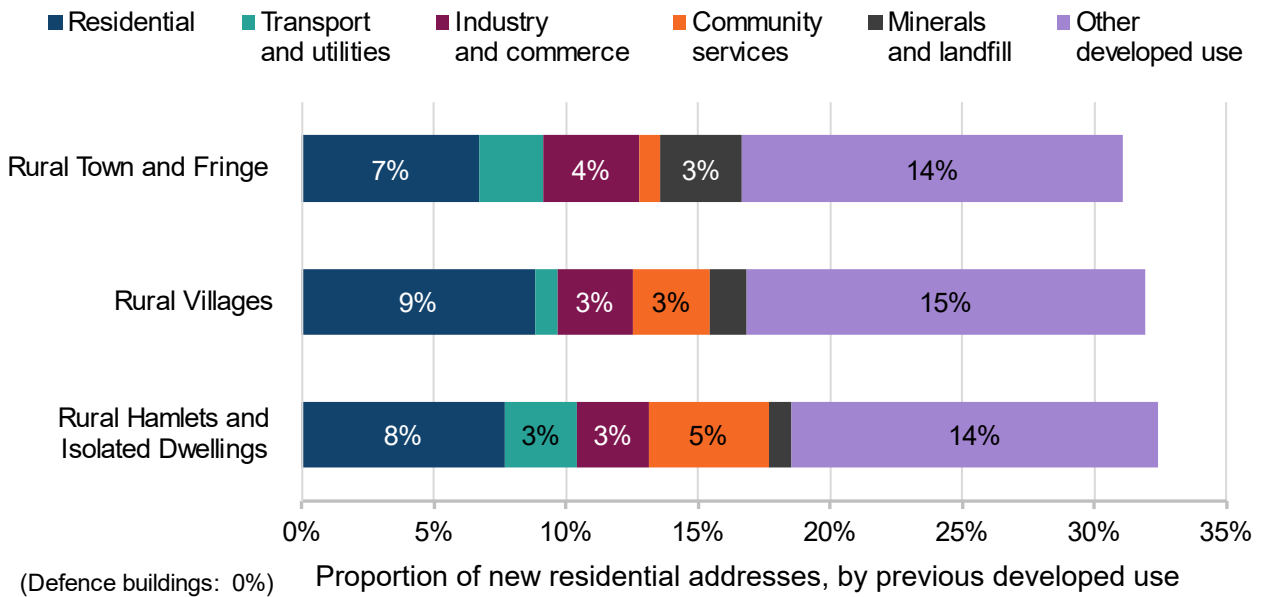
- **Agriculture:** 53% in Rural areas and 19% in Urban areas;

- **Forestry, open land and water:** 4% in Rural areas and 6% in Urban areas;
- **Outdoor recreation:** 0.4% in Rural areas and 1% in Urban areas;
- **Residential gardens:** 6% in Rural areas and 5% in Urban areas;
- **Other undeveloped land:** 4% in Rural areas and 5% in Urban areas.

In 2021/22 between Rural settlement types there was only a slight variation in the proportions of new residential addresses developed on different previous land uses as seen in Figure G-4.

Figure G-4: Proportion of new residential addresses, by previous land use, by settlement type in Rural Areas, in England, 2021/22 (Note G-4)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacks of bars. 0% of new residential addresses were built on land previously used for defence buildings. Land that was previously developed is represented in the top chart, and not previously developed is in the bottom chart.



Of new residential addresses in 2021/21 the proportions on previously developed land uses (Figure G-4– top stacked bar chart) were:

- **Residential:** 7% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 9% in Rural Villages and 8% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Transport and utilities:** 2% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 1% in Rural Villages and 3% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Industry and commerce:** 4% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 3% in Rural Villages and 3% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Community services:** 1% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 3% in Rural Villages and 5% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Minerals and land fill:** 3% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 1% in Rural Villages and 1% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Other developed use:** 14% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 15% in Rural Villages and 14% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings.

Of new residential addresses in 2021/21 the proportions on previously non-developed land uses (Figure G-4 – bottom stacked bar chart) were:

- **Agriculture:** 52% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 52% in Rural Villages and 56% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Forestry, open land and water:** 5% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 4% in Rural Villages and 4% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Outdoor recreation:** 1% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 0.4% in Rural Villages and 0.2% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Residential gardens:** 5% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 7% in Rural Villages and 5% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings;
- **Other undeveloped land:** 6% in Rural Town and Fringe areas; 4% in Rural Villages and 2% in Rural Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings.

Notes

- Proportions smaller than 3% have not been labelled on the bar charts in Figure G-3 and Figure G-4.

Land use change for housing - explanatory notes

- **Note G-1**

Source: DLUHC Land Use Change Statistics: [Land use change: new residential addresses 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/land-use-change-new-residential-addresses-2021-to-2022) includes explanatory notes on previous land uses

- **Note G-2**

Population based on 2011 Rural-Urban Classification and 2011 population data.

- **Note G-3**

The previous land use portions differ slightly from those published by DLUHC owing to differences in how the data have been geographically referenced for the analysis here.

- **Note G-4**

If the land was vacant prior to residential development, then the land use prior to becoming vacant is recorded.

Appendix 1: The 8 thematic reports that make up the Statistical Digest of Rural England (and the topics included within them)

1. [Population](#)

- A. Population level and change
- B. Population age profile
- C. Ethnicity
- D. Internal migration
- E. Local Authority population data

2. [Housing](#)

- A. Housing stock: age and type
- B. Housing stock: additions
- C. House prices
- D. Housing stock: affordable housing
- E. Second and empty homes
- F. Homelessness
- G. Land use change for housing

3. [Health and Wellbeing](#)

- A. Life expectancy
- B. Wellbeing
- C. NHS Dentistry provision
- D. General Practices
- E. Childcare provision
- F. Loneliness
- G. Volunteering and charity

4. [Communities and Households](#)

- A. Deprivation
- B. Poverty due to low income
- C. Household expenditure
- D. Police recorded crime and outcomes
- E. Crime surveys: local police and businesses
- F. Feelings about the local neighbourhood

5. [Connectivity and Accessibility](#)

- A. Broadband
- B. Travel behaviours
- C. Access to personal transport
- D. Access to services
- E. Home working

6. [Education, Qualifications and Training](#)

- A. Secondary education – GCSE Maths and English attainment
- B. School inspections
- C. Free school meals
- D. Alternative and specialist education provision
- E. Higher education
- F. Apprenticeships and on-the-job training
- G. Workforce education level

7. [Rural Economic Bulletin](#)

- A. Employment
- B. Earnings
- C. Redundancies
- D. Claimant count - Jobseeker's Allowance
- E. Output and productivity measured by Gross Value Added (GVA)
- F. Businesses - status, structure and composition
- G. Innovation and investment

8. [Energy](#)

- A. Fuel poverty
- B. Energy Performance Certificates: average Energy Efficiency Score
- C. Energy Performance Certificates: achieving energy efficiency category C
- D. Energy Costs
- E. Energy Consumption

Each of the 8 themes also has their own set of supplementary data tables that include the larger source data that could not be included in the presented document. The chapter headings above are hyperlinked to the home page for that specific digest theme. The supplementary tables can be accessed from these home pages.

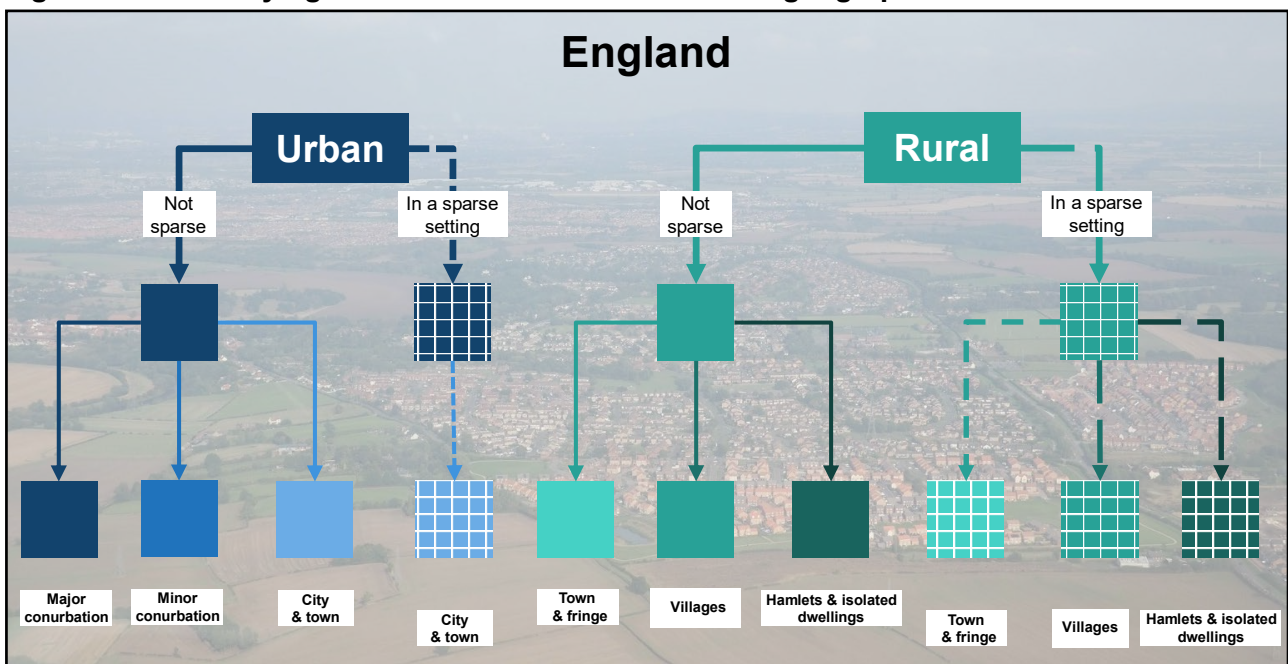
There is a further document including the individual Local Authority data tables, which have been separated for ease of use.

Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas

Wherever possible, the Rural-Urban Classification is used to distinguish Rural and Urban areas. The Classification defines areas as Rural if they fall outside of settlements with more than 10,000 resident population.

Census Output Areas are the smallest areas for which data are available from Censuses. These Census Output Areas are assigned to one of four Urban or six Rural categories (Figure X-1) based on dwelling densities. Those described as “in a sparse setting” reflect where the wider area is sparsely populated (again based on dwelling densities). From Census Output Areas, other small area geographies can be classified based on how they map to Census Output Areas (such as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), Wards, and postcodes – [Note 1](#)).

Figure X-1: Classifying Rural and Urban areas for small geographical areas



A map showing the distribution of the Rural and Urban Census Output Areas is shown in Figure X-2.

When data are not available at a small geographical scale, it may be possible to apply the Rural-Urban Local Authority Classification or a similar classification for other larger geographies. This classification categorises districts and unitary authorities on a six-point scale from Rural to Urban. It is underpinned by Rural and Urban populations as defined by the Census Output Area Classification. A map of the geographical distribution of the Rural and Urban Local Authorities is shown in Figure X-3.

However, the Local Authority Classification also considers some Urban areas as Hub Towns (with populations of between 10,000 and 30,000). These Hub Towns have met statistical criteria (based on dwelling and business premise densities) to be considered hubs for services and businesses for a wider rural hinterland and their populations are therefore classified as effectively Rural for the purposes of determining the classification of the authority.

Figure X-2: Map of the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Census Output Areas in England

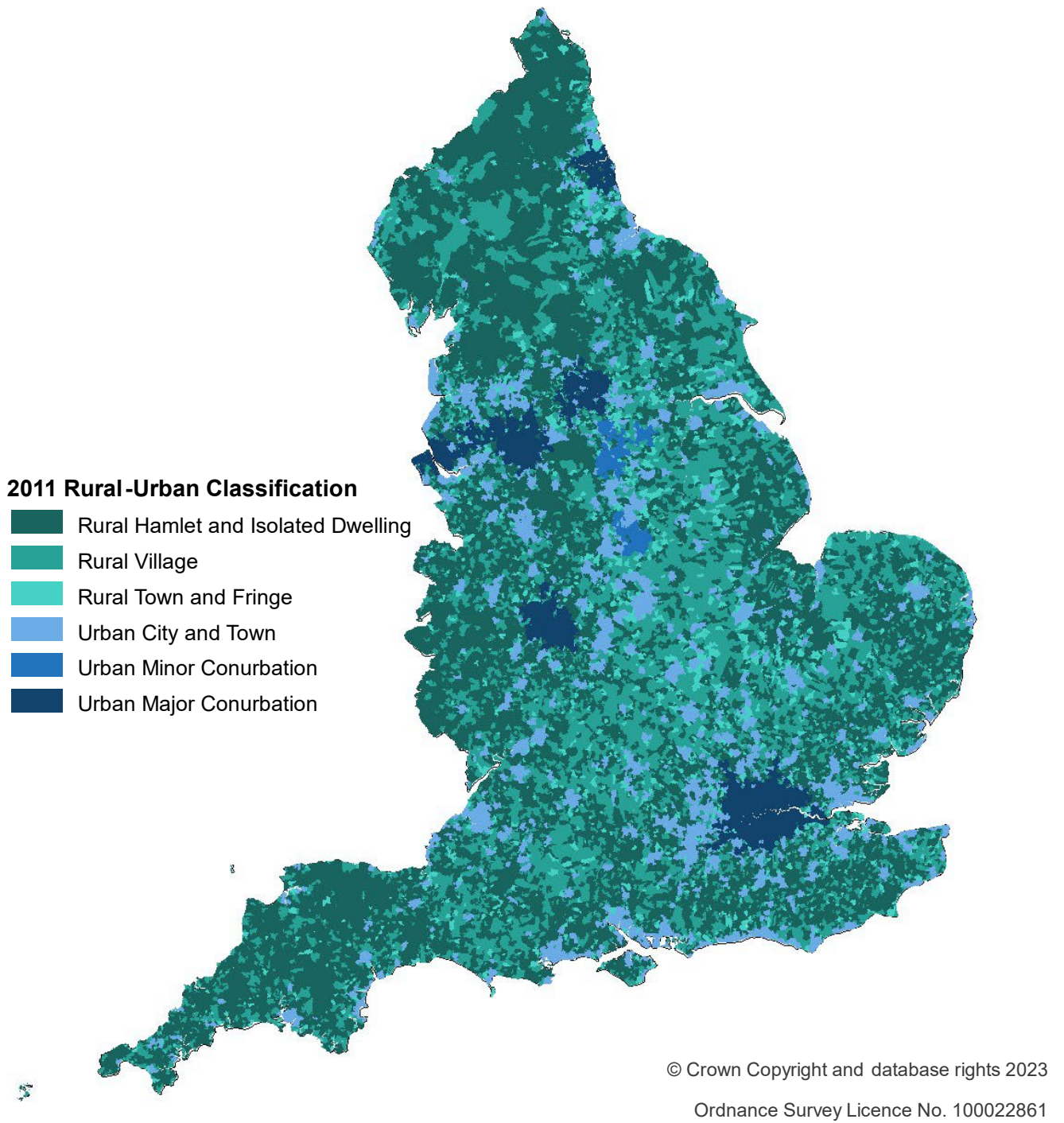
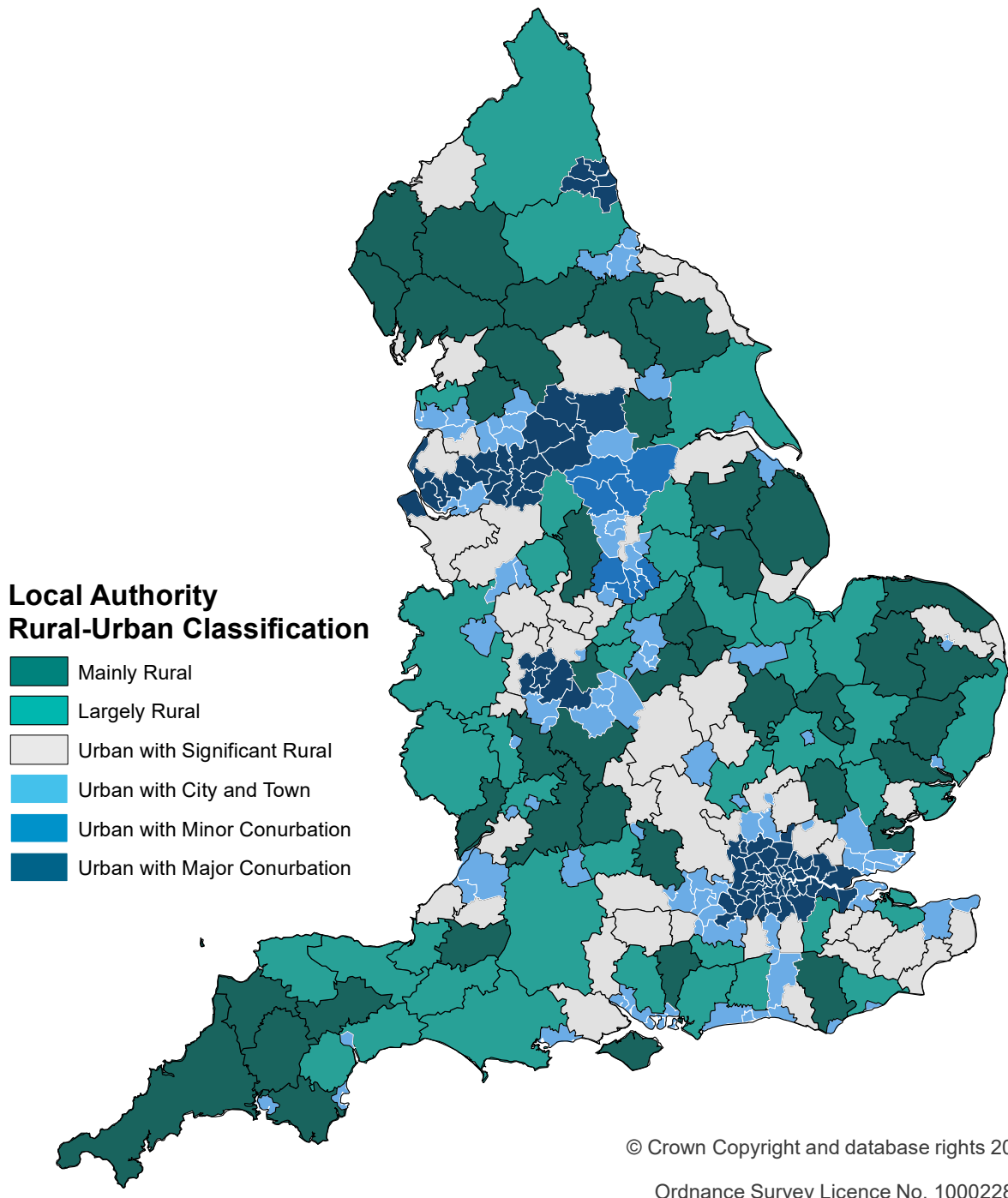
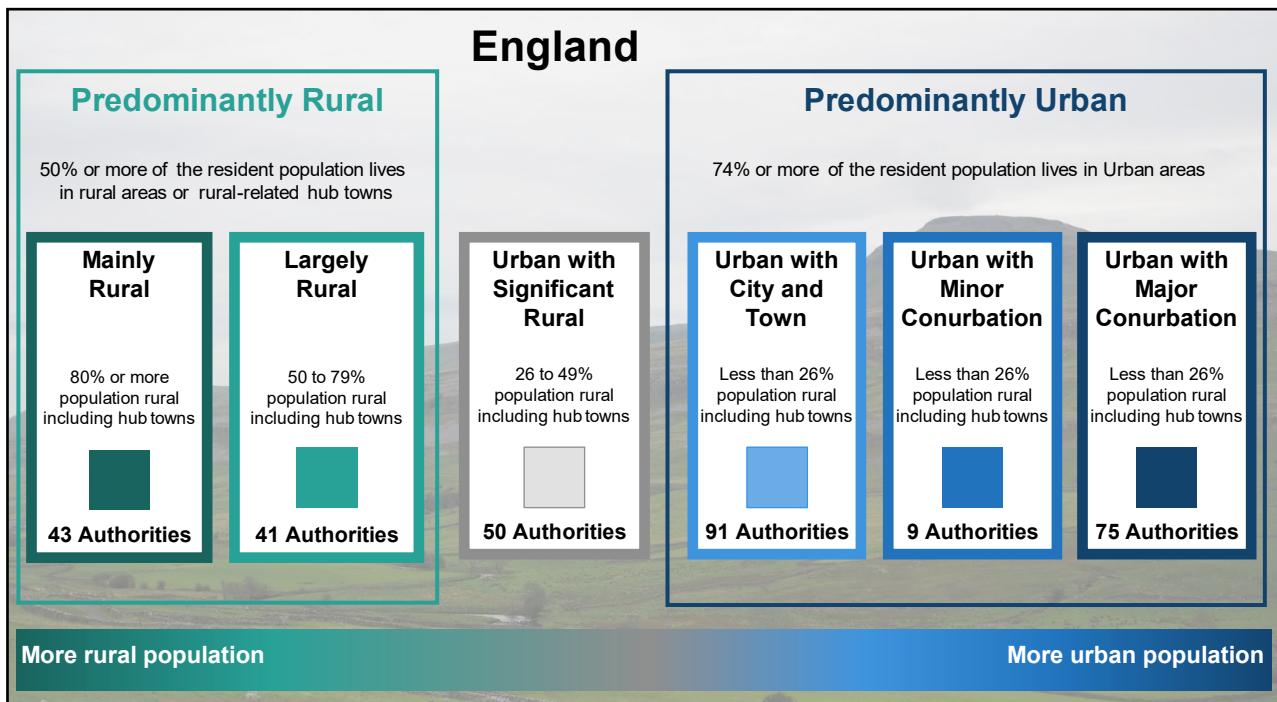


Figure X-3: Map of the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Local Authority Districts and Unitary Authorities in England



Under the classification, which is shown in Figure X-4, each Local Authority is assigned to one of six categories on the basis of the percentage of the total resident population accounted for by the combined Rural and Hub Town components of its population and its 'conurbation context'. The Local Authority Classification categories are frequently aggregated to 'Predominantly Rural', 'Urban with Significant Rural' and 'Predominantly Urban' as shown on Figure X-4.

Figure X-4: 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Local Authority Districts and Unitary Authorities in England



It should be noted that the Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification is based on populations and settlement patterns, not on how much countryside there is. Authorities classified as Urban may have wide areas of countryside and may have sizeable Rural populations. The classification has been made according to the proportions of the population residing in Urban settlements and outside Urban settlements. More information on the classifications can be found at: [The Rural-Urban Definition](#).

Defining Rural areas explanatory notes

- **Note 1:** Defining Super Output Areas and Wards

Census Output Areas (OAs) were created for publication of the results of the recent Censuses. They cover around 125 households. In practice few datasets are produced at OA level. However, other larger geographies can be built up from OAs. These include *Lower Layer Super Output Areas* (LSOAs) which typically contain 5 OAs, so contain approximately 625 households or a population of approximately 1,500 and a minimum 1,000. Their Rural-Urban Classification is based on the majority category of OAs they contain. Some other geographies, for example postcodes are classified based on the location of their central point and the classification of respective OA.

- **Note 2:** Accessibility of Figure X-2

We accept that this map might not be accessible for all users, but it is difficult to develop a map containing six colours that will provide enough contrast between all colours to enable every user to see them, especially when the shaded areas are small. Separate maps (showing only three levels of shading) for Rural and Urban areas are available on request from: rural.statistics@defra.gov.uk