



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Statistical Digest of Rural England:

2 - Housing

December 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.

In December 2024, the “Housing stock: additions to affordable housing”, “Housing costs: purchases and rentals”, “House purchase affordability” and “Second and empty homes” sections were refreshed with new and more detailed analysis.

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	Apr 2023	Nov 2023	Feb 2024	Jul 2024	Dec 2024
Housing stock: age and type	New	✗	✗	✗	✗
Housing stock: additions and affordable housing	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Housing costs: purchases and rentals	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
House purchase affordability	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Second and empty homes	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Homelessness	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Land use change for housing		New	✗	✗	✗
Housing quality				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 delivery for residential purposes, including affordable housing (Section B)
- costs for buying or renting a property (Section C)
- house purchase affordability (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)
- housing quality (Section H)

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 and affordable housing - key findings

Delivery of affordable housing on rural exception sites has decreased from 760 new homes in 2015/16 to 440 new homes in 2022/23 in Rural areas

There were 3,300 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 within Predominantly Rural Local Authorities in 2022/23

Twice as many homes were delivered via section 106 agreements in Rural areas in 2022/23 as were delivered in 2015/16

Overall Mainly Rural Local Authorities were meeting 29% of the need for council housing in 2022/23

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

Overall Predominantly Urban Local Authorities were meeting 59% of the need for council housing in 2022/23

Housing costs: purchases and rentals - key findings

4 in 10 properties were detached in Rural areas, compared to 2 in 10 in Urban areas outside of London

There was little difference in the purchase price of detached properties between Rural and Urban areas outside of London

County Durham had the lowest property purchase prices in Rural areas

Average terraced properties sold in Rural areas were around £9,800 more expensive than in Urban areas outside of London

On average, properties in Predominantly Rural areas are around 10% cheaper to rent compared to Predominantly Urban areas outside of London

Properties were slightly cheaper to rent in Rural areas than in Urban areas

A flat/maisonette in London is typically more expensive to rent or buy compared to detached properties elsewhere in England

House purchase affordability - key findings

There was little difference in affordability of house purchases between Rural and Urban areas outside of London

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

Detached properties typically cost 14 times earnings in both Rural and Urban areas

Terraced properties typically cost at least 7 times earnings in both Rural and Urban areas

Burnley was the most affordable area outside of London for both average buyers and first-time buyers/low earners

County Durham was the most affordable Rural area for both average buyers and first-time buyers/low earners

Waverley and St Albans were the least affordable areas outside of London for both average buyers and first-time buyers/low earners

Second and empty homes - key findings

There are twice as many dwellings classed as second homes in Predominantly Rural areas (1.8%) than in Predominantly Urban areas (0.9%).

In Predominantly Rural areas, the greatest percentage of dwellings classed as second homes are in the lowest Council Tax Band A or the grouped band of E to H (both 2.1%)

For Predominantly Rural areas with a coastal boundary or with at least one fifth of their area in a National Park, the percentage of dwellings that are second homes rises to 27 in every thousand (2.7%).

Around 2% of homes are classed as empty dwellings in both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas.

In Predominantly Rural areas, more than 1 in 3 of all empty homes are in the lowest council tax band.

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

Housing quality - key findings

1 in 5 rural homes fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard

The proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard halved over the period 2008 to 2021

The more rural the area the lower the proportion of homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard

It is more likely that rural homes provide insufficient thermal comfort for occupants than urban homes

More than one in ten rural homes fail to meet minimum standard set under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System

4 in every 100 rural homes are prone to damp compared to 6 in every 100 urban homes

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.

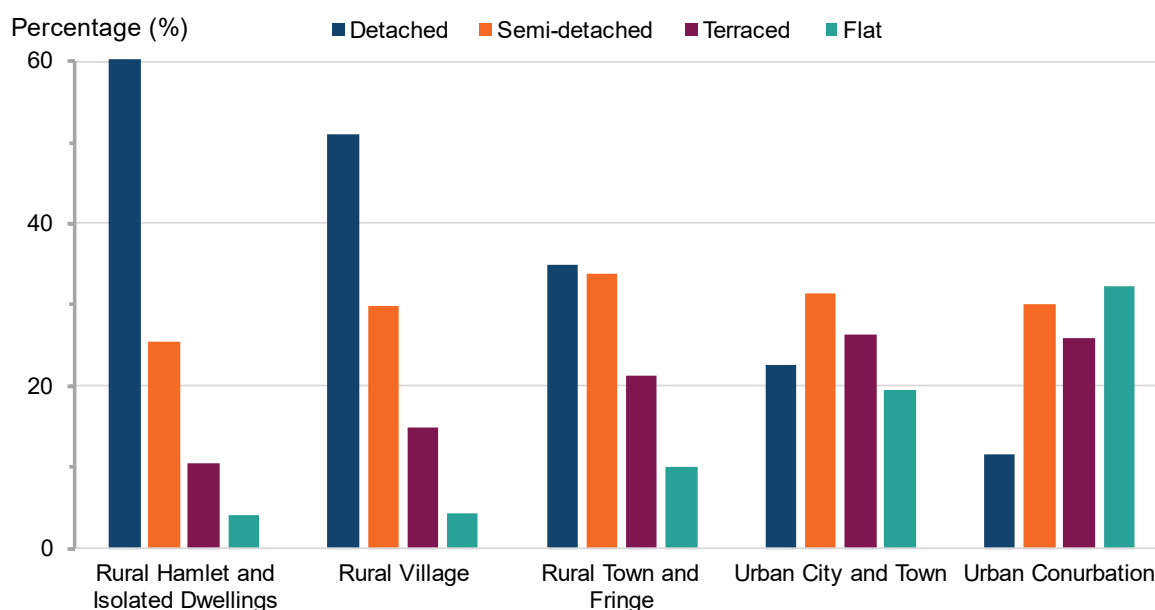
Table A-1: Number (millions) and proportion (%) of residential properties, by housing type, Census 2011

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.



The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) is a national survey commissioned by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) that has been conducted since 1967. It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition 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.

The EHS does not provide results for the Rural-Urban Classification definitions used elsewhere within this document. As explained in English Housing Survey Surveyors' handbook, the surveyor decides whether the area is either urban or rural based on the immediate area surrounding the dwelling. 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. The specific names associated with these 6 codes are: 1 Commercial City/Town Centre; 2 Urban; 3 Suburban residential; 4 Rural residential; 5 Village centre; and 6 Rural. A description of these 6 categories is included in Note A-4.

This EHS rural and urban classification system is strongly reliant on the perception of the surveyor conducting each dwelling survey. The Official Statistics Rural Urban classification has a precise definition linked to population (see Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas for details on this definition) and leaves no room for interpretation. Whereas this looser EHS definition has the potential, in certain circumstances, to result in different classifications with different surveyors.

Housing stock by type in 2020

The Digest uses data from the [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) to assess the diversity of the housing stock by type in 2020. 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.

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).

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.

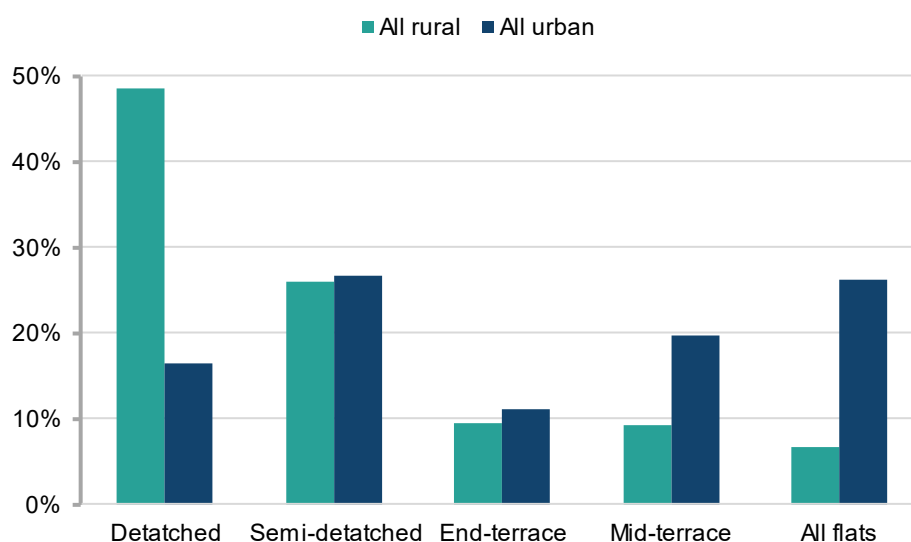


Table A-2: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

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

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).

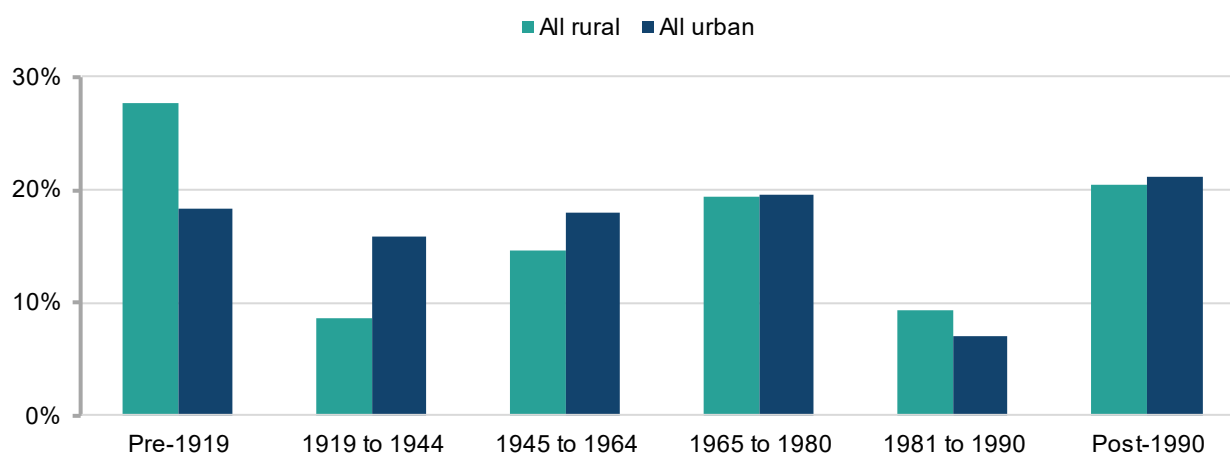
Figure A-3 also shows that there is a greater proportion of urban properties (16%) dating from the period 1919-1945 than rural properties (9%). There is a similar proportion of residential properties originating from the periods 1965 to 1980 and post-1990 in both rural and urban areas but there is a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

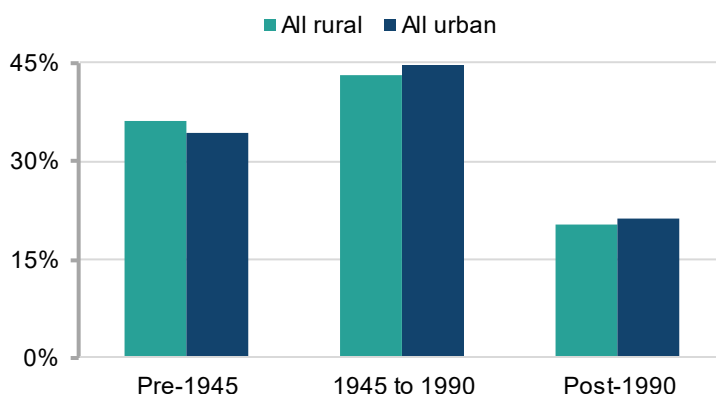
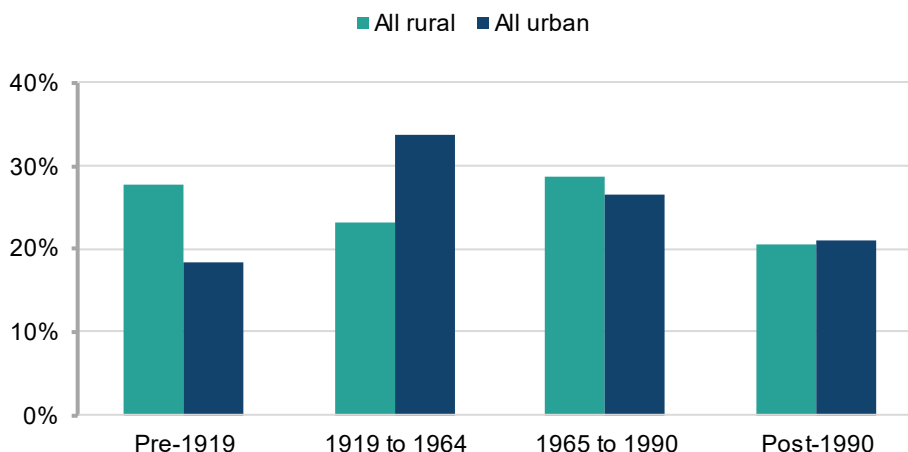


Figure A-5: Percentage of residential properties, by 4-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

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 and affordable housing

There were 13 more new homes completed per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas, with 3 in every 4 new homes completed by private enterprise; affordable housing accounts for 29% of new homes in Predominantly Rural areas.

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.

As of 2023, there were more than 5.8 million dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas and nearly 12.4 million dwellings in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London. The total dwelling stock increased by 9% in Mainly Rural areas, and 8% in Largely Rural areas, between 2016 and 2023. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the total dwelling stock increased by around 6% between 2016 and 2023.

In Predominantly Rural Local Authorities overall, there were 50,390 new dwellings completed in 2023/24; 74% of these (37,520) were via Private Enterprise, and 25% (12,690) were via Housing Associations. Less than 1% (190) of new dwellings completed were via a Local Authority provider in 2023/24. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were 65,560 new dwellings completed; 77% of these were via Private Enterprise, 21% were via Housing Associations, and 1% were completed via a Local Authority provider.

In 2022/23, there were 92,400 households on council housing waiting lists in Mainly Rural areas. Mainly Rural Local Authorities owned 38,660 dwellings in 2022/23; assuming these were occupied, Local Authorities were meeting 29% of the need for council housing in Mainly Rural areas. In comparison, Local Authorities in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London were meeting 59% of the council housing need in 2022/23 (918,100 dwellings, presumably occupied, compared with 637,650 households on the waiting list). The number of households on the waiting list in Predominantly Rural areas had an overall increase of 7% between 2015/16 and 2022/23; however, more recently, the size of the waiting list increased by 20% between 2019/20 and 2022/23.

In 2022/23, there were 6,690 affordable homes delivered in Mainly Rural areas; this was 2.1 times higher than in 2015/16 (3,120). In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were more than 3 times as many affordable homes delivered as in Mainly Rural areas (22,660); there were around 1.6 times more homes delivered in 2022/23 than in 2015/16 (14,130) in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London.

Background information

Prior to December 2024, this publication analysed housing stock additions under the following four sub-headings: (1) Housing starts and completions; (2) Net additions to housing stock; (3) Additions to affordable housing stock; and (4) Residential housing transactions. We have adapted this publication following discussions with users; a summary of the changes are as follows:

- (1) **Housing starts and completions:** this publication previously analysed permanent dwelling starts and completions per 1,000 households, by broad Rural-Urban Classification and provider, between 2004/05 to 2020/21. This has been replaced with the [Housebuilding completions](#) subsection. The commentary now only focuses on the number of dwellings completed by provider in the latest year available (2023/24).
- (2) **Net additions to housing stock:** this publication previously included information on the net additions arising from newly built dwellings, conversions, or change of use. This data has been removed to make space for new analysis, but may return in future editions of the Digest if there is a sufficient demand for the data.
- (3) **Additions to affordable housing stock:** this publication previously included additions to affordable housing stock per 1,000 households, by broad Rural-Urban Classification, between 2017/18 and 2021/22. This has been replaced with the [Affordable housing delivery](#) subsection. The commentary now focuses on the total number of affordable homes delivered, affordable homes delivered per 1,000 households, and the proportion of new homes delivered that were affordable. We have also introduced an index of change chart to indicate how the number of affordable homes delivered per year has changed over time.

There is further information on:

- the proportion of affordable homes delivered by tenure,
- the number of affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000,
- the number of affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites,
- the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England / Greater London Authority funding (including an index of change chart),
- and the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements (including an index of change chart).

- (4) **Residential housing transactions:** this publication previously included information on the number of property sales per 1,000 households. This information now features within [Section C - Housing costs: purchases and rentals](#). The aim of the relocation was to keep more relevant statistics grouped together.

On top of developing the existing analysis, two new sections have been introduced:

Total dwelling stock: this subsection shows the index of change in the total number of dwellings, which helps to provide context for the additions statistics.

Council housing: this subsection relates to the [Affordable housing delivery](#) subsection. It details the number of dwellings owned by Local Authorities for council housing, as well as statistics regarding the number of households on council housing waiting lists.

Total dwelling stock

The size and increase in the dwelling stock is an important means of considering housing provision and need.

As of 2023, there were 5,844,200 dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas. Table B-1 gives the total number of dwellings by Rural-Urban Classification in 2023. A full time series since 2016 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#)

Table B-1: Total dwelling stock, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

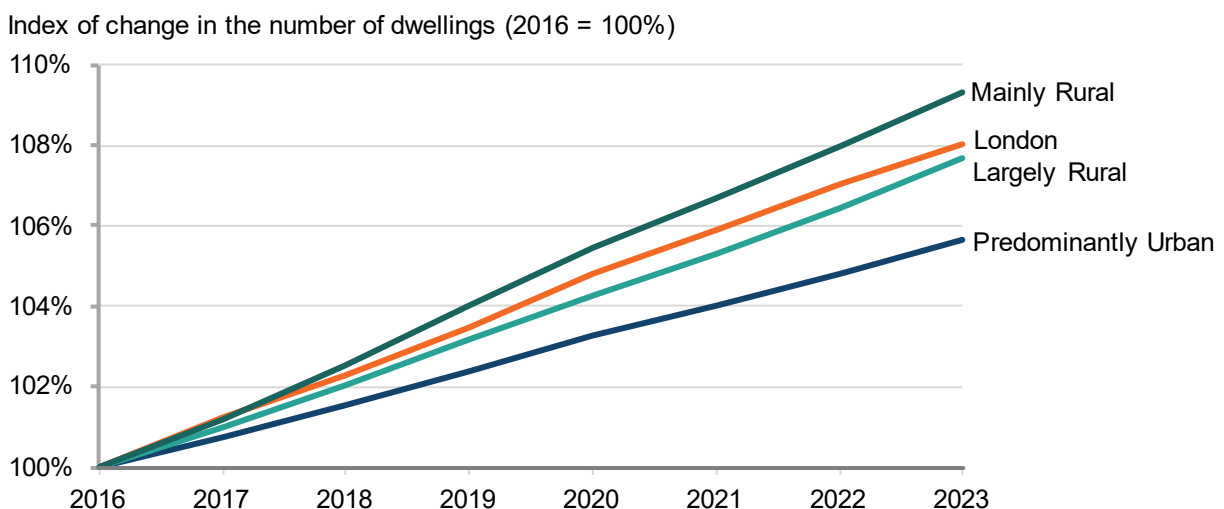
Values have been rounded to the nearest 1,000 dwellings. Predominantly Urban excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Total number of dwellings
Mainly Rural	1,819,000
Largely Rural	4,025,000
Urban with Significant Rural	3,374,000
Predominantly Urban	12,388,000
London	3,790,000
England	25,396,000

The line chart in Figure B-1 provides the index of change in the number of dwellings between 2016 and 2023. In this index of change chart, the number of dwellings in each given year has been divided by the number of dwellings in 2016; this allows the calculation of percentage changes.

Figure B-1: Line chart showing the index (2016 = 100%) of change in the number of dwellings between 2016 and 2023, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Predominantly Urban excludes London.



With index charts, it is possible to calculate percentage change by subtracting 100% from each value; for example, an index of 104% means there has been a 4% increase since 2016.

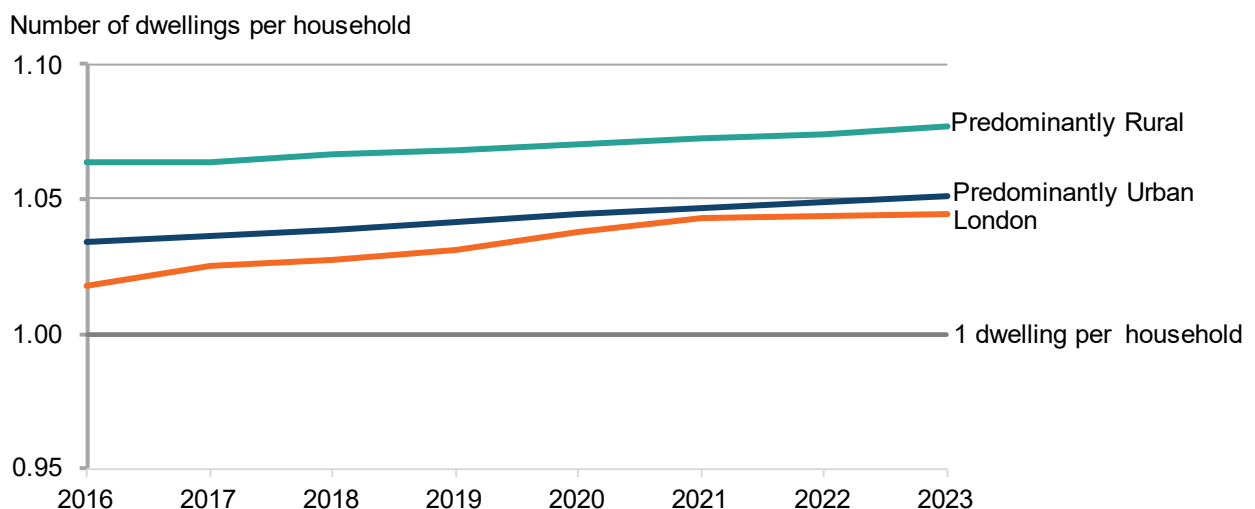
The index of change chart in Figure B-1 can be described as follows:

- The size of the dwelling stock increased faster in Rural areas (Mainly Rural and Largely Rural) than in Predominantly Urban areas between 2016 and 2023.
- In Mainly Rural areas, the number of dwellings in 2023 was 109% of the total in 2016; this means that the total dwelling stock in Mainly Rural areas had increased by 9% between 2016 and 2023. This was the greatest proportional increase of all settlement types. In absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 1,664,000 to 1,819,000 between 2016 and 2023.
- In Largely Rural areas, the number of dwellings in 2023 was just under 108% of that in 2016, meaning that the total dwelling stock had increased by around 8%. In absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 3,739,000 to 4,025,000 between 2016 and 2023.
- The percentage increase in the number of dwellings in London was similar to that of Largely Rural areas (8%). However, in absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 3,509,000 to 3,790,000 between 2016 and 2023.
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the number of dwellings in 2023 was just under 106% of that in 2016, meaning that the total dwelling stock had increased by around 6%. This was the smallest proportional increase of all settlement types. In absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 11,728,000 to 12,388,000 between 2016 and 2023.

It is possible to create a ratio of dwellings to households using the total dwelling stock data. A ratio of 1.00 would indicate that there were exactly the number of dwellings needed to house every household in a given area. Ratios substantially higher than 1.00 indicate the presence of second and empty homes. However, it should be noted that the availability of dwellings will affect the formation of separate households – household formation is not independent of dwelling stock. The line chart in Figure B-2 shows the number of dwellings per household between 2016 and 2023.

Figure B-2: Line chart showing the number of dwellings per household, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2016 to 2023

The ratio of 1.00 (i.e., 1 dwelling per household) has been indicated on the chart. Predominantly Urban excludes London.



The line chart in Figure B-2 can be described as follows:

- Predominantly Rural areas have consistently had the highest number of dwellings per household of all settlement types between 2016 and 2023, whilst London consistently had the lowest number of dwellings per household.
- In Predominantly Rural areas, there were 1.07 dwellings per household in 2016. This steadily increased to 1.09 dwellings per household in 2023. This indicates that the housing stock in Predominantly Rural areas grew faster than the population (naturally or due to migration) between 2016 and 2023.
- Between 2016 and 2023, the number of dwellings per household increased gradually in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, from 1.04 to 1.06 dwellings per household. These increases were similar to those seen in London, where the number of dwellings per household increased from 1.03 to 1.05 between 2016 and 2023.

Table B-2 shows the Local Authorities with the highest number of dwellings per household by settlement type in 2023. These figures highlight areas where there may be particularly high proportions of second and empty homes.

Table B-2: Local Authorities with the highest number of dwellings per household, by Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2023

Predominantly Urban excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Local Authority	Dwellings per household
Mainly Rural	Isles of Scilly	1.58
Largely Rural	East Riding of Yorkshire	1.16
Predominantly Urban	Cambridge	1.32
London	City of London	1.79
England	City of London	1.79

In Mainly Rural areas, the highest ratio of dwellings to households was seen in the “Isles of Scilly”; here, there were 1.58 dwellings per household in 2023. However, this was likely an effect of the small number of households within this Authority. In Largely Rural areas, the highest ratio was seen in “East Riding of Yorkshire”, where there were 1.16 dwellings per household. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, “Cambridge” has the highest ratio, with 1.32 dwellings per household. “City of London” had the highest ratio in London, with 1.79 dwellings per household in 2023. This was also the highest overall in England.

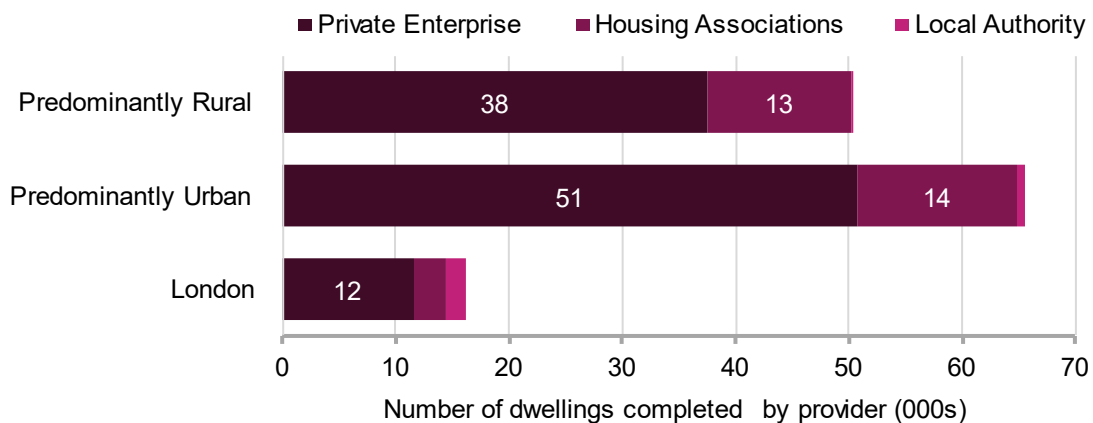
Housebuilding completions

The increases to the size of the dwelling stock can be attributed to building new dwellings, or converting existing dwellings.

The stacked bar chart in Figure B-3 shows the absolute number of new dwellings completed by provider and settlement type in 2023/24.

Figure B-3: Bar chart showing the number of dwellings completed by provider and Local broad Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2023/24 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Values are given in thousands (000s). Predominantly Urban excludes London. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars.



The bar chart in Figure B-3 can be summarised as follows:

- In Predominantly Rural Local Authorities overall, there were 50,390 new dwellings completed in 2023/24; 74% of these (37,520) were via Private Enterprise, and 25% (12,690) were via Housing Associations. Less than 1% (190) of new dwellings completed were via a Local Authority provider in 2023/24.
 - In Mainly Rural areas, there were 17,640 new dwellings completed in 2023/24; 75% of these (13,260) were via Private Enterprise, and the remaining 25% (4,380) were via Housing Associations. There were no dwellings completed via a Local Authority providers in 2023/24; this was the only settlement type not to have any completions via a Local Authority provider in 2023/24.
 - In Largely Rural areas, there were 32,750 new dwellings completed in 2023/24; 74% (24,260) of these were via Private Enterprise, and 25% (8,310) were via Housing Associations. 1% (190) of new dwellings were completed via a Local Authority provider.
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were 65,560 new dwellings completed in 2023/24. 77% (50,780) of these were via Private Enterprise; this was the highest proportion of all settlement types. 21% (14,040) were via Housing Associations, and 1% (750) of new dwellings were completed via a Local Authority provider.
- In London, there were 16,180 new dwellings completed in 2023/24. 71% (11,550) of these were via Private Enterprise; this was the lowest proportion of all settlement types. 17% (2,810) were via Housing Associations. 12% (1,870) of new dwellings were completed via a Local Authority provider; this was the highest proportion of all settlement types.

Council housing

Local Authority owned housing (or council housing) is used to help people with a priority need for housing; they must meet the eligibility criteria to join the [housing register](#). The criteria can differ between Local Authorities.

As of 2022/23, there were 142,980 dwellings owned by Predominantly Rural Local Authorities. Table B-3 shows the number of dwellings owned by the Local Authority (i.e., council houses), by Rural-Urban Classification, in 2022/23. A full time series since 2015/16 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table B-3: Number of council dwellings, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Predominantly Urban excludes London.

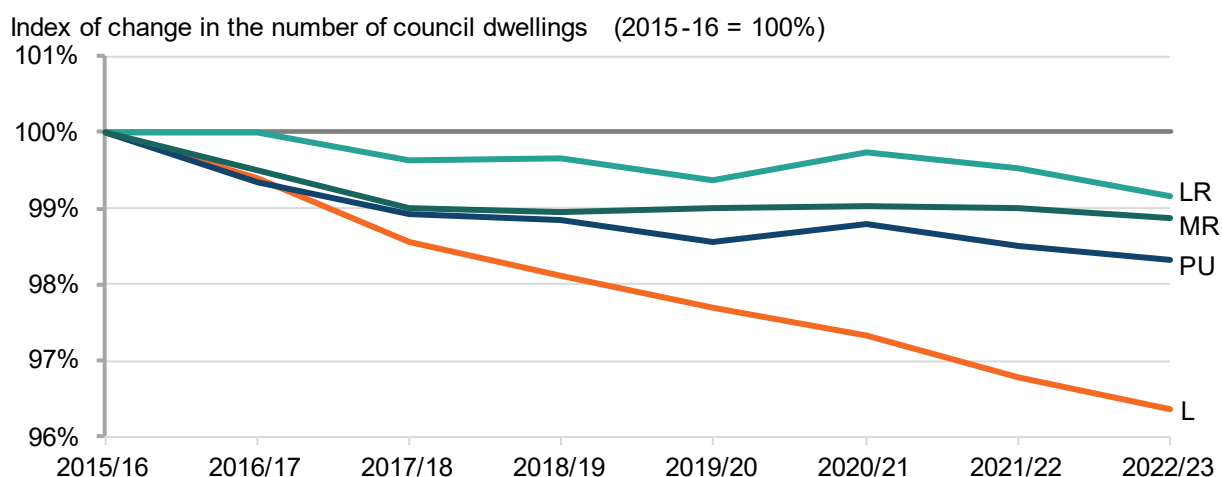
Rural-Urban Classification	Number of council houses
Mainly Rural	38,660
Largely Rural	104,320
Urban with Significant Rural	113,260
Predominantly Urban	918,100
London	388,860
England	1,563,200

In 2022/23, there were 38,660 council dwellings in Mainly Rural areas, which accounts for 2% of the total dwelling stock; this is 10 times fewer than in London (388,860; 10% of total dwelling stock). In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were nearly 24 times more council dwellings in Mainly Rural areas (918,100; 7% of total dwelling stock).

The line chart in Figure B-4 provides the index of change in the number of council dwellings between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

Figure B-4: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 100%) of change in the number of council dwellings between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London; “L” = London.



In this index of change chart, the number of council dwellings in each given year has been divided by the number of council dwellings in 2015/16; this allows the calculation of percentage changes. With index charts, it is possible to calculate percentage change by subtracting 100% from each value; for example, an index of 98% means there has been a 2% decrease since 2015/16.

The index of change chart in Figure B-4 can be described as follows:

- There were fewer council dwellings in 2022/23 than in 2015/16 for all settlement types; the greatest reduction in the number of council houses was in London.
- In Mainly Rural areas, there was little change (1%) in the number of council dwellings between 2015/16 (39,100) and 2022/23 (38,700).
- In Largely Rural areas, there was little change (just under 1%) in the number of council dwellings between 2015/16 (105,200) and 2022/23 (104,300).
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the number of council dwellings in 2022/23 was just over 98% of the total in 2015/16, meaning that council dwelling stock had decreased by nearly 2%. In absolute terms, the council dwelling stock decreased from 952,700 to 918,100 between 2015/16 and 2022/23.
- In London, the number of council dwellings in 2022/23 was around 96% of the total in 2015/16, meaning that the dwelling stock had decreased by nearly 4%; this was the largest proportional decrease of all settlement types. In absolute terms, the council dwelling stock decreased from 397,900 to 388,900 between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

As the number of dwellings owned by Local Authorities has decreased, the number of households on council housing waiting lists has increased. As of 2022/23, there were 205,750 households on the waiting list for council housing in Predominantly Rural Local Authorities. Table B-4 gives the number of households on the waiting list for Local Authority housing by Rural-Urban Classification in 2022/23. A full time series since 2015/16 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table B-4: Number of households on waiting lists for council housing, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Predominantly Urban excludes London.

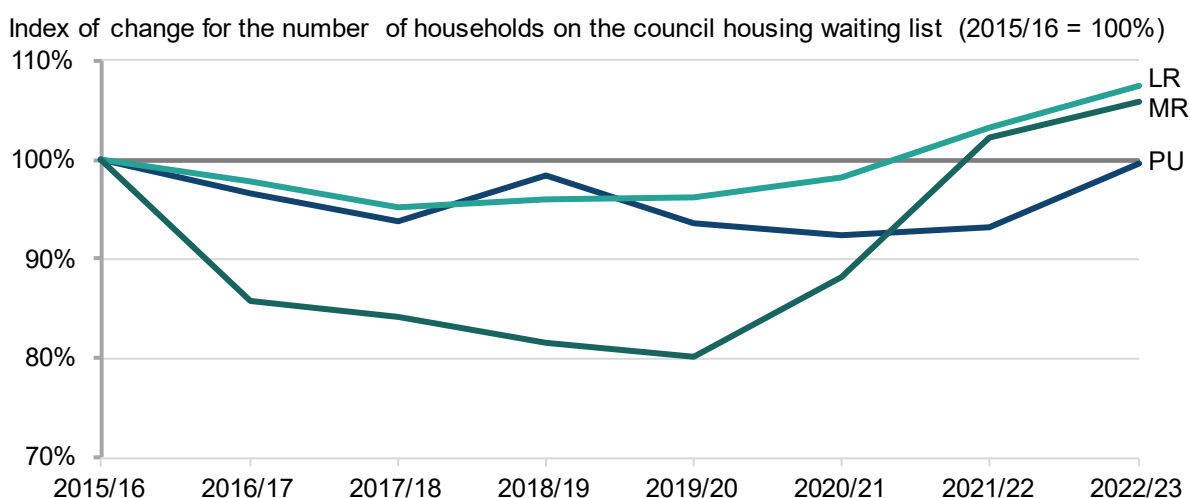
Rural-Urban Classification	Number of households on council housing waiting lists
Mainly Rural	92,400
Largely Rural	113,350
Urban with Significant Rural	115,990
Predominantly Urban	637,650
London	323,640
England	1,283,020

In 2022/23, there were 92,400 households on council housing waiting lists in Mainly Rural areas. Given that Mainly Rural Local Authorities owned 38,660 dwellings in 2022/23, this means that Local Authorities were meeting 29% of the need for council housing in Mainly Rural areas. In comparison, Local Authorities in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London were meeting 59% of the council housing need in 2022/23 (918,100 dwellings, presumably occupied, vs 637,650 households on the waiting list).

Waiting lists for council housing has grown in recent years. The line chart in Figure B-5 provides the index of change in the number of households on council housing waiting lists between 2015/16 and 2022/23. In this index of change chart, the number of households on waiting lists in each given year has been divided by the number of households on waiting lists in 2015/16; this allows the calculation of percentage changes.

Figure B-5: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 100%) of change in the number of households on council housing waiting lists between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London. London has not been included the chart due to the different magnitude of change.



With index charts, it is possible to calculate percentage change by subtracting 100% from each value; for example, an index of 104% means there has been a 4% increase since 2015/16.

The index of change chart in Figure B-5 can be described as follows:

- Since 2021/22, council housing waiting lists grew most significantly in Mainly Rural areas, and least significantly in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London.
- In Predominantly Rural areas, the number of households on council housing waiting lists in 2022/23 was 107% of the total in 2015/16; this means that the number of households on the waiting list in Predominantly Rural areas had increased by 7% between 2015/16 and 2022/23 (from 192,630 to 205,750 households). More recently, the number of households on the waiting list in Predominantly Rural areas increased by 20% between 2019/20 and 2022/23 (from 171,170 to 205,750 households).
 - In Mainly Rural areas, the number of households on council housing waiting lists in 2022/23 was 106% of the total in 2015/16, meaning that the waiting list had increased by 6% (from 87,240 to 92,400 households). More recently, the number of households on the waiting list in Mainly Rural areas increased by 32% between 2019/20 and 2022/23 (from 69,840 to 92,400 households). This increase followed a shrinkage in the waiting list between 2015/16 and 2019/20.
 - In Largely Rural areas, the number of households on council housing waiting lists in 2022/23 was 108% of the total in 2015/16, meaning that the waiting list had increased by 8% (from 105,390 to 113,350 households). More recently, the number of households on

the waiting list in Largely Rural areas increased by 12% between 2019/20 and 2022/23 (from 101,720 to 113,350 households).

- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there was little overall change in the number of households on council housing waiting lists between 2015/16 (639,780) and 2022/23 (637,650). However, in 2020/21, the waiting list was at its lowest in Predominantly Urban areas, with 590,920 households.
- In London, the number of households on council housing waiting lists in 2022/23 was 142% of the total in 2015/16, meaning that the waiting list grew by 42% (from 227,550 to 323,640).

Affordable housing delivery

As [defined](#) by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), affordable housing represents housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).

All affordable housing

Table B-5 shows the number of affordable homes delivered, by Rural-Urban Classification, in 2022/23. A full time series since 2015/16 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

There were 15,810 affordable homes delivered in Predominantly Rural areas in 2022/23; this is equivalent to 2.9 homes per 1,000 households, or 29% of completions of new dwellings. Whilst there were 22,660 affordable homes delivered in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London in 2022/23, there were fewer delivered per household compared to Predominantly Rural areas (1.9 homes per 1,000 households). However, of all completions of new dwellings, a larger proportion were affordable in Predominantly Urban areas (34%) than in Predominantly Rural areas.

Table B-5: Number of affordable homes delivered, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Predominantly Urban excludes London.

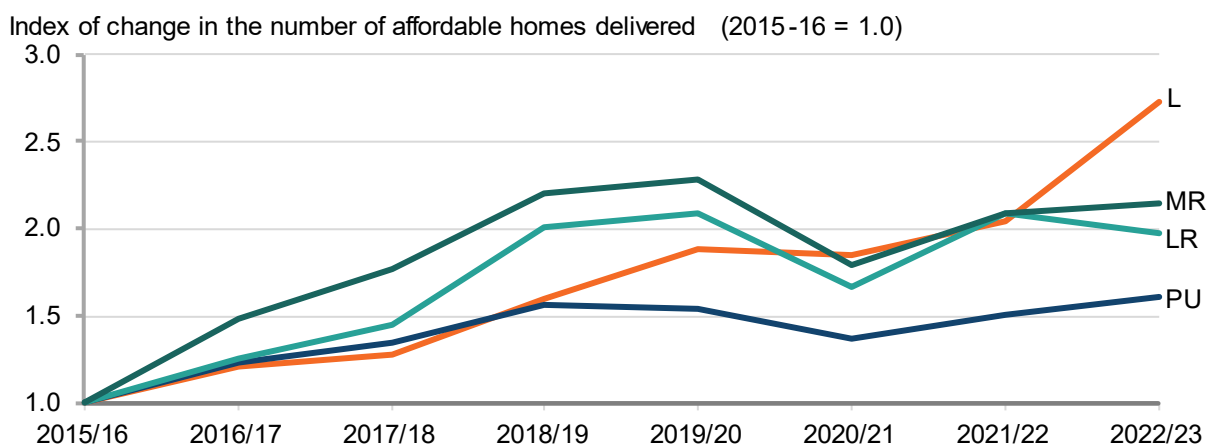
Rural-Urban Classification	Number of affordable homes delivered	Affordable homes delivered per 1,000 households	Proportion of completions of new dwellings that were affordable
Predominantly Rural	15,810	2.94	29%
Urban with Significant Rural	9,670	3.05	32%
Predominantly Urban	22,660	1.93	34%
London	15,770	4.38	75%
England	63,910	2.68	37%

Please note: the proportion of completions of new dwellings that were affordable, quoted in Table B-5, differ from those [published by the MHCLG](#). This is because this publication has focused on newly built dwellings, whereas their findings include all additions (i.e., including acquisitions).

The line chart in Figure B-6 provides the index of change in the number of affordable homes delivered between 2015/16 and 2022/23. In this index of change chart, the number of affordable homes completed in each given year has been divided by the number of affordable homes completed in 2015/16; this allows the calculation of percentage changes.

Figure B-6: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 1.0) of change in the number of affordable homes delivered between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London; “L” = London.



The index of change chart in Figure B-6 can be described as follows:

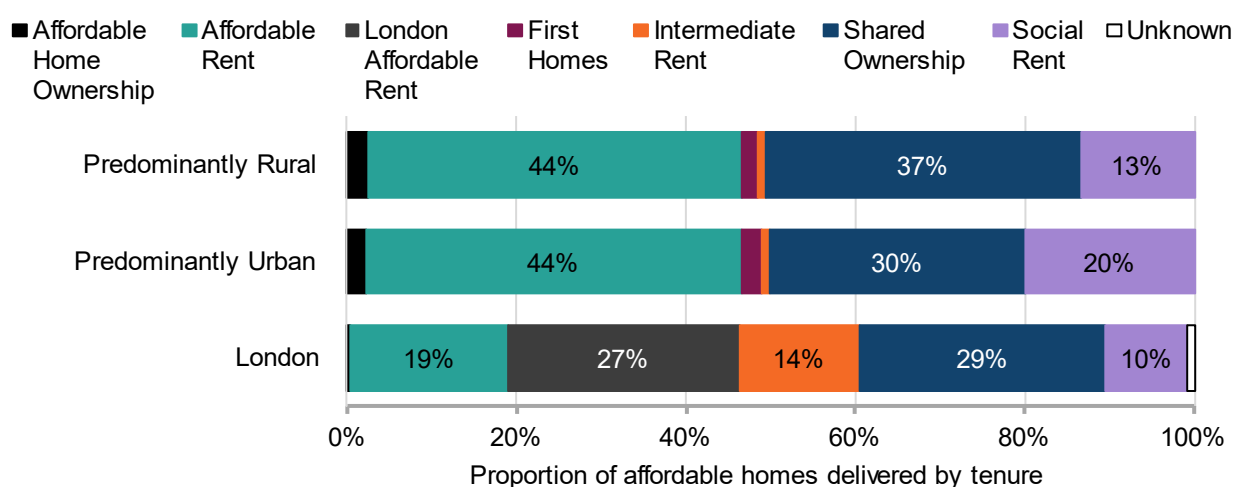
- Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, Mainly and Largely Rural areas generally saw the greatest proportional increases to the affordable housing stock compared to other settlement types. However, this decreased to a lower rate of delivery in 2020/21 for both areas (potentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic), and again in 2022/23 for Largely Rural areas.
- In Mainly Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (6,690) was 2.1 times higher than in 2015/16 (3,120). The greatest increase was in 2019/20 (7,130), where there were 2.3 times more affordable homes delivered than in 2015/16.
- In Largely Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (9,130) was 2.0 times higher than in 2015/16 (4,620). The greatest increase was in 2019/20 and 2021/22 (9,650), where there were 2.1 times more affordable homes delivered than in 2015/16.
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (22,660) was 1.6 times higher than in 2015/16 (14,130). This was the greatest increase across the period.
- In London, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (15,770) was 2.7 times higher than in 2015/16 (5,790). This was the greatest increase across the period.

Affordable homes can be delivered in several different ways, including: (1) Affordable Home Ownership; (2) Affordable Rent; (3) London Affordable Rent; (4) First Homes; (5) Intermediate Rent; (6) Shared Ownership; or (7) Social Rent. Definitions for these tenures are given in Note B-5.

The 100% stacked bar chart in Figure B-7 shows the proportion of affordable homes delivered by tenure and Rural-Urban Classification in 2022/23. Outside of London, more than 4 in every 10 affordable homes were delivered for Affordable Rent – and more than 3 in every 10 affordable homes were delivered for Shared Ownership – in 2022/23.

Figure B-7: Bar chart showing the proportion of affordable homes delivered, by tenure and broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4, Note B-5)

Predominantly Urban excludes London. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. “London Affordable Rent” only applies to London and therefore does not feature in other stacks of bars. Proportions smaller than 5% have not been labelled on the chart.



The bar chart in Figure B-7 presents the proportion of affordable homes within each category; absolute values can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

The chart can be described as follows:

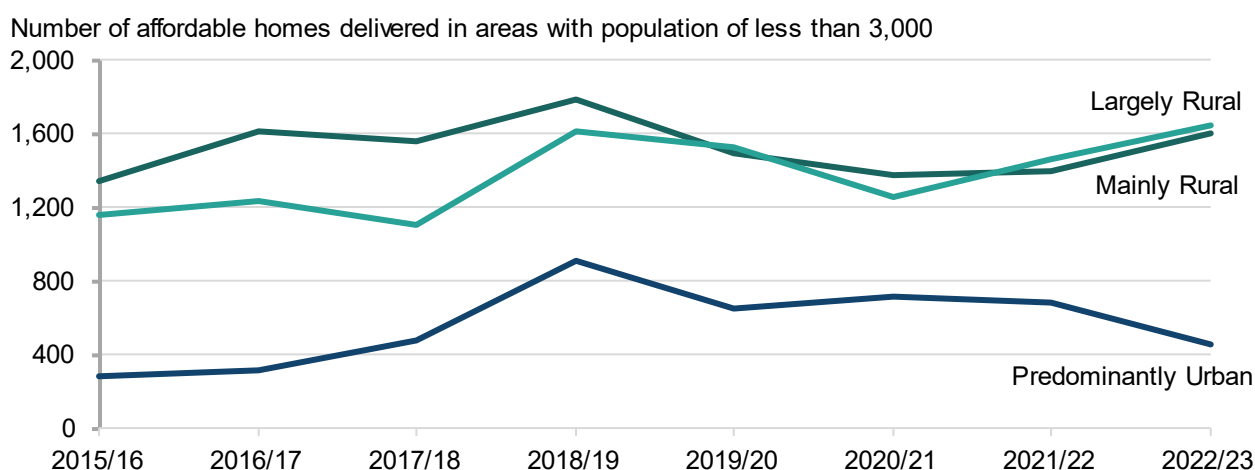
- In Predominantly Rural areas, the largest proportion of affordable homes delivered were for Affordable Rent (44%). This was followed by Shared Ownership (37%), and then Social Rent (13%). Few affordable homes were delivered for Affordable Home Ownership (2%), First Homes (2%), and Intermediate Rent (1%) in Predominantly Rural areas in 2022/23.
- In Predominantly Urban areas, the largest proportion of affordable homes delivered were for Affordable Rent (44%). This was followed by Shared Ownership (30%), and then Social Rent (20%). Few affordable homes were delivered for Affordable Home Ownership (2%), First Homes (3%), and Intermediate Rent (1%) in Predominantly Rural areas in 2022/23.
- In London, the largest proportion of affordable homes delivered were for Shared Ownership (29%). This was followed by London Affordable Rent (27%), and then Affordable Rent (19%). Smaller proportions of affordable homes were delivered for Intermediate Rent (14%) and Social Rent (10%). 1% of affordable homes delivered in London in 2022/23 had an unknown tenure. Less than 1% of affordable homes delivered were for Affordable Home Ownership. There were no First Homes delivered in London in 2022/23.

Areas with population less than 3,000

Within this section, populations of 3,000 or less are not defined according to a specific statistical geography, and are instead determined by the relevant Local Authority. The line chart in Figure B-8 shows the number of affordable homes delivered in areas with a population of less than 3,000, by Rural-Urban Classification, between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.

Figure B-8: Line chart showing the number of affordable homes delivered in areas with population of less than 3,000, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2015/16 to 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Predominantly Urban excludes London. London has not been included in the chart due to the low number of areas with populations of less than 3,000 that delivered affordable housing.



The line chart in Figure B-8 can be described as follows:

- The majority of affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 were in Predominantly Rural Local Authorities.
- In Predominantly Rural Local Authorities, there were 2,510 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 in 2015/16. Across the period 2015/16 to 2022/23, the greatest year for delivery was in 2018/19, where there were 3,410 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000. 2020/21 had the lowest delivery across the period (2,630 additional affordable homes). In 2022/23, there were 3,260 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 in Predominantly Rural Local Authorities.
 - In Mainly Rural Local Authorities, there were 1,340 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 in 2015/16. Across the period, the greatest year for delivery was in 2018/19, where there were 1,790 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000. 2020/21 had the lowest delivery across the period (1,370 additional affordable homes). In 2022/23, there were 1,610 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 within Mainly Rural Local Authorities.
 - In Largely Rural Local Authorities, there were 1,170 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 in 2015/16. Across the period, the greatest year for delivery was in 2018/19, where there were 1,610 affordable homes delivered in these areas. 2017/18 had the lowest delivery across the period (1,110 additional affordable homes). In 2022/23, there were 1,650 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 within Largely Rural Local Authorities.

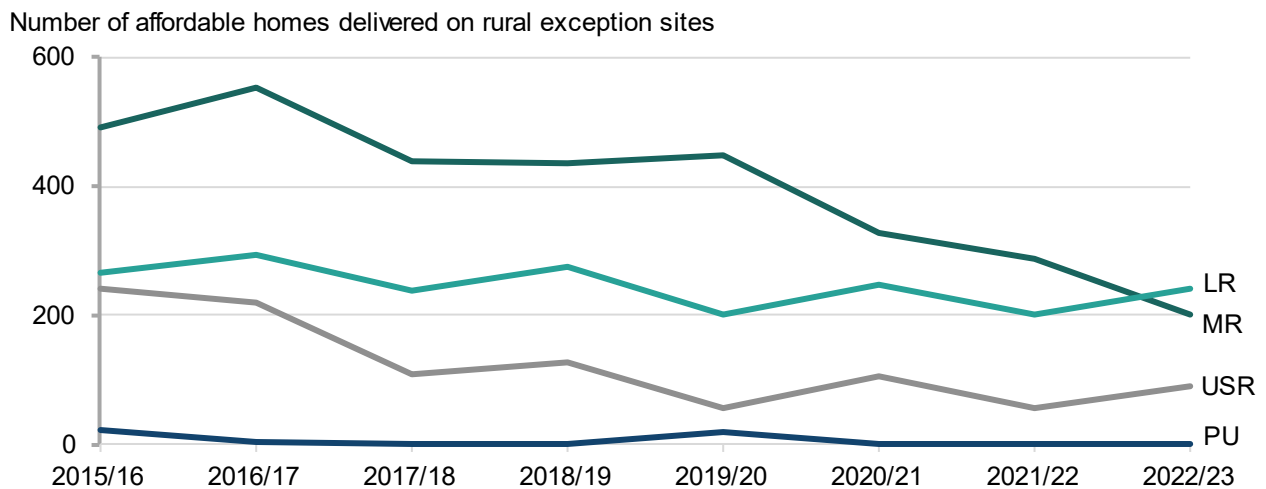
- In Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London, there were 290 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 in 2015/16; this was the lowest across the period. The greatest year for delivery was in 2018/19, where there were 910 affordable homes delivered in these areas. In 2022/23, there were 460 affordable homes delivered in areas with populations of less than 3,000 within Predominantly Urban Local Authorities.

Rural exception sites

A rural exception site is a small site on the edge of a rural settlement that is used to develop affordable housing for local residents. Predominantly Urban or Urban with Significant Rural Local Authorities can include rural areas and hence rural exception sites. The line chart in Figure B-9 shows the number of affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

Figure B-9: Line chart showing the number of affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2015/16 to 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “USR” = Urban with Significant Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London.



The line chart in Figure B-9 can be described as follows:

- There were more affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in Mainly Rural areas than in any other settlement type, however the rate of delivery has decreased over time.
- In Predominantly Rural Local Authorities overall, there were 760 affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in 2015/16. The greatest year for delivery across the period was in 2016/17, where there were 850 affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites. Since then, delivery has decreased; in 2022/23, there were 440 new affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in Predominantly Rural Local Authorities.
 - In Mainly Rural Local Authorities, there were 490 newly built affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in 2015/16. The greatest year for delivery across the period was in 2016/17, where there were 550 affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites. Since then, delivery has decreased. In 2022/23, there were 200 new affordable homes delivered

on rural exception sites in Mainly Rural Local Authorities; this is the lowest across the period.

- In Largely Rural Local Authorities, the delivery rate of newly built affordable homes on rural exception sites fluctuated between 200 to 300 homes between 2015/16 and 2022/23. In 2022/23, there were 240 new affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in Largely Rural Local Authorities.
- In Urban with Significant Rural Local Authorities, the delivery rate of newly built affordable homes on rural exception sites fluctuated over time, resulting in an overall decrease from 240 additional homes in 2015/16 to 90 additional homes in 2022/23.
- In Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London, there were very few affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites across the period; 2015/16 and 2019/20 were the only two years where there were more than 10 new affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites.

Homes England and the Greater London Authority

[Homes England](#) is responsible for delivery of affordable housing in England, except for in London, where it is the responsibility of the [Greater London Authority](#).

Table B-6 shows the number of affordable homes delivered via funding from Homes England (or, in the case of London, from the Greater London Authority) in 2022/23. A full time series since 2015/16 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table B-6: Number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England (HE) or Greater London Authority (GLA) funding, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Predominantly Urban excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of affordable homes delivered via HE/GLA funding
Mainly Rural	2,020
Largely Rural	3,030
Urban with Significant Rural	2,860
Predominantly Urban	11,810
London	6,600
England	26,310

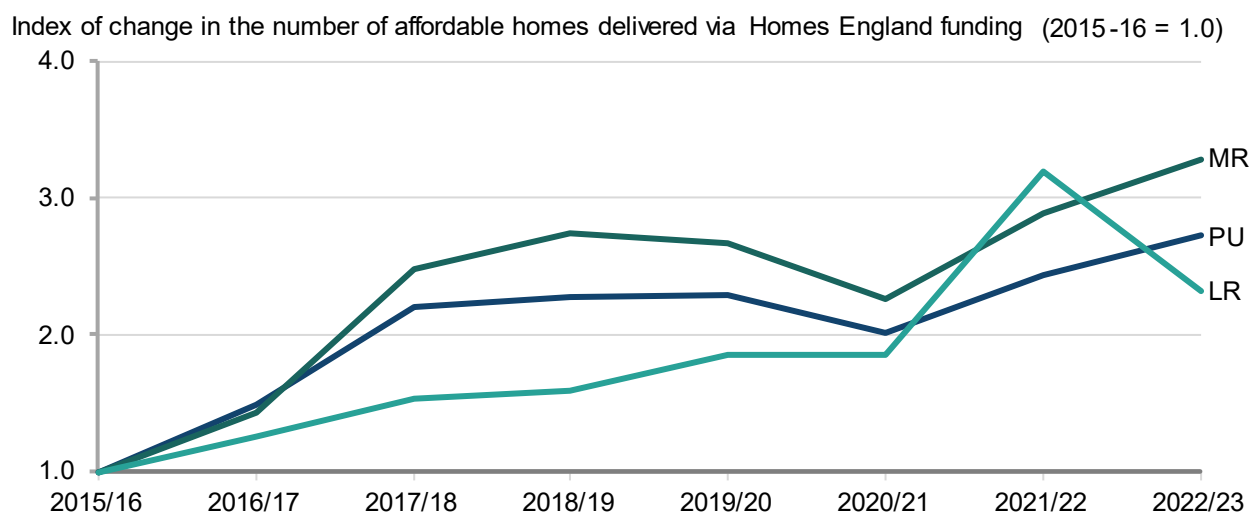
In 2022/23, there were 2,020 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in Mainly Rural Local Authorities. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were nearly 6 times more affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding than in Mainly Rural areas (11,810). In London, there were 6,600 affordable homes delivered via Greater London Authority funding in 2022/23.

The line chart in Figure B-10 provides the index of change in the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

In this index of change chart, the number of affordable homes delivered in each given year has been divided by the number of affordable homes delivered in 2015/16; this allows the calculation of percentage increases.

Figure B-10: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 1.0) of change in the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London. London is excluded from the chart as it is funded by the Greater London Authority.



The index of change chart in Figure B-10 can be described as follows:

- Generally, the greatest proportional increases were seen in Mainly Rural areas, whilst Largely Rural areas typically saw the smallest proportional increases to affordable housing. The exception to this was in 2021/22, where there were 3.2 times more affordable homes delivered in Largely Rural areas than in 2015/16 (4,180 and 1,310 additions, respectively).
- In Predominantly Rural areas overall, the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in 2022/23 (5,050) was 2.6 times higher than in 2015/16 (1,923).
 - In Mainly Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in 2022/23 (2,020) was 3.3 times higher than in 2015/16 (620). This was the greatest increase across the period.
 - In Largely Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in 2022/23 (3,030) was 2.3 times higher than in 2015/16 (1,310). The greatest increase across the period was in 2021/22 (4,180), where there were 3.2 times more affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding than in 2015/16.
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in 2022/23 (11,810) was 2.7 times higher than in 2015/16 (4,330). This was the greatest increase across the period.

Section 106 (S106) agreements

A Section 106 agreement is a legally binding contract entered into by a local planning authority and a property developer under [Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) under which the developer agrees to provide defined facilities, such as affordable housing, as part of the proposed development.

Table B-7 shows the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23. A full time series since 2015/16 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

In 2022/23, there were 4,270 affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in Mainly Rural Local Authorities. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, there were nearly double the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements than in Mainly Rural areas (7,230). Half of the affordable homes built in Urban areas via Section 106 agreements were in London in 2022/23 (7,280).

Table B-7: Number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)
Predominantly Urban excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements
Mainly Rural	4,270
Largely Rural	5,380
Urban with Significant Rural	6,090
Predominantly Urban	7,230
London	7,280
England	30,240

The line chart in Figure B-11 provides the index of change in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements between 2015/16 and 2022/23. In this index of change chart, the number of affordable homes delivered in each given year has been divided by the number of affordable homes delivered in 2015/16; this allows the calculation of percentage increases.

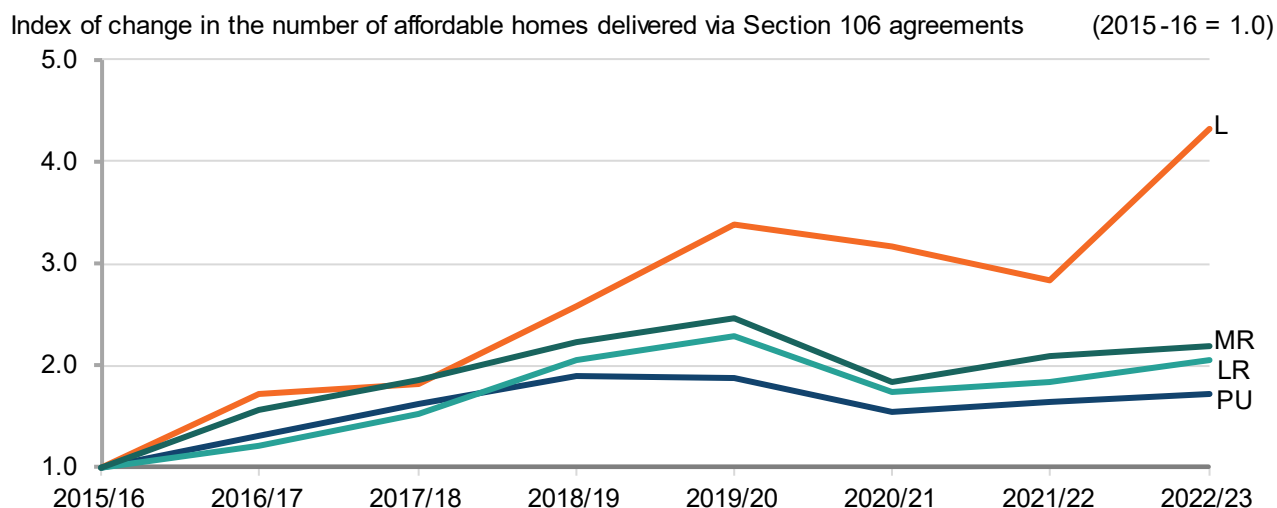
The line chart in Figure B-11 can be described as follows:

- The rate of delivery for affordable homes via Section 106 agreements has increased between 2015/16 and 2022/23 for all settlement types. Additionally, there were more affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas, although neither settlement type had as many additions as London; generally, the greatest proportional increases were seen in London, whilst either Largely Rural or Predominantly Urban areas typically saw the smallest proportional increases.
- In Predominantly Rural areas overall, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23 (9,650) was 2.1 times higher than in 2015/16 (4,580).
 - In Mainly Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23 (4,270) was 2.2 times higher than in 2015/16 (1,950). Across the period, the greatest increase was in 2019/20 (4,810), where there were 2.5 times more affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements than in 2015/16.

- In Largely Rural areas, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23 (5,380) was 2.0 times higher than in 2015/16 (2,630). Across the period, the greatest increase was in 2019/20 (6,020), where there were 2.3 times more affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements than in 2015/16.
- In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23 (7,230) was 1.7 times higher than in 2015/16 (4,210). Across the period, the greatest increase was in 2018/19 (8,020), where there were 1.9 times more affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements than in 2015/16.
- In London, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in 2022/23 (7,280) was 4.3 times higher than in 2015/16 (1,680); this was the greatest proportional increase across the period.

Figure B-11: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 1.0) of change in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Labels have been presented in short-hand on the chart: “MR” = Mainly Rural; “LR” = Largely Rural; “PU” = Predominantly Urban outside of London; “L” = London.



Housing stock: additions and affordable housing - explanatory notes

- **Note B-1**

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

- **Note B-2**

Values are rounded to the nearest 10 dwellings unless otherwise stated. Values presented for the latest year are provisional and subject to revision.

- **Note B-3**

Throughout this section, the broad and detailed Local Authority [Rural-Urban Classification](#) have been combined to show more detail for the Rural settlement types; instead of “Predominantly Rural”, some charts and tables instead break this down further into “Mainly Rural” and “Largely Rural”.

- **Note B-4**

Affordable housing is defined as Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following: (a) Affordable housing for rent; (b) Starter homes; (c) Discounted market sales housing; or (d) Other affordable routes to home ownership. Definitions for these terms can be found via [Housing statistics and English Housing Survey glossary - A to Z - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note B-5**

Affordable homes can be delivered via:

- **Affordable home ownership:** Affordable housing provided for sale. It includes relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent).
- **Affordable rent:** A form of social housing. Affordable rented homes are let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of up to 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- **London affordable rent:** London affordable rent is a tenure of affordable housing available in London by the Greater London Authority. The landlord of these homes must be registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.
- **First homes:** First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which: (a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value; (b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria; (c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and, (d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).
- **Intermediate rent:** Sub-market rent where the rent must not exceed 80% of the current market rate (inclusive of service charge). This can include schemes with specific eligibility criteria, the reduced rent is an opportunity for the tenant to save towards a house purchasing deposit.
- **Shared ownership:** An affordable housing scheme where the purchaser pays for an initial share of between 25% and 75% of the home's value with the option to increase their ownership if they later choose and can afford to do so. The registered provider owns the remaining share, and rent is paid on the landlord's share.
- **Social rent:** Affordable housing that is rented at social housing rents, usually owned and managed by local authorities and private registered providers, for which target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

Further information: [Housing statistics and English Housing Survey glossary - A to Z - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note B-6**

Total dwelling stock source: [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK](#)

Housebuilding completions source: [Live tables on housing supply: indicators of new supply - GOV.UK](#)

Council housing source: [Local Authority Housing Statistics open data - GOV.UK](#)

Affordable housing source: [Live tables on affordable housing supply - GOV.UK](#)

Household estimate source: [Household projections for England - Office for National Statistics](#)

- **Note B-7**

Data for [Total dwelling stock](#) are calendar years; all other subsections are financial years (e.g. 2022/23 refers to the year ending March 2023).

C. Housing costs: purchases and rentals

Average sale prices of residential properties are higher in Rural areas than in Urban areas, however average rent prices are lower.

Summary

The average price paid for residential properties will be affected by the types of dwelling such as detached, semi-detached, terraced houses, and flats/maisonettes. Changes in purchase or rent prices can be used to indicate changes in the housing market. This section analyses changes in average property sale and rent prices between areas, as well as the number of sales.

In Predominantly Rural areas, sales were distributed as follows: 37% detached; 28% semi-detached; 25% terraced; 10% flats/maisonettes. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, sales were distributed as follows: 20% detached; 33% semi-detached; 32% terraced; 16% flats/maisonettes. The most common sales in Predominantly Rural areas are therefore detached properties, whilst flats are the least common. In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, sales of semi-detached and terraced properties were the most common.

When buying a property, **detached** homes had a higher average purchase price than any other dwelling type for both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (£455,700 and £454,800 respectively). This was followed by **semi-detached** properties, for which average purchase prices were higher in Predominantly Rural areas (£292,600) than in Predominantly Urban areas (£285,900). **Terraced** properties had the second lowest average purchase price of all dwelling types; average prices were higher in Predominantly Rural areas (£234,000) than in Predominantly Urban areas (£224,200). **Flats/maisonettes** had a lower average purchase price than any other dwelling type; in Predominantly Rural areas, the average price paid was £155,600, compared to £157,800 in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London.

When renting a property, **detached** homes had a higher average rent price than any other dwelling type for both Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (£1,206 and £1,326 per month, respectively). This was followed by **semi-detached** properties, for which average rent prices were lower in Predominantly Rural areas (£936) than in Predominantly Urban areas (£1,045). **Terraced** properties had the second lowest average rent price of all dwelling types; average prices were lower in Predominantly Rural areas (£856) than in Predominantly Urban areas (£962). **Flats/maisonettes** had a lower average rent price than any other dwelling type; in Predominantly Rural areas, the average monthly rent was £696, compared to £782 in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London.

Background information

Prior to July 2024, this publication analysed the difference in house prices using the mean price paid at Middle-layer Super Output Area (MSOA) level; this was from [house price statistics for small areas \(HPSSA\), dataset 3 - ONS](#). As described in their accompanying [bulletin](#), many of the HPSSA datasets were discontinued on 20 September 2023; this included dataset 3. Therefore, it was necessary to refresh the analysis of house prices within this section using a new data source.

In needing to revise the house price statistics, we took this opportunity to adapt the style of the analysis in order to be more beneficial to users. A summary of changes are as follows:

- **We have changed the data source from** HPSSA dataset 3 to [Private rent and house prices - ONS](#). We have chosen this data source as it is one that the ONS will continue to publish monthly, and therefore we should not need to revise our methodology again; this also means we may be able to track changes over time in future publications.
- **We are no longer analysing changes over time.** Instead, we have opted to focus on the difference in prices by dwelling type. This helps to reduce the potential for average prices to have varied between areas purely due to sales compositions. For example, in one area there might be more detached homes sold and in another there might be more flats/maisonettes sold.
- **We have changed the geography used;** we will now use Local Authorities (Note C-3). We have changed the geography used as the MSOA-level data is unsuitable for analysis by dwelling type; the small nature of the areas results in many disclosure issues. As Local Authorities are larger than MSOAs, a larger proportion of the dataset can be used, therefore maximising the output we can provide.
- **We have changed our average;** previous analysis focused on the arithmetic mean but now we are using the geometric mean as the latter is less sensitive to extreme property values (Note C-1).
- **We have introduced new analysis of rents;** rental affordability statistics have been removed from [Section D](#) (previously called Housing stock: affordable housing). In order to retain some statistics regarding the rental market, a new data source has been analysed and included within this section.
- **We have added in analysis of the number of residential property sales;** this was previously covered under the “Residential Housing Transactions” subsection from [Section B](#). Due to the development of the housing stock statistics, including a focus on affordable housing, we have relocated these property sale statistics to a more suitable location; this also makes the analysis easier for users to find, as most relevant information will be within the same section.

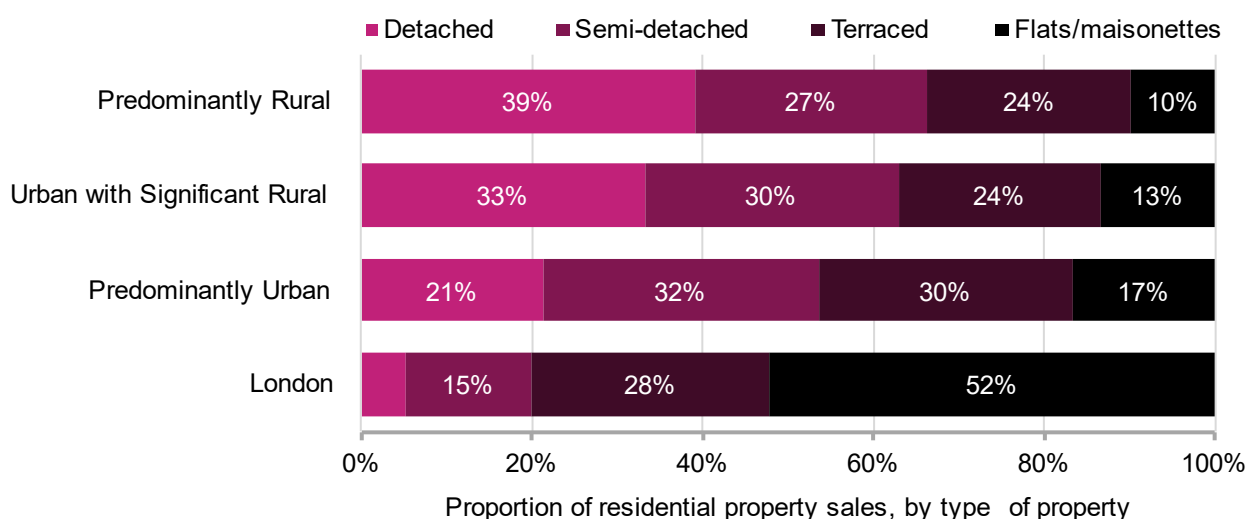
Number of property sales

The ONS publishes [housing affordability statistics](#), within which they include the number of residential property sales (Note C-12); the rest of this data is analysed in [Section D](#). After every house sale, the transaction must be registered with HM Land Registry. The number of sales by dwelling type may differ due to the nature of the location; for example, a city is more likely to have a higher number of sales of terraced properties or flats/maisonettes than detached properties, whereas the opposite is true for a village.

The bar chart in Figure C-1 shows the proportion of residential property sales, by dwelling type and settlement type, in year ending March 2022; whilst more recent data are available, it is provisional due to the property registration processing time (Note C-11). The property sales analysis presented within this publication therefore focuses on most robust data, but technically not the latest.

Figure C-1: Bar chart showing the proportion of property sales, by dwelling type and Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, year ending March 2022 (Note C-3, Note C-6)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. Bars have not been labelled where there were 5% or fewer sales. “Predominantly Urban” excludes London.



The more Rural the area, the higher the proportion of **detached** property sales. In Predominantly Rural areas, 39% of property sales were for detached properties in year ending March 2022; this was higher than in any other settlement type. Comparatively, in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, 21% of sales were for detached properties – 18 percentage points less than in Predominantly Rural areas. In London, just 5% of sales were for detached properties; this was considerably lower than any other settlement type.

There was little difference in the proportions of **semi-detached** property sales by rurality, however proportions were slightly lower in Predominantly Rural areas (27%) than in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (32%). In London, 15% of sales were for semi-detached properties.

There was little difference in the proportions of **terraced** property sales by rurality, however proportions were slightly lower in Predominantly Rural areas (24%) than in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (30%). In London, 28% of sales were for terraced properties.

The more Rural the area, the lower the proportion of sales of **flats/maisonettes**. In Predominantly Rural areas, 10% of sales were for flats/maisonettes in year ending March 2022. In comparison,

17% of sales in Predominantly Urban areas were for flats/maisonettes. In London, 52% of property sales were for flats/maisonettes; this is considerably higher than any other settlement type.

The number or proportion of house sales may not reflect the overall number of dwellings within each property type. This is because the rental market is not represented, and also there will be people who do not sell their home for many years. Data on total dwelling stock can be found in [Section B](#).

Table C-1 shows the number of residential property sales, by dwelling type and settlement type, in year ending March 2022; this provides context for Figure C-1. Caution is advised when comparing absolute values between settlement types.

Table C-1: Number of property sales, by dwelling type and Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, year ending March 2022 (Note C-3, Note C-6)

Values have been rounded to the nearest 100 sales and therefore may not sum to totals.

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/maisonettes	All properties
Predominantly Rural	97,200	67,600	59,400	24,300	248,500
Urban with Significant Rural	47,400	42,400	33,900	19,100	142,800
Predominantly Urban	94,400	142,500	132,300	73,500	442,600
London	5,200	15,300	28,700	53,700	103,000
England	244,100	267,800	254,300	170,600	936,800

The proportions shown in Figure C-1 are generated using the values in Table C-1. For example:

- There were 248,500 properties sold in Predominantly Rural areas in year ending March 2022. 97,200 of these properties were detached (39%), whilst 67,600 were semi-detached (27%). 59,400 properties were terraced (24%), and 24,300 were flats/maisonettes (10%).
- There were 442,600 properties sold in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London in year ending March 2022. 94,400 of these properties were detached (21%), whilst 142,300 were semi-detached (32%). 132,300 properties were terraced (30%), and the remaining 53,700 were flats/maisonettes (17%).

Generally, it is not advisable to compare absolute numbers of property sales between settlement types. For example, there were similar numbers of detached properties sold in Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, however these values represent vastly different proportions of the total dwelling stock within their respective areas.

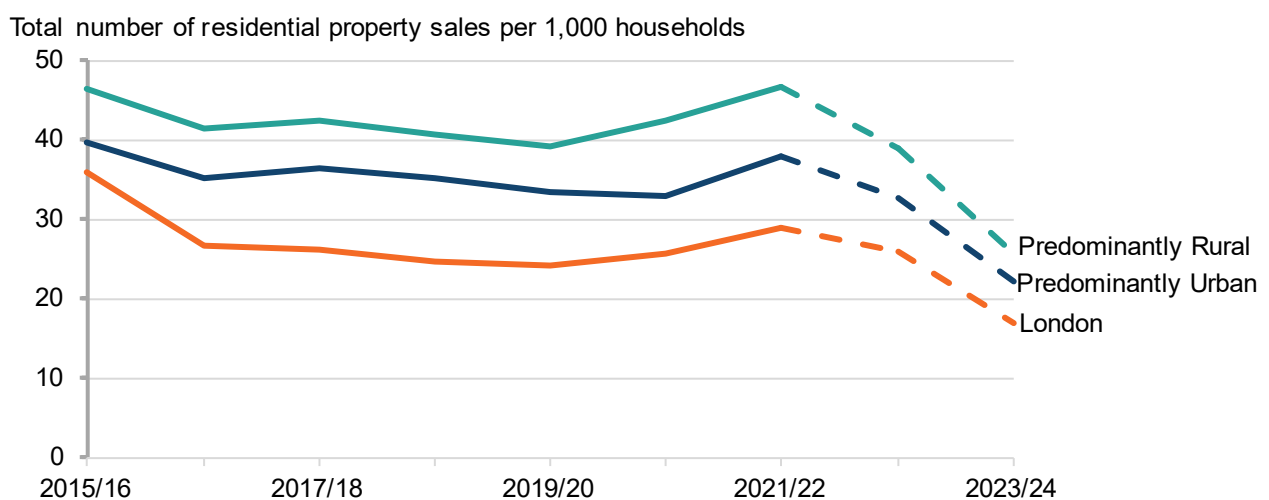
By apportioning the number of property sales to the number of households, it is possible to make comparisons between settlement types over time. The line chart in Figure C-2 shows the number of residential property sales (for all dwelling types) per 1,000 households, by settlement type, year ending March 2016 to year ending March 2024.

The time series shown in Figure C-2 can be described as follows:

- Between 2015/16 and 2023/24, there were consistently more residential property sales per 1,000 households in Predominantly Rural areas than in any other settlement type.
- Between 2015/16 and 2016/17, the rate of property sales decreased in both Predominantly Rural areas (from 46.4 to 41.4 sales per 1,000 households) and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (from 39.7 to 35.0 sales per 1,000 households). The decrease was more significant in London (from 36.0 to 26.7 sales per 1,000 households).
- In Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas, the number of residential property sales per 1,000 households increased slightly in 2017/18. This was followed by decreases in all settlement types to 2019/20.
- Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, the rate of residential property sales increased in Predominantly Rural areas (from 39.1 to 46.6 sales per 1,000 households) and in London (from 24.2 to 28.9 sales per 1,000 households). In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, the rate of property sales decreased further between 2019/20 and 2020/21, but increased between 2020/21 and 2021/22 (from 33.0 to 38.0 sales per 1,000 households).
- Between 2021/22 and 2023/24, trends are depicted with a dashed line due to the fact that they are subject to revisions caused by registration delays.

Figure C-2: Line chart showing the total number of property sales for all dwelling types, per 1,000 households, by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, year ending March 2016 to year ending March 2024 (Note C-3)

Totals for residential transactions in more recent years are provisional (Note C-11), and have been indicated with a dashed line where revisions may occur. “Predominantly Urban” excludes London.



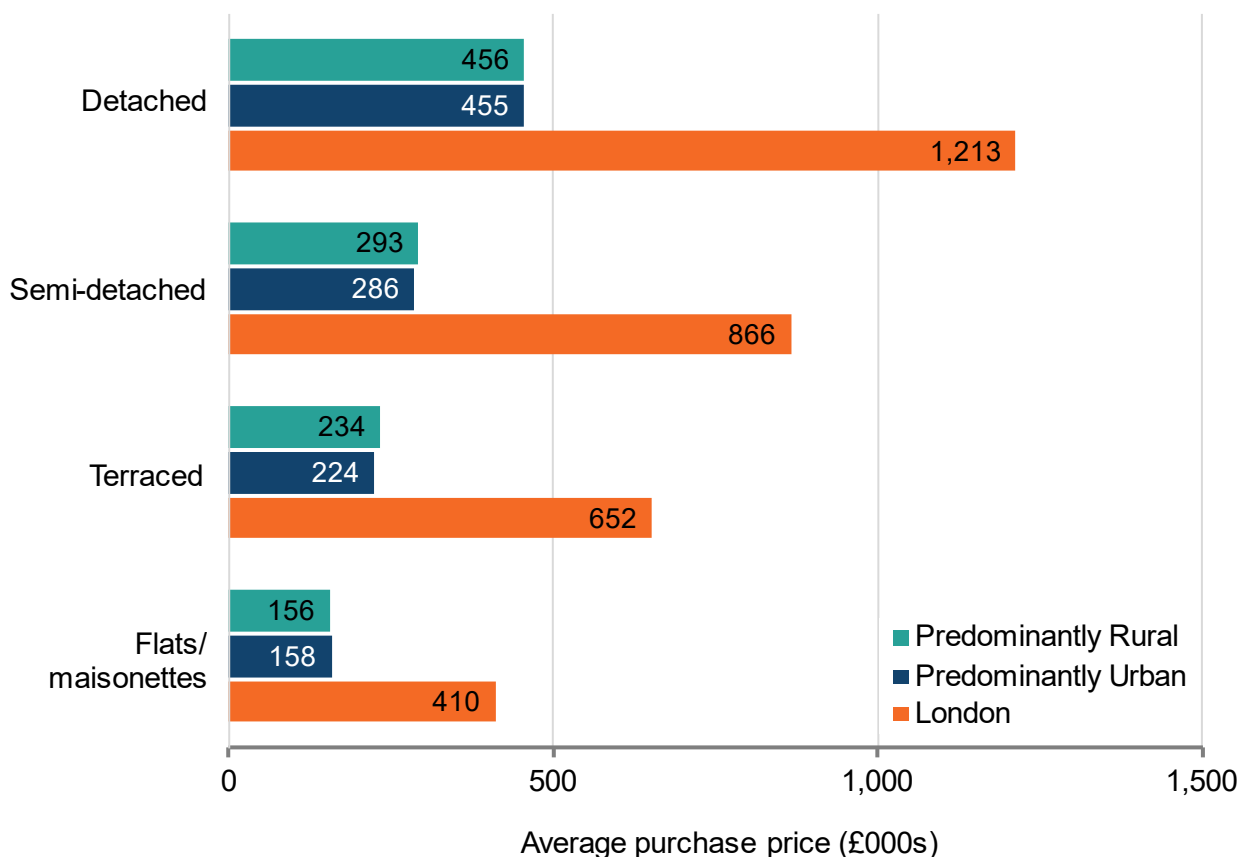
Average house purchase prices

Monthly residential property sale prices are reported by the ONS (Note C-4). Average property purchase prices differ depending on the type of dwelling; for instance, in most cases, a flat or maisonette will be less expensive than a detached home in the same area.

The bar chart in Figure C-3 shows the average price paid for properties sold by dwelling type and settlement type. Detached properties were typically the most expensive in March 2024, whilst flats/maisonettes were typically the cheapest.

Figure C-3: Bar chart showing the average property purchase price (£000s), by dwelling type and broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, in England, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3, Note C-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. “Predominantly Urban” excludes London.



In March 2024, the average price paid for **detached** properties was similar in Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (£455,700 and £454,800, respectively). The average price paid for detached properties in London was nearly three times higher than any other settlement type in England (£1,212,900).

The average purchase price for **semi-detached** properties was around £6,700 - or 2.4% - higher in Predominantly Rural areas (£292,600) compared to Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (£285,900). The average price paid for semi-detached properties in London was nearly three times higher than in any other settlement type (£866,100).

The average price paid for **terraced** properties was around £9,800 - or 4.4% - higher in Predominantly Rural areas (£234,000) than in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London

(£224,200). In London, the average price paid for terraced properties was nearly three times higher than in any other settlement type (£651,700).

The average price paid for **flats or maisonettes** was around £2,200 (or 1.4%) lower in Predominantly Rural areas (£155,600) than in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London (£157,800). The average price paid for flats or maisonettes in London was nearly three times higher than in any other settlement type (£410,300). This means that the average price paid for a flat/maisonette in London was higher in March 2024 than for semi-detached or terraced properties, and nearly as high as detached properties, in other areas of England.

Table C-2 shows the average property purchase price by detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification in March 2024. The average price paid for properties in Mainly Rural areas was typically higher than in Largely Rural areas in March 2024. Urban with Significant Rural areas generally had the highest average price paid, whilst Urban Conurbation areas outside of London typically had the lowest.

Table C-2: Average property purchase price (£), by dwelling type and Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3, Note C-6, Note C-9)

“Urban Conurbation” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/maisonettes	All properties
Mainly Rural	482,600	313,000	252,400	166,100	331,600
Largely Rural	443,800	283,600	225,800	150,900	289,700
Urban with Significant Rural	548,400	335,600	265,100	178,500	331,400
Urban with City and Town	490,700	313,600	249,500	169,300	281,700
Urban Conurbation	416,100	256,100	197,000	145,300	232,800
London	1,212,900	866,100	651,700	410,300	522,000
England	465,200	289,700	244,300	247,300	299,300

Some areas of the country tend to have higher average property purchase prices than others, regardless of the settlement type. Table C-3 shows the Local Authorities with the **highest** average property purchase prices in March 2024, by property type and broad Rural-Urban Classification. It can be described as follows:

- For detached properties, “Sevenoaks” in Kent had the highest average purchase price out of all Predominantly Rural Local Authorities (£876,700). “Waverley” in Surrey had the highest average purchase price for semi-detached properties (£528,800) and flats/maisonettes (£266,200). “Winchester” in Hampshire had the highest average purchase price for terraced properties in Predominantly Rural areas (£413,500).
- For detached properties and flats/maisonettes, “Elmbridge” in Surrey had the highest average purchase prices out of all Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London (£1,255,300 and £336,700, respectively). For semi-detached and terraced properties, “St Albans” in Hertfordshire had the highest average purchase prices in Predominantly Urban areas (£697,100 and £515,800, respectively).

- Outside of London, all of the Local Authorities with the highest average property purchase prices were in and around the South East of England. These areas tend to be highly desirable due to their proximity to London, allowing even Rural areas to be well connected.

Table C-3: Local Authorities with the highest average property purchase price (£), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Average price
Predominantly Rural	Detached	Sevenoaks	876,700
	Semi-detached	Waverley	528,800
	Terraced	Winchester	413,500
	Flats	Waverley	266,200
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Elmbridge	1,355,300
	Semi-detached	St Albans	697,100
	Terraced	St Albans	515,800
	Flats	Elmbridge	336,700

Table C-4 shows the Local Authorities with the **lowest** average property purchase prices in March 2024, by property type and broad Rural-Urban Classification. It can be described as follows:

- For all dwelling types, “County Durham” had the lowest average property purchase prices out of all Predominantly Rural Local Authorities; here, average prices ranged from £80,100 (for flats/maisonettes) to £217,200 (for detached properties).
- For most dwelling types, “Burnley” in Lancashire had the lowest average property purchase price out of all Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London; here, average prices ranged from £87,100 (for terraced properties) to £199,800 (for detached properties).
“Hartlepool” in County Durham had the lowest average purchase price for flats/maisonettes in Predominantly Urban areas, at £67,100.
- Outside of London, all of the Local Authorities with the lowest average property purchase prices were in the North of England. These areas tend to have a large housing supply, in part due to the many homes built for industrial workers in the past.

Table C-4: Local Authorities with the lowest average property purchase price (£), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Average price
Predominantly Rural	Detached	County Durham	217,200
	Semi-detached	County Durham	128,600
	Terraced	County Durham	105,200
	Flats	County Durham	80,100
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Burnley	199,800
	Semi-detached	Burnley	127,100
	Terraced	Burnley	87,100
	Flats	Hartlepool	67,100

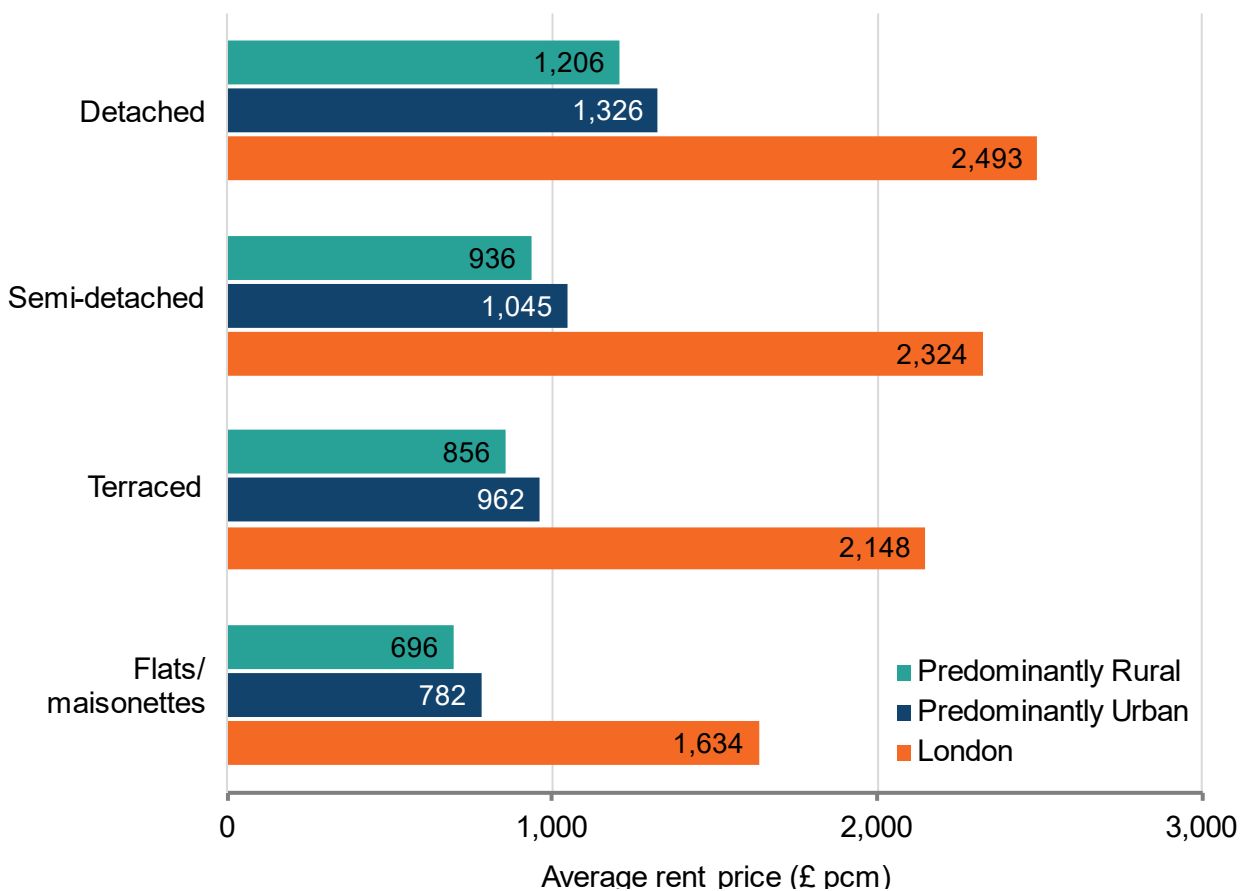
Average rent prices

The Price Index of Private Rents (PIPR) measures private rent inflation for new and existing tenancies, and is presented monthly by the ONS. Average property rental prices differ depending on the type of dwelling; for instance, in most cases, a flat or maisonette will be less expensive than a detached home in the same area.

The bar chart in Figure C-4 shows the average rent price for properties by dwelling type and settlement type. Detached properties were typically the most expensive in March 2024, whilst flats/maisonettes were typically the cheapest to rent.

Figure C-4: Bar chart showing average monthly rent price (£), by broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3, Note C-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. “Predominantly Urban” excludes London. Prices are given as £ pcm (per calendar month).



In March 2024, for every dwelling type, average monthly rent prices were lower in Predominantly Rural areas than in Predominantly Urban areas, and prices in London were at least two times higher than anywhere else in England. This is detailed as follows:

- For **detached** properties, the average rent price was £1,206 in Predominantly Rural areas and £1,326 in Predominantly Urban areas. In London, the average rent price was £2,493.
- For **semi-detached** properties, the average rent price was £936 in Predominantly Rural areas and £1,045 in Predominantly Urban areas. In London, the average rent price was £2,324.
- For **terraced** properties, the average rent price was £856 in Predominantly Rural areas and £962 in Predominantly Urban areas. In London, the average rent price was £2,148.

- For **flats or maisonettes**, the average rent price was £696 in Predominantly Rural areas and £782 in Predominantly Urban areas. In London, the average rent price was £1,634.

Table C-5 shows the average monthly rent price by Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification in March 2024. The average rent price for properties in Mainly Rural (the most Rural) areas was typically higher than in Largely Rural areas in March 2024. Urban with City and Town areas generally had the highest average rent prices, whilst Largely Rural areas typically had the lowest.

Table C-5: Average monthly rent price (£), by detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3, Note C-6, Note C-9)

“Urban Conurbation” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes	All properties
Mainly Rural	1,237	970	888	722	900
Largely Rural	1,192	921	842	685	854
Urban with Significant Rural	1,443	1,104	1,011	825	1,024
Urban with City and Town	1,403	1,123	1,037	829	1,032
Urban Conurbation	1,243	961	881	732	891
London	2,493	2,324	2,148	1,634	1,832
England	1,465	1,276	1,260	1,270	1,285

Some areas of the country tend to have lower average monthly rent prices than others, regardless of the settlement type. Factors that contribute towards this include proximity to universities/higher student populations, as well as not having the supply to meet the demand.

Table C-6 shows the Local Authorities with the **highest** average monthly rent price in March 2024, by property type and broad Rural-Urban Classification.

Table C-6: Local Authorities with the highest average monthly rent price (£), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Average rent price
Predominantly Rural	Detached	Sevenoaks	2,480
	Semi-detached	Sevenoaks	1,682
	Terraced	Sevenoaks	1,458
	Flats	Sevenoaks	1,292
Urban with Significant Rural	Detached	Epping Forest	2,197
	Semi-detached	Epping Forest	1,666
	Terraced	Bath and North East Somerset	1,650
	Flats	Epping Forest	1,204
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Elmbridge	2,572
	Semi-detached	City of Bristol	1,941
	Terraced	Brighton and Hove	1,904
	Flats	City of Bristol	1,389

Regardless of the type of property, “Sevenoaks” in Kent had the highest average monthly rent price out of all Predominantly Rural Local Authorities; here, average prices ranged from £1,292 (for flats/maisonettes) to £2,480 (for detached properties).

In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, “Elmbridge” in Surrey had the highest average monthly rent price for detached properties (£2,572). For semi-detached properties or flats/maisonettes, “City of Bristol” had the highest average rent price in Predominantly Urban areas (£1,941 and £1,389, respectively).

Outside of London, most of the Local Authorities with the highest average property purchase prices were in the South East. The exceptions to this are “City of Bristol” and “Bath and North East Somerset” in the South West of England. Average monthly rent prices for flats/maisonettes in the most expensive Local Authority in London were higher detached properties in the rest of England.

Table C-7 shows the Local Authorities with the **lowest** average monthly rent price in March 2024, by property type and broad Rural-Urban Classification.

Table C-7: Local Authorities with the lowest average monthly rent price (£), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Average rent price
Predominantly Rural	Detached	East Lindsey	563
	Semi-detached	West Lindsey	481
	Terraced	Staffordshire Moorlands	440
	Flats	West Lindsey	359
Urban with Significant Rural	Detached	North Lincolnshire	613
	Semi-detached	Bolsover	470
	Terraced	Bolsover	440
	Flats	North Lincolnshire	355
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Stoke-on-Trent	591
	Semi-detached	Barnsley	479
	Terraced	Pendle	425
	Flats	Pendle	352

For detached properties, “East Lindsey” in Lincolnshire had the lowest average monthly rent price out of all Predominantly Rural Local Authorities in March 2024 (£563). For semi-detached properties or flats/maisonettes, “West Lindsey” in Lincolnshire had the lowest average rent price in Predominantly Rural areas (£481 and £359, respectively). “Staffordshire Moorlands” had the lowest average rent price for terraced properties in Predominantly Rural areas (£440).

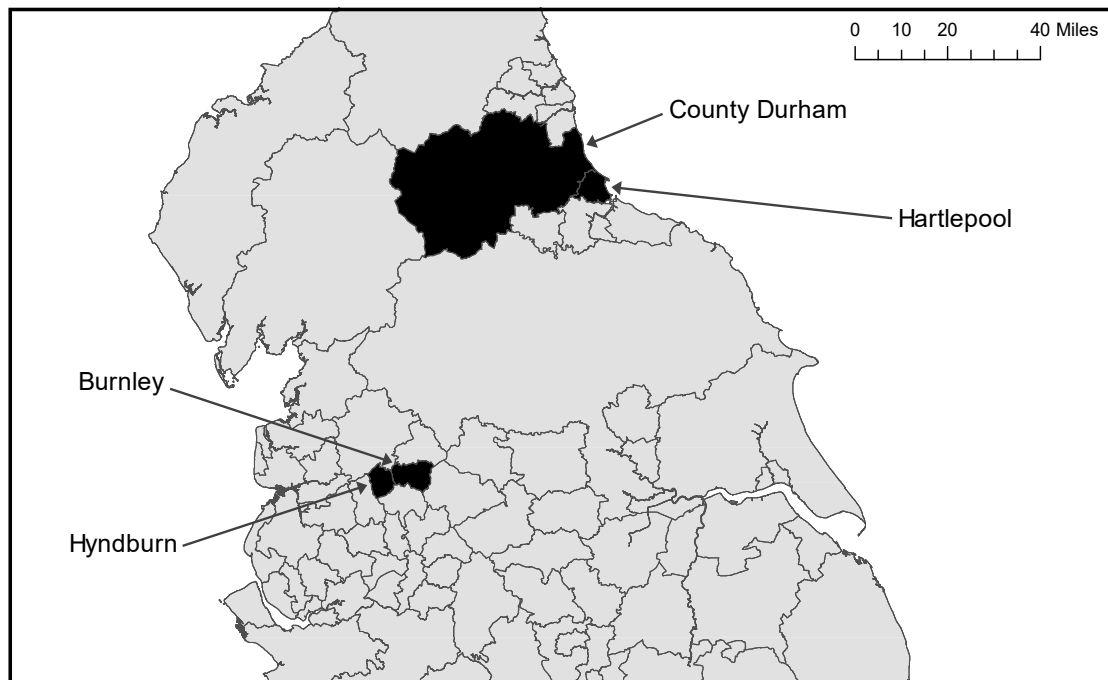
In Predominantly Urban areas outside of London, “Stoke-on-Trent” in Staffordshire had the lowest average monthly rent price for detached properties (£591), whilst “Barnsley” in South Yorkshire had the lowest average rent price for semi-detached properties (£479). “Pendle” in Lancashire had the lowest average rent price for terraced properties and flats/maisonettes in Predominantly Urban areas outside of London in March 2024 (£425 and £352, respectively).

Outside of London, all of the Local Authorities with the lowest average monthly rent prices were in the East Midlands, West Midlands, North West or Yorkshire and the Humber.

Highest and lowest average housing costs in England

Housing costs can vary for many reasons, such as housing supply/demand, buyer demographics, or perceptions of the local area. In some cases, the “cheapest” area to rent a property may not be the “cheapest” area to buy a property in. The map in Figure C-5 shows the Local Authorities with the lowest average house purchase prices or average rent prices in March 2024.

Figure C-5: Map showing the Local Authorities with the lowest average property purchase prices or rent prices in England, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)



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“Burnley” had the lowest average house purchase price in England at £103,200. This is followed by “Hyndburn” at £123,000 and then “Hartlepool” at £127,600. Hartlepool also had the lowest average rent price in England, at £534 per month. Similarly, “Burnley” had one of the lowest average rent prices, at £535 per month. However, the next “cheapest” Local Authority to rent a property in was “County Durham”, at £543 per month. This shows that County Durham is “cheaper” to rent in than to buy a property in (relative to the rest of England), whilst the opposite is true for Hyndburn. All of these are Predominantly Urban Local Authorities in the North of England, except for “County Durham”, which is Predominantly Rural.

Local Authorities in London generally had the highest average housing costs in England.

“Kensington and Chelsea” had both the highest average purchase price (£1,193,500) and average rent cost (£3,305 per month). This was followed by “City of Westminster” (£910,700 to buy; £2,950 per month to rent). “Richmond upon Thames” had the next highest average property purchase price in London (£745,900), whilst “Camden” had the next highest average rent price (£2,478 per month).

The map in Figure C-6 shows the Local Authorities outside of London with the highest average house purchase prices or average rent prices in March 2024.

Figure C-6: Map showing the Local Authorities with the highest average property purchase prices or rent prices outside of London, in England, March 2024 (Note C-1, Note C-3)



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“Elmbridge” had the highest average house purchase price outside of London at £644,800. This is followed by “St Albans” (£575,800) and then “Three Rivers” (£553,100). “Elmbridge” also had one of the highest average rent prices outside of London, at £1,746 per month. This is followed by “Brighton and Hove”, at £1,723 per month. However, “City of Bristol” had the highest average rent price outside of London in March 2024, at £1,748 per month. All of these Local Authorities are Predominantly Urban and are in the South of England.

Housing costs: purchases and rentals explanatory notes

- **Note C-1**

Average prices in this section are based on the geometric mean, as opposed to the usual arithmetic mean. The arithmetic mean is sensitive to extreme property values and, as a result, the prices can be skewed upwards by high value property. The geometric mean is less sensitive to these values, although it continues to represent them in the calculation process.

Average property 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.

- **Note C-2**

Purchase prices are shown rounded to the nearest £100. For quality and methodology information, see the [Quality assurance of administrative data used in the Price Index of Private Rents - Office for National Statistics](#).

- **Note C-3**

Data are for 2023 Local Authorities; the corresponding Rural-Urban Classification of these Authorities can be found via [2011 Rural Urban Classification lookup tables for all geographies - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note C-4**

Source: [Private rent and house prices, UK Statistical bulletins - Office for National Statistics](#).

- **Note C-5**

A detached property is one where none of the living accommodation is attached to another property (but can be attached to a garage). [Section A - Housing stock: age and type](#) shows the proportion of properties that are detached in Rural and Urban areas; there are typically proportionally more detached properties in Rural areas than Urban areas.

A semi-detached property is one where the living accommodation is joined to one other house or bungalow by a common wall that they share.

A mid-terraced house is usually located between two other houses and shares two common side walls; an end-of-terrace house is part of a terraced development but only shares one common side wall. Back-to-Back terraces still occur in large numbers in some urban areas such as parts of Leeds and Bradford. These houses share 3 common walls if they are in the middle of a row and 2 common walls when on the end of a row.

A flat is a single-level residence within a larger building, often sharing common areas such as hallways and staircases; a maisonette is a two-storey flat. The ONS groups these two property types together.

- **Note C-6**

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

- **Note C-7**

In order to aggregate average property purchase/rent prices for areas up to the Rural-Urban Classifications, population has been used to weight the data. Source: [Estimates of the population for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#).

- **Note C-8**

Please note that the scales differ between the charts in this section; caution is advised when comparing between these bar charts.

- **Note C-9**

Data for some Local Authorities (“City of London” and “Isles of Scilly”) has been suppressed where population numbers, or number of sales/rents, was small. These values are not included towards the settlement type totals, but are included within the England total.

- **Note C-10**

Tables showing the data given in this section are included within the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note C-11**

The property registration process can take time, particularly for new build properties. Therefore, the statistics presented within this publication 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. For more information, see the [House price statistics for small areas QMI - Office for National Statistics](#).

- **Note C-12**

Source: [Residential property sales for administrative geographies - Office for National Statistics](#)

D. House purchase affordability

Location has a bigger impact on house purchase affordability than rurality; homes are generally more affordable to buy in the North of England than the South, regardless of their settlement type.

Summary

Within this publication, house purchase affordability ratios are based on both median and lower quartile house prices and workplace-based earnings. Previously this section analysed rental affordability and additions to affordable housing; a summary of changes are given in the “Background information” section.

In terms of median house prices and workplace-based earnings, detached properties were the least affordable dwelling type and flats/maisonettes were the most affordable for all settlement types in England. The median price paid for **detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 13.8 times higher than median earnings; this is marginally higher than in Predominantly Urban areas (13.6). The median price paid for **semi-detached** properties in either Predominantly Rural or Predominantly Urban areas was 8.9 times higher than median earnings. The median price paid for **terraced** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 7.3 times higher than median earnings; this is similar to Predominantly Urban areas (7.2 times). The mean price paid for **flats/maisonettes** in either Predominantly Rural or Predominantly Urban areas was 4.9 times higher than median earnings.

In terms of lower quartile house prices and workplace-based earnings, detached properties were the least affordable dwelling type and flats/maisonettes were the most affordable for all settlement types in England. The lower quartile price paid for **detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 14.2 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (14.5). The lower quartile price paid for **semi-detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 9.8 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (10.0). The lower quartile price paid for **terraced** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 7.9 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (8.1). The mean price paid for **flats/maisonettes** in Predominantly Rural areas was 5.0 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is similar to Predominantly Urban areas (5.1).

Background information

Prior to July 2024, this publication analysed the difference in lower quartile affordability ratios at Local Authority level; this was from [house price to residence-based earnings ratio - ONS](#). In light of the datasets used in our house prices analysis being discontinued, we took this opportunity to also revise the analysis on housing affordability. A summary of the changes are as follows:

- **We have moved or removed some analysis**; the additions to affordable housing analysis now features in [Section B - Housing stock: additions](#). Also, the rental affordability analysis has been removed in favour of adding in rent prices information into [Section C - Housing costs: purchases and rentals](#).
- **We are no longer analysing changes over time**. Instead, we have opted to focus on the difference in affordability by dwelling type. This helps to reduce some of the issues where affordability may have varied between areas purely because of sales compositions; for example, in one area there could have been many detached homes sold and in another there could have been many flats/maisonettes sold.
- **We have changed our earnings metric**; we will now use workplace-based earnings, instead of the residence-based measure that we were using before. Workplace-based earnings refer to where people work, rather than where they live. This should help to show where people are less likely be able to afford to live in the same location as their place of work and hence have to live elsewhere. House purchase affordability ratios are based on average house prices and workplace-based earnings. The earnings figures used are for individuals (not households) and therefore **the ratios presented are based on a single person trying to buy a house**. Affordability ratios will be reduced when a household has more than one income from earnings – for example when a couple combine their earnings to buy a house.

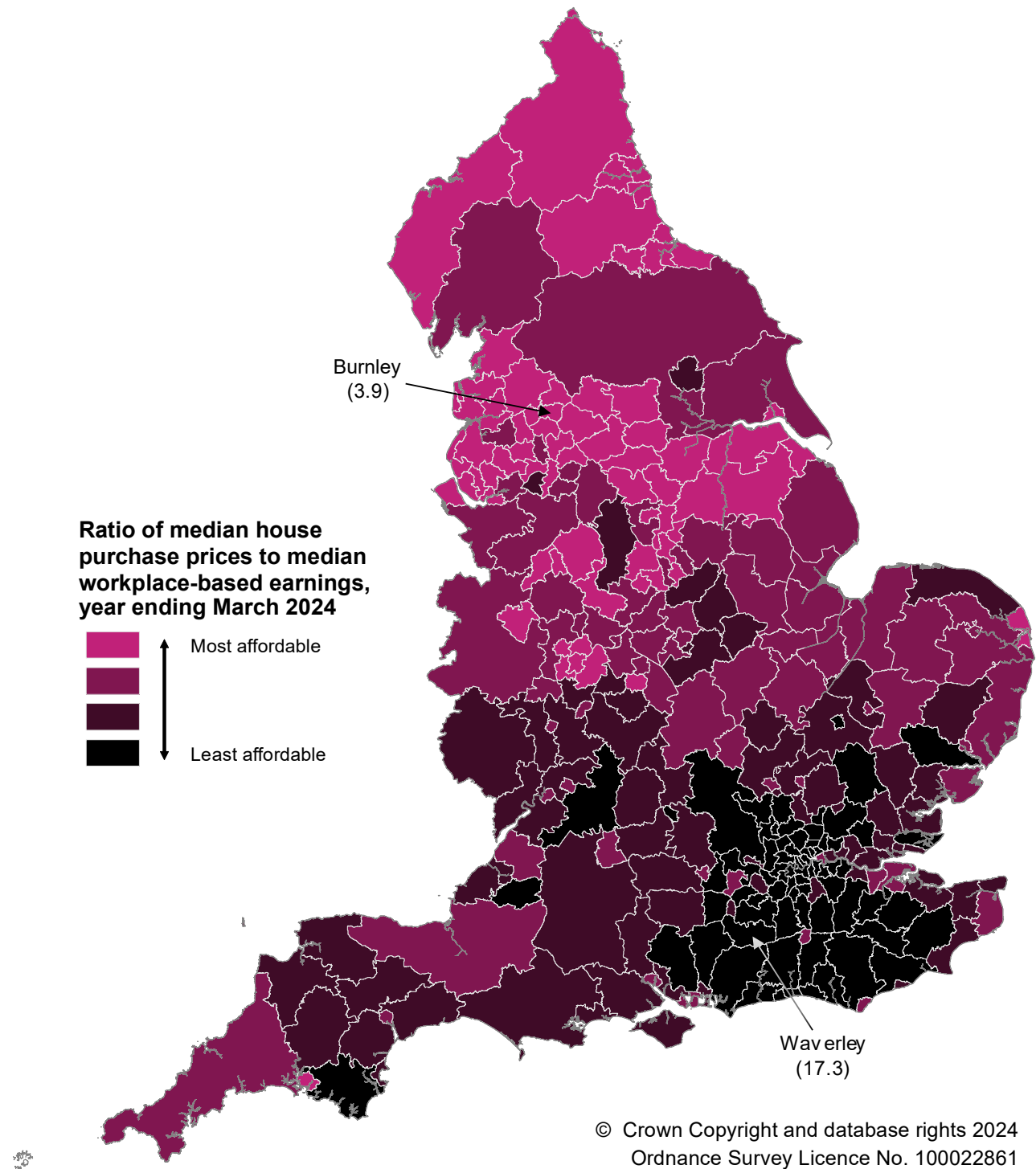
As explained within the [Housing affordability in England and Wales QMI - Office for National Statistics](#), mortgages have traditionally been offered at multiples of four to five times income (typically gross income). This means that within this publication, only those Local Authorities with an affordability ratio of less than 5 would be considered realistic for an individual to purchase.

Median house purchase affordability

The ratio between median (Note D-5) property purchase prices and median workplace-based earnings can be used to give an indication of whether the average person could afford to buy a house. The map in Figure D-1 shows the median affordability ratios of Local Authorities.

Figure D-1: Map showing median house affordability (all dwellings) for Local Authorities, by quartiles, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-4)

The darker the colour, the higher the ratio of median house purchase prices to median annual workplace-based earnings, and therefore the less affordable the average house is in the area. Data excludes City of London and Isles of Scilly. Most and least affordable areas are labelled.



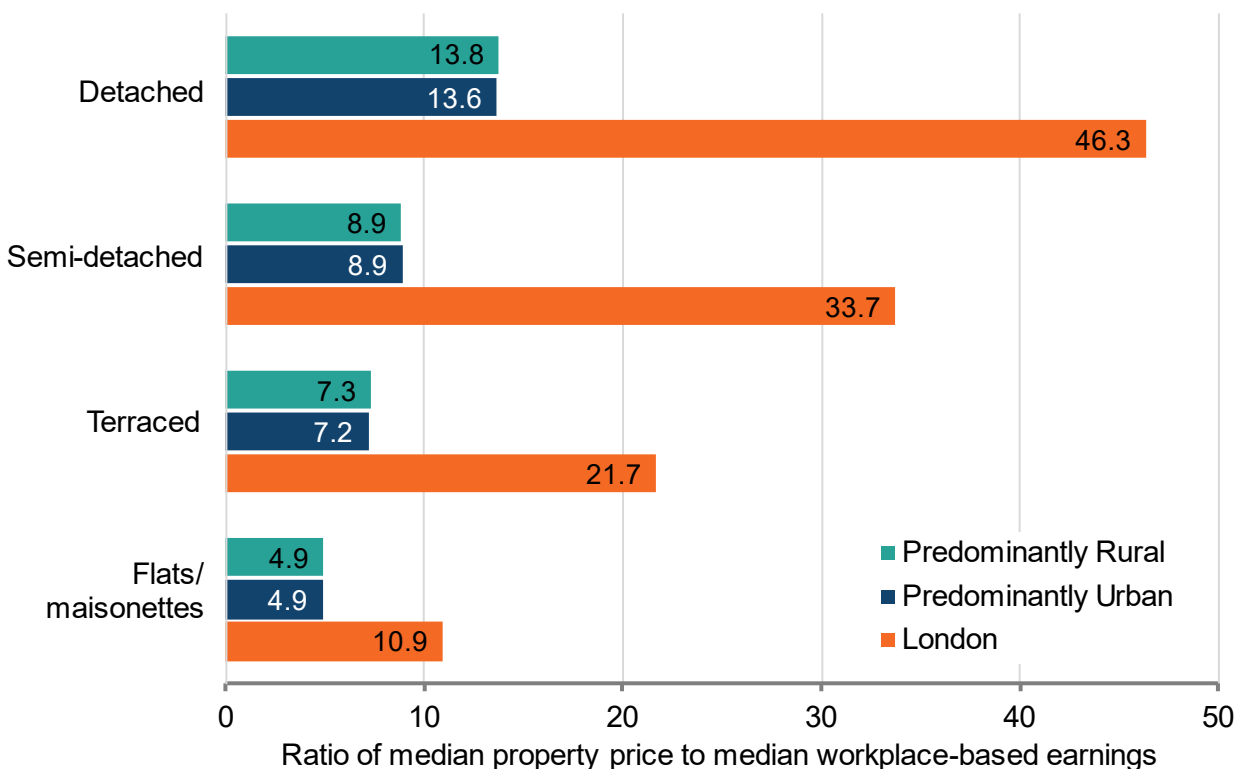
The map in Figure D-1 can be summarised as follows:

- Generally, the North of England is much more affordable to buy a property in than the South, in terms of median property purchase prices and median annual workplace-based earnings. The least affordable areas are in and around London.
- In the most affordable 25% of Local Authorities in England, median property purchase prices were up to 6.8 times higher than median annual workplace-based earnings. Of these 74 Local Authorities, 8 were Predominantly Rural and 59 were Predominantly Urban (excluding London).
- In the least affordable 25% of Local Authorities in England, median property purchase prices were between 11.2 and 33.6 times higher than median annual workplace-based earnings. Of these 74 Local Authorities, 12 were Predominantly Rural, 22 were Predominantly Urban (excluding London), and 27 were in London.
- The most affordable Local Authority overall was “Burnley” (Predominantly Urban) where median house purchase prices were 3.9 times higher than median workplace-based earnings. The least affordable Local Authority was “Kensington and Chelsea” (London) where median property prices were 33.6 times higher than median annual workplace-based earnings. Outside of London, the least affordable Local Authority was “Waverley” (a Predominantly Rural area of Surrey) where median property prices were 17.3 times higher than median annual earnings.

Residential property purchase prices differ depending on the type of dwelling; for instance, in most cases, a flat or maisonette will be less expensive than a detached home in the same area. As a result, properties in the same area may be more or less affordable to the same person, based on their earnings staying the same. This is shown in the bar chart in Figure D-2.

Figure D-2: Bar chart showing median house purchase affordability ratios by settlement type and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-6, Note D-7)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. Lower values = more affordable.



For all dwelling types, there was little difference between the median affordability ratios in Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London in March 2024:

- The median price paid for **detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 13.8 times higher than median workplace-based earnings; this is marginally higher than in Predominantly Urban areas (13.6). Median affordability ratios in London were more than 3 times higher than anywhere else in England; the median price paid for detached properties in London was 46.3 times higher than median earnings.
- The median price paid for **semi-detached** properties in either Predominantly Rural or Predominantly Urban areas was 8.9 times higher than median earnings. Median affordability ratios in London were nearly 4 times higher than anywhere else in England; the median price paid for semi-detached properties in London was 33.7 times higher than median earnings.
- The median price paid for **terraced** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 7.3 times higher than median earnings; this is marginally higher than in Predominantly Urban areas (7.2 times). Median affordability ratios in London were nearly 3 times higher than anywhere else in England; the median price paid for terraced properties in London was 21.7 times higher than median earnings.
- The mean price paid for **flats/maisonettes** in either Predominantly Rural or Predominantly Urban areas was 4.9 times higher than median earnings. Median affordability ratios in London were twice as high as anywhere else in England; the median price paid for flats/maisonettes in London was 10.9 times higher than median earnings.

Table D-1 shows the median affordability ratios by detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type in year ending March 2024. Mainly Rural areas were typically less affordable than Largely Rural areas. Urban with Significant Rural areas generally were the least affordable outside of London, whilst Urban Conurbation areas were typically the most.

Table D-1: Median house purchase affordability ratios by settlement type and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-6, Note D-7)

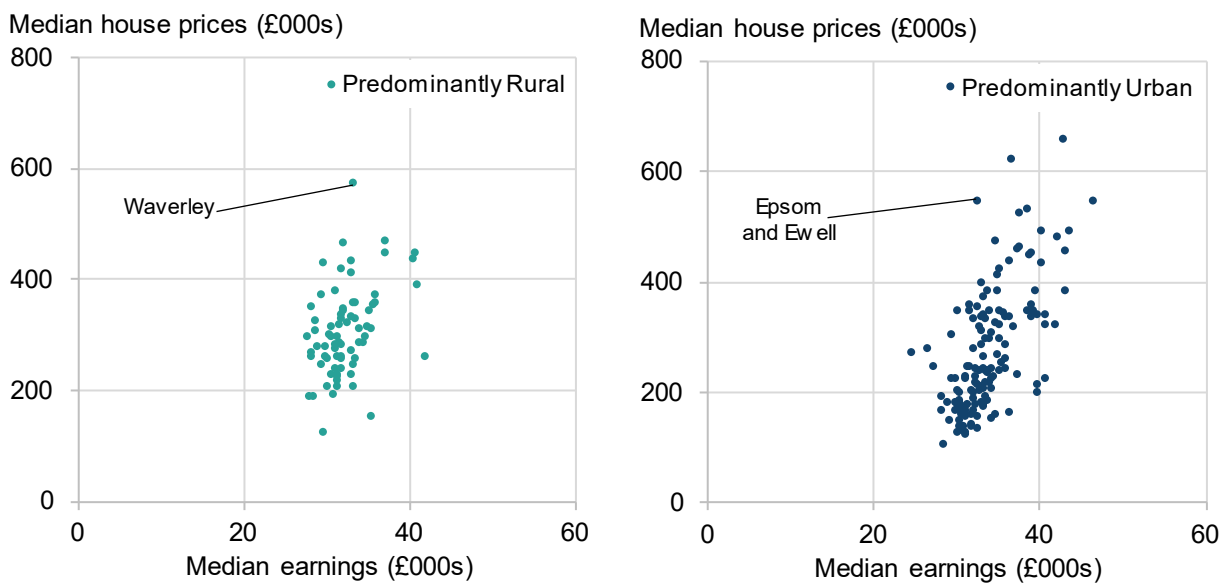
“Urban Conurbation” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes	All properties
Mainly Rural	14.0	9.0	7.6	5.1	10.0
Largely Rural	13.6	8.8	7.2	4.8	9.2
Urban with Significant Rural	14.5	9.4	7.6	5.1	9.4
Urban with City and Town	13.5	9.0	7.4	4.9	8.4
Urban Conurbation	13.9	8.6	6.7	4.8	7.9
London	46.3	33.7	21.7	10.9	14.4
England	17.8	12.0	9.1	5.7	9.5

Affordability is calculated using house prices and earnings. Therefore, for example, one area may be more affordable than another - even if average earnings are similar - due to their average house prices differing. The scatter plots in Figure D-3 show the distribution of median house prices to earnings for Local Authorities, by settlement type, in year ending March 2024.

Figure D-3: Scatter plots showing median property sale prices against median annual workplace-based earnings for Local Authorities in England, by broad Rural-Urban Classification, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3)

Predominantly Rural Local Authorities are represented in the left-hand chart. Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London are represented in the right-hand chart. Charts are plotted on the same scale to aid comparisons. Notable outliers from the general trend have been labelled, and explained below.



Whilst generally, areas with higher earnings tend to have higher house prices, this is not always the case. Some notable outliers have been labelled on Figure D-3:

- “Waverley” in Surrey has been labelled on the left-hand chart as it has a particularly high median property sale price, and is therefore less affordable, compared to other Predominantly Rural Local Authorities with similar median earnings.
- “Epsom and Ewell” in Surrey has been labelled on the right-hand chart as it has a particularly high median property sale price, and is therefore less affordable, compared to other Predominantly Urban Local Authorities with similar median earnings; it also has particularly low median earnings compared to other Predominantly Urban Local Authorities with similar median property sale prices.

Some areas of the country tend to be more affordable than others. Factors that contribute towards this include lower housing costs or higher average earnings. Table D-2 shows the **most affordable** Local Authorities in year ending March 2024.

Table D-2: Local Authorities with the lowest median affordability ratios (median house prices to median workplace-based earnings), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Ratio
Predominantly Rural	Detached	Cumberland	8.3
	Semi-detached	Cumberland	4.5
	Terraced	County Durham	2.9
	Flats/maisonettes	South Holland	2.6
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Kingston upon Hull, City of	7.8
	Semi-detached	Hartlepool	4.6
	Terraced	Hartlepool	2.6
	Flats/maisonettes	Middlesbrough	2.1

For detached and semi-detached properties, “Cumberland” in Cumbria was the most affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in year ending March 2024; here, median detached property sale prices were 8.3 times higher than median earnings, whilst median semi-detached property sale prices were 4.5 times higher than earnings. “County Durham” was the most affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in terms of terraced properties (as median sale prices were 2.9 times higher than earnings). “South Holland” in Lincolnshire was the most affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in terms of flats/maisonettes (as median sale prices were 2.6 times higher than earnings).

For detached properties, “Kingston upon Hull” in East Riding of Yorkshire was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority outside of London (as median sale prices were 7.8 times higher than earnings). For semi-detached or terraced properties, “Hartlepool” in County Durham was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority; here, median semi-detached property sale prices were 4.6 times higher than earnings, whilst median terraced property sale prices were 2.6 times higher than earnings. “Middlesbrough” in North Yorkshire was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority in terms of flats/maisonettes (as median sale prices were 2.1 times higher than earnings).

Table D-3 shows the **least affordable** Local Authorities (with the highest affordability ratios) in year ending March 2024.

Table D-3: Local Authorities with the highest median affordability ratios (median house prices to median workplace-based earnings), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Ratio
Predominantly Rural	Detached	Sevenoaks	27.1
	Semi-detached	Waverley	16.2
	Terraced	Waverley	12.5
	Flats/maisonettes	South Hams	8.5
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Elmbridge	31.8
	Semi-detached	St Albans	19.3
	Terraced	St Albans	15.5
	Flats/maisonettes	Epsom and Ewell	10.2

For detached properties, “Sevenoaks” in Kent was the least affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in year ending March 2024 (as median sale prices were 27.1 times higher than earnings). For semi-detached or terraced properties, “Waverley” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority; here, median semi-detached property sale prices were 16.2 times higher than earnings, whilst median terraced property sale prices were 12.5 times higher than earnings. “South Hams” in Devon was the least affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in terms of flats/maisonettes (as median sale prices were 8.5 times higher than earnings).

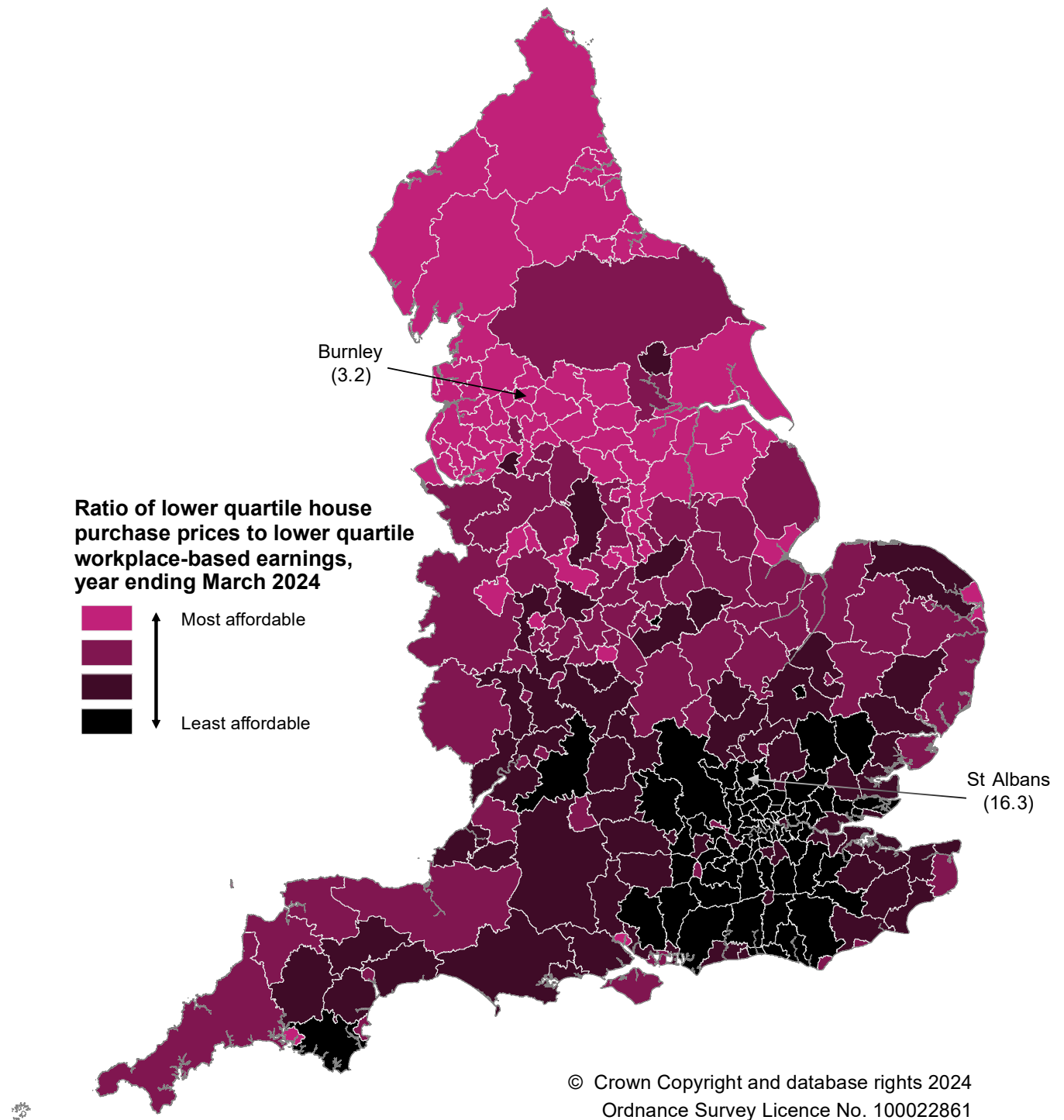
For detached properties, “Elmbridge” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority outside of London (as median sale prices were 31.8 times higher than earnings). For semi-detached or terraced properties, “St Albans” in Hertfordshire was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority; here, median semi-detached property sale prices were 19.3 times higher than earnings, whilst median terraced property sale prices were 15.5 times higher than earnings. “Epsom and Ewell” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority in terms of flats/maisonettes (as median sale prices were 10.2 times higher than earnings).

Lower quartile house purchase affordability

The ratio between lower quartile (Note D-5) property purchase prices and lower quartile workplace-based earnings can be used to give an indication of whether typical first-time buyers or people on low income could afford to buy a house at the lower end of the housing market. The map in Figure D-4 shows the lower quartile affordability ratios of Local Authorities in year ending March 2024.

Figure D-4: Map showing lower quartile house affordability (all dwellings) for Local Authorities, by quartiles, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-4)

The darker the colour, the higher the ratio of lower quartile house purchase prices to lower quartile workplace-based earnings, and therefore the less affordable the typical low-market house is. Data excludes City of London and Isles of Scilly. Most and least affordable areas are labelled.



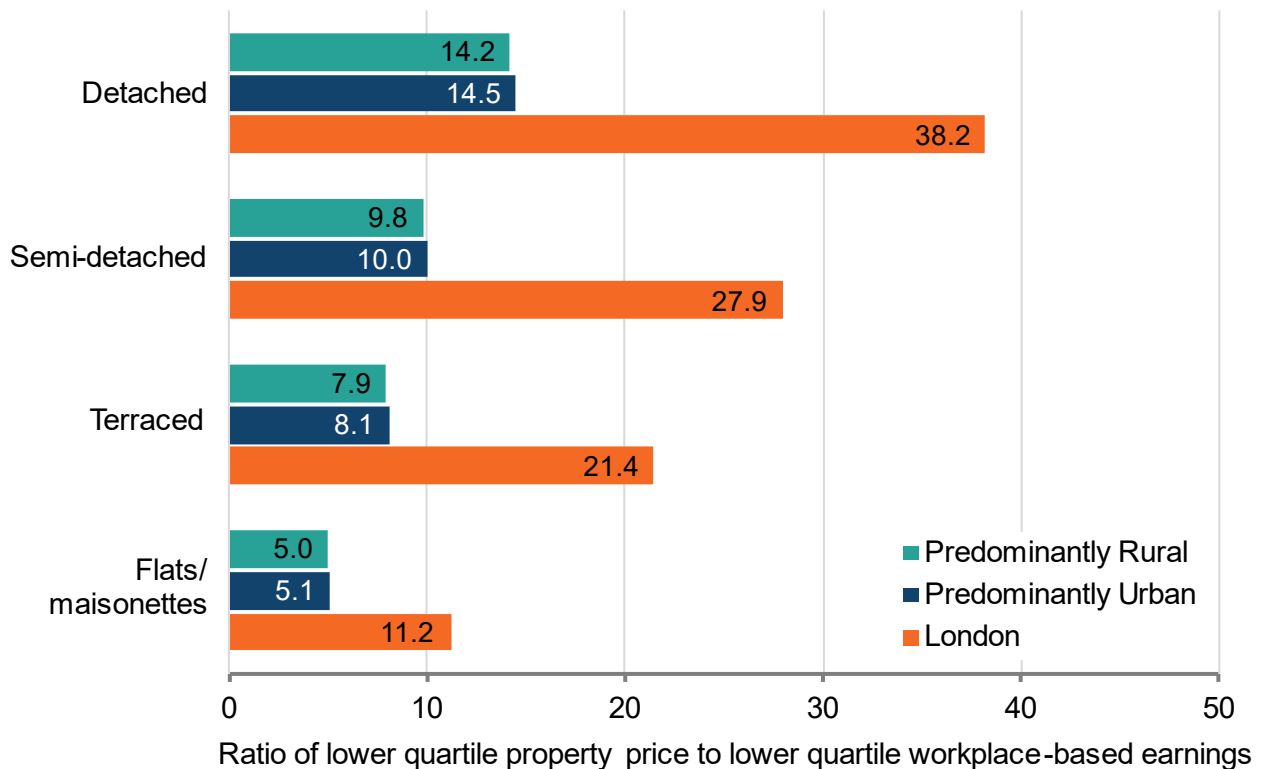
The map in Figure D-4 can be summarised as follows:

- Generally, the North of England is much more affordable to buy a property in than the South, in terms of lower quartile property purchase prices and lower quartile annual workplace-based earnings. The least affordable areas are in and around London.
- In the most affordable 25% of Local Authorities in England, lower quartile property purchase prices were up to 6.7 times higher than annual workplace-based earnings. Of these 74 Local Authorities, 9 were Predominantly Rural and 56 were Predominantly Urban (excluding London).
- In the least affordable 25% of Local Authorities in England, lower quartile property purchase prices were between 11.3 and 25.9 times higher than annual workplace-based earnings. Of these 74 Local Authorities, 12 were Predominantly Rural, 23 were Predominantly Urban (excluding London), and 29 were in London.
- The most affordable Local Authority overall was “Burnley” where lower quartile house purchase prices were 3.3 times higher than annual lower quartile workplace-based earnings. Outside of London, the least affordable Local Authority was “St Albans” where lower quartile property prices were 16.3 times higher than annual earnings.

Residential property purchase prices differ depending on the type of dwelling; for instance, in most cases, a flat or maisonette will be less expensive than a detached home in the same area. As a result, properties in the same area may be more or less affordable to the same person, based on their earnings staying the same. This is shown in the bar chart in Figure D-5.

Figure D-5: Bar chart showing lower quartile house purchase affordability ratios by settlement type and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-7)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. Lower values = more affordable.



For all dwelling types, there was little difference between the lower quartile affordability ratios in Predominantly Rural and Predominantly Urban areas outside of London in March 2024:

- The lower quartile price paid for **detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 14.2 times higher than lower quartile workplace-based earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (14.5). Lower quartile affordability ratios in London were more than 2 times higher than anywhere else in England; the lower quartile price paid for detached properties in London was 38.2 times higher than lower quartile earnings.
- The lower quartile price paid for **semi-detached** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 9.8 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (10.0). Lower quartile affordability ratios in London were nearly 3 times higher than anywhere else in England; the lower quartile price paid for semi-detached properties in London was 27.9 times higher than lower quartile earnings.
- The lower quartile price paid for **terraced** properties in Predominantly Rural areas was 7.9 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is marginally lower than in Predominantly Urban areas (8.1). Lower quartile affordability ratios in London were nearly 3 times higher than anywhere else in England; the lower quartile price paid for terraced properties in London was 21.4 times higher than lower quartile earnings.
- The mean price paid for **flats/maisonettes** in Predominantly Rural areas was 5.0 times higher than lower quartile earnings; this is similar to Predominantly Urban areas (5.1). Lower quartile affordability ratios in London were more than 2 times higher than anywhere else in England; the lower quartile price paid for flats/maisonettes in London was 11.2 times higher than lower quartile earnings.

Table D-4 shows the lower quartile affordability ratios by detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type in year ending March 2024. On average, Mainly Rural areas were less affordable than Largely Rural areas. Urban with Significant Rural areas generally were the least affordable outside of London, whilst Urban Conurbation or Largely Rural areas were typically the most affordable.

Table D-4: Lower quartile house purchase affordability ratios by settlement type and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3, Note D-6, Note D-7)

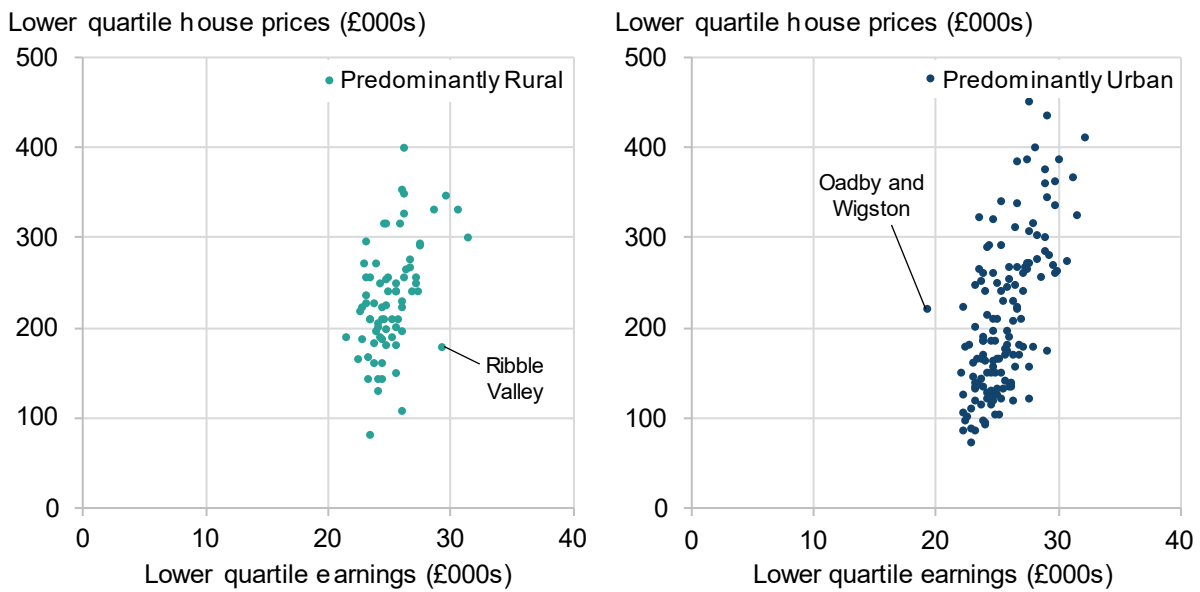
“Urban Conurbation” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/maisonettes	All properties
Mainly Rural	14.4	10.0	8.2	5.3	9.7
Largely Rural	14.0	9.6	7.7	4.8	8.9
Urban with Significant Rural	15.5	10.6	8.6	5.4	9.4
Urban with City and Town	14.4	10.2	8.4	5.2	8.5
Urban Conurbation	14.6	9.5	7.4	5.0	7.7
London	38.2	27.9	21.4	11.2	13.9
England	17.2	12.0	9.7	5.8	9.3

Affordability is calculated using house prices and earnings. Therefore, for example, one area may be more affordable than another - even if average earnings are similar - due to their average house prices differing. The scatter plots in Figure D-6 show the distribution of lower quartile house prices to earnings for Local Authorities, by settlement type, in year ending March 2024.

Figure D-6: Scatter plots showing lower quartile house prices against lower quartile workplace-based earnings for Local Authorities in England, by broad Rural-Urban Classification, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2, Note D-3)

Predominantly Rural Local Authorities are represented in the left-hand chart. Predominantly Urban Local Authorities outside of London are represented in the right-hand chart. Charts are plotted on the same scale to aid comparisons. Notable outliers from the general trend have been labelled, and explained below.



Whilst generally, areas with higher earnings tend to have higher house prices, this is not always the case. Some notable outliers have been labelled on Figure D-6:

- “Ribble Valley” in Lancashire has been labelled on the left-hand chart as it has particularly high lower quartile workplace-based earnings, and is therefore more affordable to buy a property in, compared to other Predominantly Rural Local Authorities with a similar lower quartile property sale price.
- “Oadby and Wigston” in Leicestershire has been labelled on the right-hand chart as it has particularly low lower quartile workplace-based earnings, and is therefore less affordable to buy a property in, compared to other Predominantly Urban Local Authorities with a similar lower quartile property sale price.

Some areas of the country tend to be more affordable than others. Factors that contribute towards this include lower housing costs or higher average earnings. Table D-5 shows the **most affordable** Local Authorities (with the lowest affordability ratios) in year ending March 2024.

Table D-5: Local Authorities with the lowest lower quartile affordability ratios (lower quartile house prices to lower quartile workplace-based earnings), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Ratio
Predominantly Rural	Detached	County Durham	8.4
	Semi-detached	County Durham	4.3
	Terraced	County Durham	2.7
	Flats/maisonettes	County Durham	2.8
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Stoke-on-Trent	8.3
	Semi-detached	Stockton-on-Tees	5.1
	Terraced	Middlesbrough	2.6
	Flats/maisonettes	Kingston upon Hull, City of	2.1

In Predominantly Rural areas, regardless of the type of property, “County Durham” was the most affordable Local Authority in terms of lower quartile house prices and lower quartile earnings; here, the sale price for flats/maisonettes was 2.8 times higher than earnings, whilst detached property sale prices were 8.4 times higher than earnings. Terraced properties were slightly more affordable than flats/maisonettes in this Authority, as their sale prices were 2.7 times higher than earnings.

For detached properties, “Stoke-on-Trent” in Staffordshire was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority outside of London (as lower quartile sale prices were 8.3 times higher than earnings). For semi-detached properties, “Stockton-on-Tees” in County Durham was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority (as lower quartile sale prices were 5.1 times higher than earnings). For terraced properties, “Middlesbrough” in North Yorkshire was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority (as lower quartile sale prices were 2.6 times higher than earnings). For flats/maisonettes, “Kingston upon Hull” in East Riding of Yorkshire was the most affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority (as lower quartile sale prices were 2.1 times higher than earnings).

Table D-6 shows the **least affordable** Local Authorities (with the highest affordability ratios) in year ending March 2024.

Table D-6: Local Authorities with the highest lower quartile affordability ratios (lower quartile house prices to lower quartile workplace-based earnings), by broad Rural-Urban Classification and dwelling type, year ending March 2024 (Note D-2)

“Predominantly Urban” excludes London.

Rural-Urban Classification	Property type	Local Authority	Ratio
Predominantly Rural	Detached	Waverley	25.2
	Semi-detached	Waverley	17.2
	Terraced	Waverley	13.2
	Flats/maisonettes	Sevenoaks	7.7
Predominantly Urban	Detached	Elmbridge	33.6
	Semi-detached	St Albans	21.0
	Terraced	St Albans	17.2
	Flats/maisonettes	Epsom and Ewell	10.3

For most dwelling types (detached, semi-detached, and terraced properties), “Waverley” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority in terms of lower quartile house prices and lower quartile earnings. Here, the sale price for terraced properties was 13.2 times higher than earnings, whilst detached property sale prices were 25.2 times higher than earnings. “Sevenoaks” in Kent was the least affordable Predominantly Rural Local Authority for flats/maisonettes (as sale prices were 7.7 times higher than earnings).

For detached properties, “Elmbridge” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority outside of London (as sale prices were 33.6 times higher than earnings). For semi-detached or terraced properties, “St Albans” in Hertfordshire was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority; here, lower quartile semi-detached property sale prices were 21.0 times higher than earnings, whilst terraced property sale prices were 17.2 times higher than earnings. “Epsom and Ewell” in Surrey was the least affordable Predominantly Urban Local Authority for flats/maisonettes (as sale prices were 10.3 times higher than earnings).

Housing stock: affordable housing - explanatory notes

- **Note D-1**

Affordability ratios are calculated by dividing median/lower quartile house prices by median/lower quartile gross annual workplace-based earnings. The earnings data are from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2023) which provides a snapshot of earnings at April in each year (via [NOMIS](#)). Earnings relate to gross full-time individual earnings on a place of work basis. The house price statistics come from the [Housing affordability in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#). For more information regarding the methodology, see the [Housing affordability in England and Wales QMI - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#).

- **Note D-2**

Data were not available for the “Isles of Scilly” or “City of London” and therefore affordability ratios could not be calculated and are excluded from all totals.

- **Note D-3**

Data are for 2023 Local Authorities; the corresponding Rural-Urban Classification of these Authorities can be found via [2011 Rural Urban Classification lookup tables for all geographies - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note D-4**

The colour grading on the maps within this section are based on quartiles, which divide the affordability ratios into four equal parts, ordered from smallest to largest. Lower values = more affordable. These “bounds” are given as follows:

Rural-Urban Classification	Median affordability ratios	Lower quartile affordability ratios
Quartile 1 (lowest 25%)	More than 3.9 and up to 6.8	More than 3.2 and up to 6.7
Quartile 2	More than 6.8 and up to 9.0	More than 6.7 and up to 9.1
Quartile 3	More than 9.0 and up to 11.2	More than 9.1 and up to 11.3
Quartile 4 (highest 25%)	More than 11.2 and up to 33.6	More than 11.3 and up to 25.9

- **Note D-5**

The lower quartile is the value in a data set that has 25% of the data points below it when ordered from smallest to largest. In terms of house prices, this refers to the “cheapest” 25% of homes. Similarly, this refers to the lowest 25% of earners in England. The median is the middle value of a data set when ordered from smallest to largest, and has 50% below it and 50% above it. In terms of house prices, this refers to mid-market or “average” homes. Similarly, this refers to people earning an “average” wage.

This publication assumes that people with lower quartile earnings will be aiming to buy a low-market home, and those with median earnings will aim to buy a mid-market home. However, their affordability may change if, for example, a person with median earnings bought a low-market home.

- **Note D-6**

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

- **Note D-7**

For detached and semi-detached properties in “Tower Hamlets”, average property sale price data was not provided in the source (for both median and lower quartile) due to there being small numbers of sales. To reflect this, average earnings in “Tower Hamlets” have not been included in totals or ratio calculations.

E. Second and empty homes

In 2023, the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes was twice as high in Predominantly Rural areas (1.8%) than in Predominantly Urban areas, however rurality has little impact on the percentage of dwellings classed as empty.

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 2023, 1.8% of dwellings in Predominantly Rural areas were classed as second homes, which is twice the proportion classed as second homes in Predominantly Urban areas (0.9%). The difference is more pronounced in Local Authorities with a coastal boundary or land within a National Park (here if at least one fifth of the Local Authorities area is within a National Park), where 2.7% of dwellings in Predominantly Rural coastal areas with these characteristics were classed as second homes, compared with 0.8% in Predominantly Urban areas with the same characteristics. When considering how the percentage of second homes differ between council tax bands, we see that the proportion of second homes in Predominantly Rural areas is higher for all bands.

In 2023, there were 480,800 dwellings classed as empty homes in England and 109,600 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 1.9% 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.

Proportions of second homes and empty homes have been tracked in the Statistical Digest of Rural England from 2020. Since this point in time there have been limited changes in these proportions. See worksheet EB in the [Housing Supplementary data tables](#) for more detail.

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%. However, from 1 April 2025 Local Authorities could also charge up to 2 times the normal Council Tax for the property. The authority will decide whether the property is a 'second home' and whether to charge this additional tax (Note E-2).

As shown in Table E-1, on 2 October 2023 there were 263,300 dwellings classed as second homes in England, with 104,000 (39%) in Predominantly Rural areas and 136,800 (52%) in Predominantly Urban areas. In Predominantly Rural areas 1.8% of dwellings are classed as second homes, which is twice that of Predominantly Urban areas (0.9%) and more than twice that of Urban with Significant Rural areas (0.7%).

Table E-1: Number and Percentage of second homes by 2011 broad Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, 2 October 2023 (Note E-1)

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of second homes	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes (%)
Predominantly Rural	104,000	1.8
Urban with Significant Rural	22,600	0.7
Predominantly Urban	136,800	0.9
England	263,300	1.1

Table E-2 provides more detail, showing the number of second homes and percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes by detailed Rural-Urban classification. Mainly Rural (the most rural) areas have the highest rate of second homes, with 2.3% of dwellings classed as second homes, compared with 0.9% in Urban Conurbations (the most urban areas).

Table E-2: Number and Percentage of second homes by 2011 Detailed Local Authority Rural-Urban Classification, 2 October 2023 (Note E-1)

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of second homes	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes (%)
Mainly Rural	40,400	2.3
Largely Rural	63,600	1.6
Urban with Significant Rural	22,600	0.7
Urban with City and Town	54,600	0.9
Urban Conurbation	82,200	0.9

The difference is more pronounced for those Local Authorities that have a coastal boundary or have at least one fifth of their area within the boundaries of a National Park. In Predominantly Rural Local Authorities that are with coastal boundaries or overlapping with National Parks, 2.7% of all chargeable dwellings are classed as second homes, compared with 0.9% in Predominantly Urban Local Authorities that are with coastal boundaries or overlapping with National Parks.

At the England level, the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes in those Local Authorities that are coastal or overlapping with National Parks was 1.6%, twice the rate of those authorities that are not with coastal boundaries or overlapping with National Parks (0.8%).

Second homes by Council Tax Band

It is useful also to consider how the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes differs between Council Tax bands, giving us an indication of the value of dwellings classed as second homes. For the purposes of this analysis the eight council tax bands have been grouped into four bands: 'Band A', 'Band B', 'Bands C and D', and 'Bands E to H'. Table E-3 is provided for context and shows the Council Tax band groupings, the 1991 property values used to establish the original Council Tax bands and an estimate of their equivalent value in January 2024.

Table E-3: Current Council Tax bands for England and how they have been grouped for the purposes of this report.

Council Tax band	Market value of property on 1 April 1991	Estimated value in January 2024
Band A	up to £40,000	up to £191,000
Band B	up to £52,000	up to £249,000
Band C and D	up to £88,000	up to £421,000
Bands E to H	over £88,000	over £421,000

The bar chart in Figure E-1 shows that percentages of second homes are consistently highest in Predominantly Rural areas with those in the lowest and highest value bands (Band A and Bands E to H) having the greatest percentage of second homes (2.1%). The difference between settlement types in percentage of second homes is greatest for Band A where the percentage for Predominantly Rural areas is 1.3 percentage points greater than that for Predominantly Urban areas (0.8%).

Figure E-1: Bar chart showing the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes, by grouped Council Tax bands and Local Authority Rural Urban classification, England, 2 October 2023

The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend.

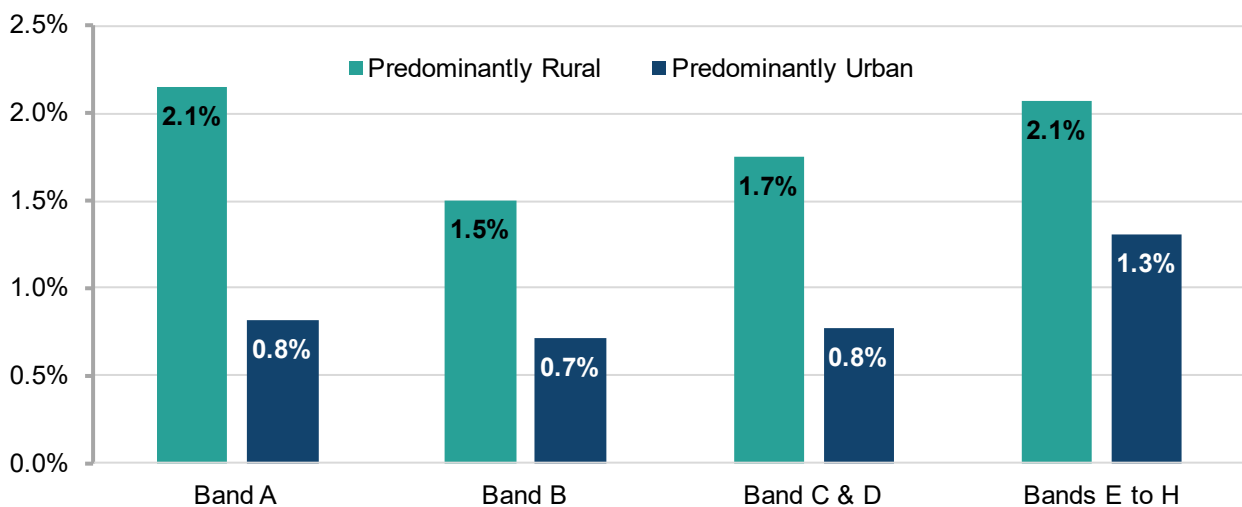


Figure E-2 is a map which shows the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes in Predominantly Rural areas. There were 3 Predominantly Rural areas where the proportion of properties that were second homes were particularly high - at least 4 times the average proportion of second homes in Predominantly Rural areas (1.8%). The areas with the highest percentage of dwellings classed as second homes, outside of London, were North Norfolk (10.1%), South Hams (8.8%), and Isles of Scilly (8.7%), all of which are coastal Mainly Rural areas.

There were no Predominantly Urban areas outside of London with at least 5% of properties being classed as second homes in 2023. Within London, the Local Authorities with the highest proportions of properties being classed as second homes were City of London (23.9%), Kensington and Chelsea (9.1%) and Camden (6.8%); this is shown in the map in Figure E-3. The only Local Authority classified as Urban with Significant Rural with at least 5% of properties being classed as second homes in 2023 was Great Yarmouth at 5.4%.

Figure E-2: Map showing the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes, Predominantly Rural Local Authorities in England, 2 October 2023

Local Authorities with coastal boundaries and / or have at least one fifth of their area within the boundaries of a National Park, are highlighted with white cross-hatching. The darker the colour of a Local Authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes. White areas on the map represent Predominantly Urban and Urban with Significant Rural areas, the colour grading of these areas is instead given in Figure E-3.

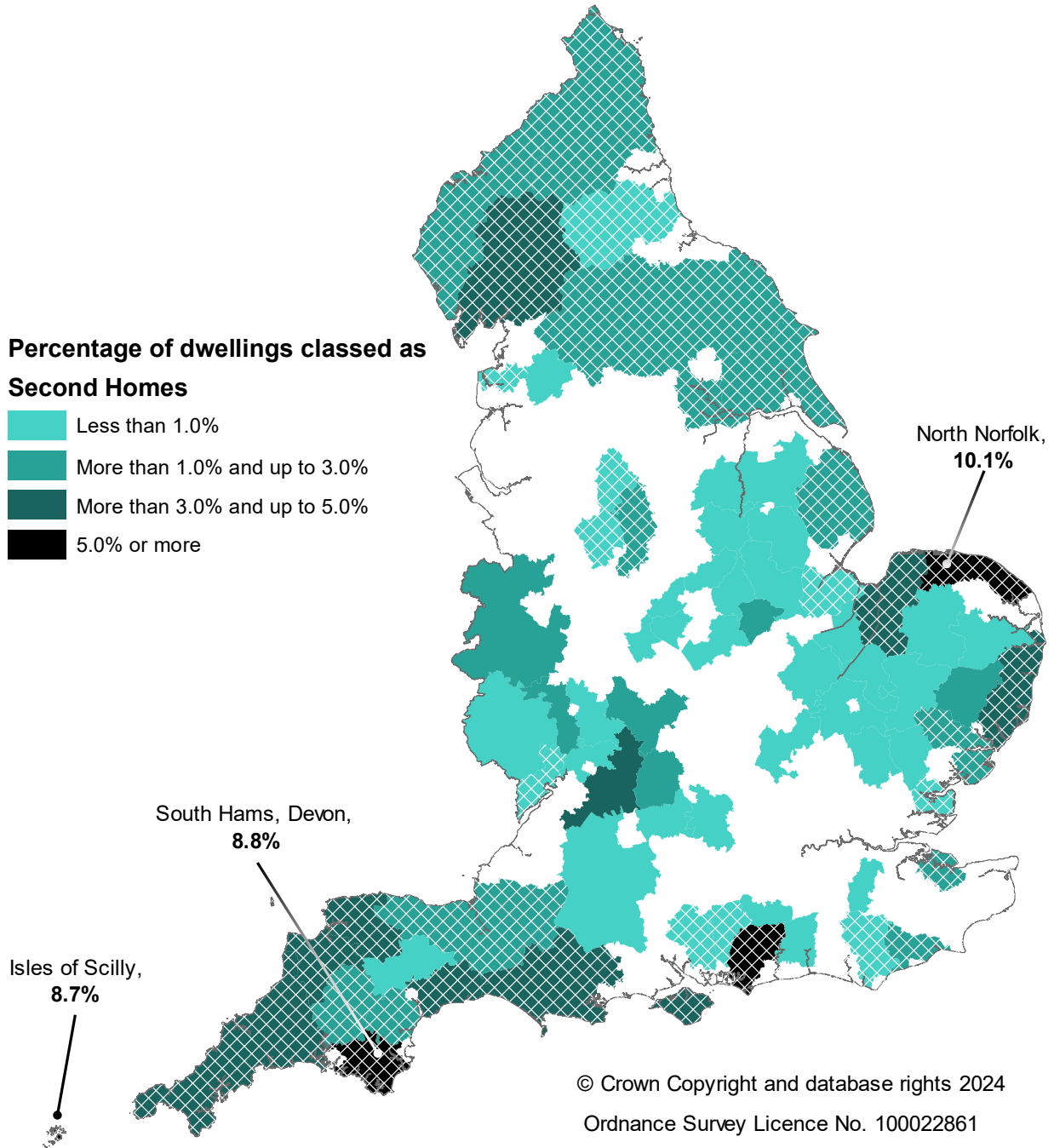
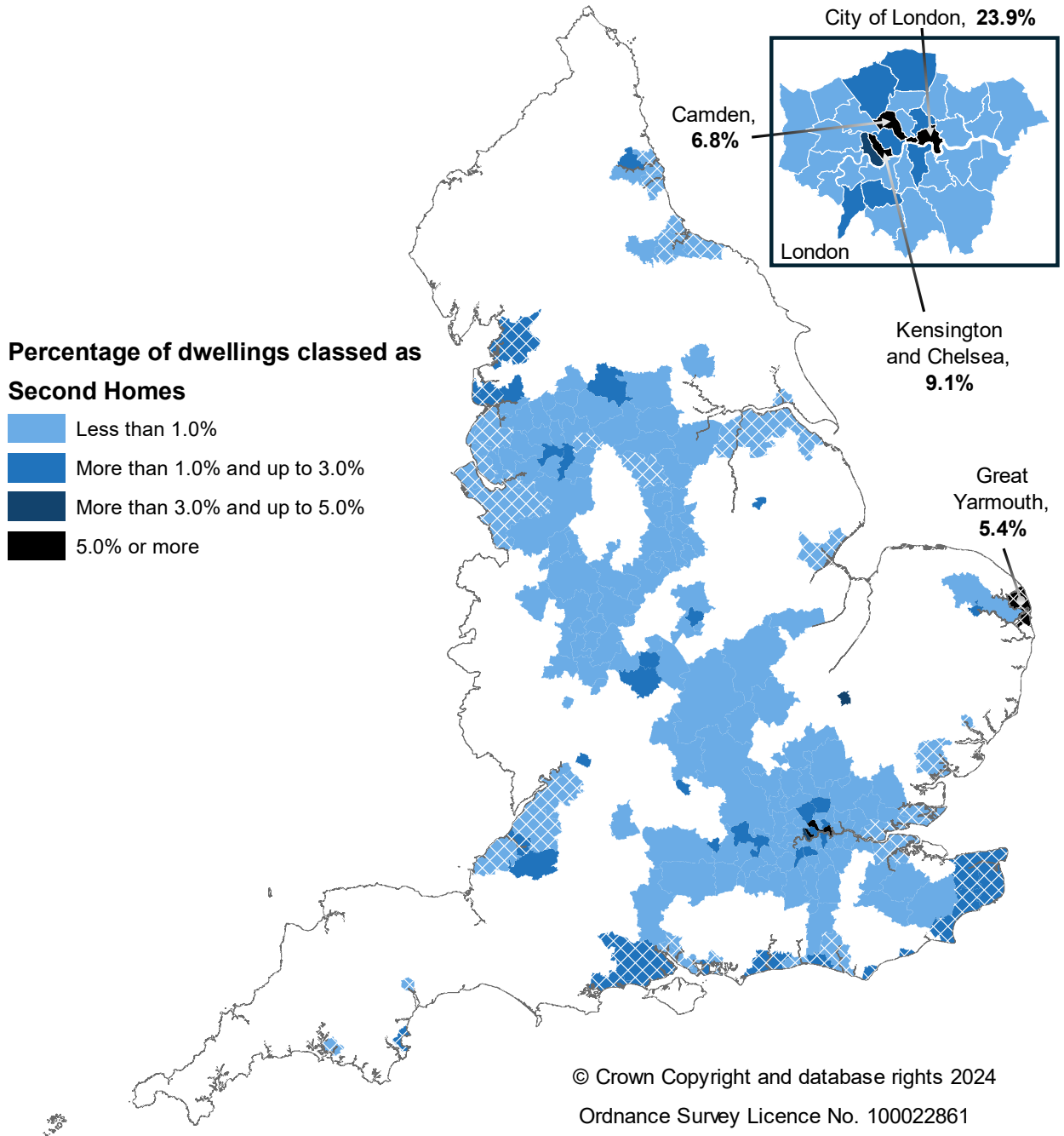


Figure E-3: Map showing the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes, for Predominantly Urban and Urban with Significant Rural Local Authorities, 2 October 2023

Local Authorities with coastal boundaries and / or have at least one fifth of their area within the boundaries of a National Park, are highlighted with white cross-hatching. The darker the colour of a Local Authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes. There is an inset map in the top right of the figure showing the Local Authorities within London for easier identification of the labelled Authorities. White areas on the map represent Predominantly Rural areas. The colour grading of these areas is instead given in Figure E-2.



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 5 to 10 years can receive a premium of up to 200%, this can increase up to 300% for premises that have been empty for 10 years or more. This is all at the discretion of each Local Authority (Note E-2).

Table E-4 shows that on 2 October 2023, there were 480,800 dwellings classed as empty homes in England. Just under a quarter of these empty homes (109,600 or 23%) were in Predominantly Rural areas and two in three (315,400 or 66%) were 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 1.9% of dwellings classed as empty homes, while Predominantly Urban areas (2.0%) and Urban with Significant Rural areas (1.7%) have similar proportions of empty homes.

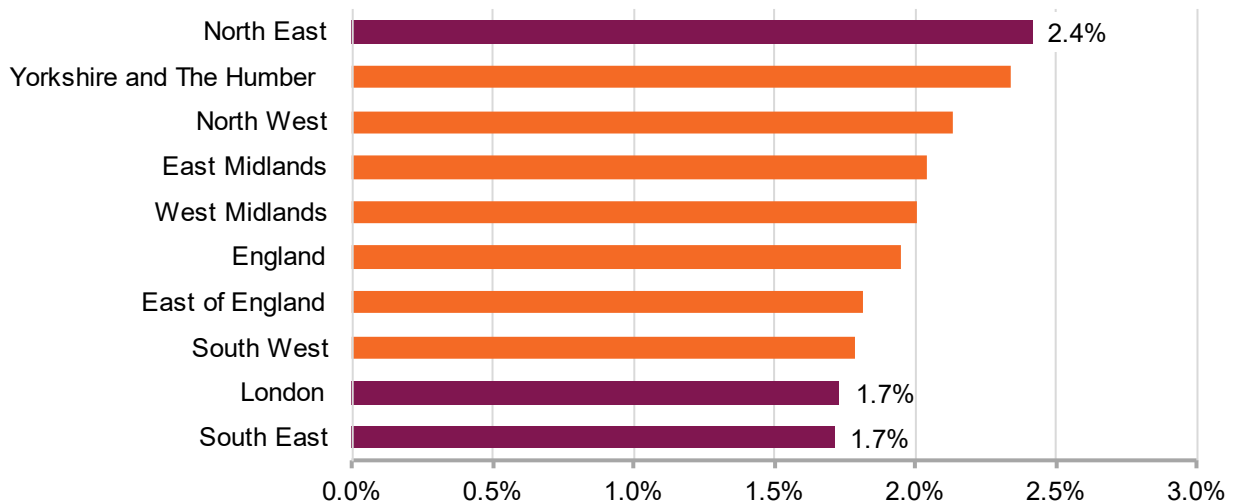
The differences are more pronounced across the regions of England, where 2.4% of dwellings are classed as empty in the North East, compared with 1.7% in the South East and in London. This is shown in the bar chart in Figure E-4. The regions of England with the highest percentage of empty dwellings are in the north. The percentage of empty dwellings generally decreases the further south you get. It is worth noting that the region which has the lowest average property price overall for England is the North East, meaning the North East region has the lowest average property price overall as well as being the region with the greatest percentage of empty properties (see [section C, Housing costs: purchase and rentals](#) in this report for more details).

Table E-4: Number and Percentage of Empty Dwellings by 2011 Local Authority broad Rural-Urban Classification, 2 October 2023 (Note E-1)

Rural-Urban Classification	Number of empty dwellings	Percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as empty (%)
Predominantly Rural	109,600	1.9
Urban with Significant Rural	55,800	1.7
Predominantly Urban	315,400	2.0
England	480,800	1.9

Figure E-4: Bar chart showing percentage of chargeable dwellings classed as empty, by Region, England, 2 October 2023

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

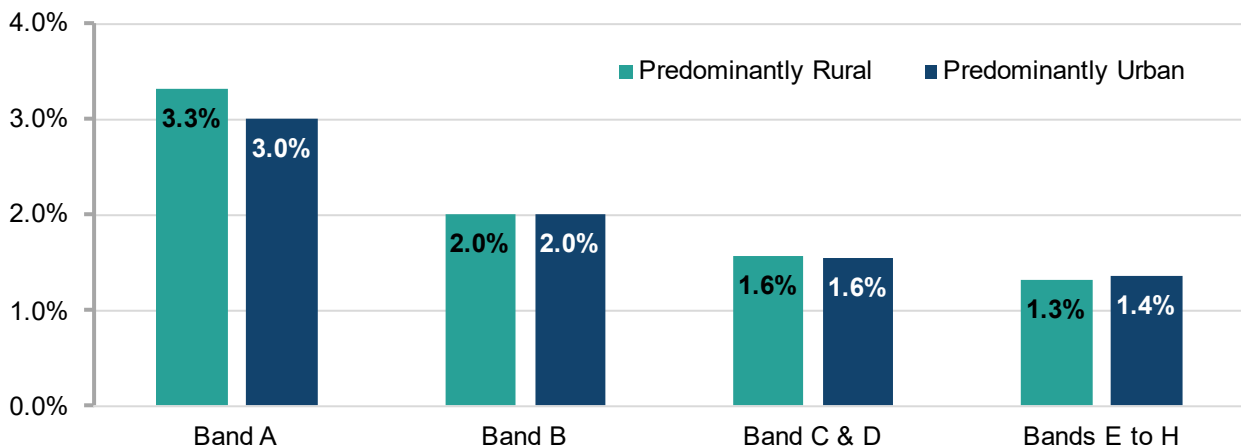


As with second homes, it can also be useful to consider how the percentage of dwellings classed as empty differs between Council Tax bands, giving us an indication of the value of dwellings being left empty. See Table E-3 for more information on the Council Tax bands and how we have grouped them for the purposes of this analysis.

The bar chart in Figure E-5 shows that percentages of empty homes are similar across all Council Tax bands apart from Band A where Predominantly Rural areas have a greater percentage of empty homes than Predominantly Urban areas (3.3% and 3.0% respectively) and Bands E to H where Predominantly Urban areas have a slightly higher percentage than Predominantly Rural areas (1.4% and 1.3% respectively). The lowest house price band (Band A) is where we see the greatest percentage of empty homes (3.3% for Predominantly Rural areas and 3.0% for Predominantly Urban area), and also where the difference between settlement types in percentages of empty homes is greatest, where the percentage for Predominantly Rural areas is 0.3 percentage points greater than that for Predominantly Urban areas (3.0%).

Figure E-5: Bar chart showing the percentage of dwellings classed as empty, by grouped Council Tax bands and Local Authority Rural Urban classification, England, 2 October 2023

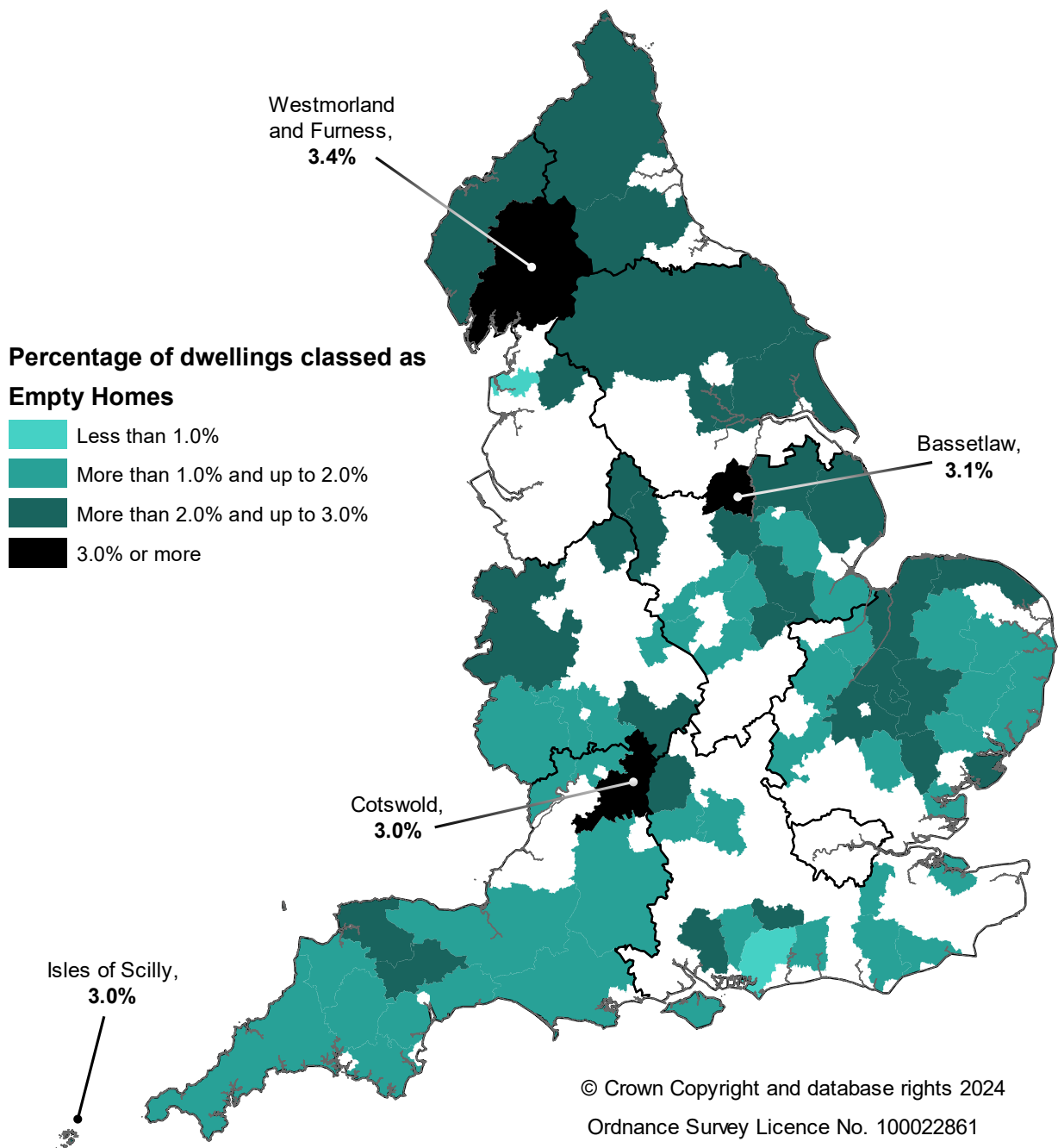
The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend.



The map in Figure E-6 shows the Predominantly Rural areas with the highest percentage of empty homes, which are Westmorland and Furness (3.4%), Bassetlaw (3.1%), Isles of Scilly and Cotswold (both 3.0%). Westmorland and Furness is a new Unitary Authority created in 2023 by merging the individual authorities of Barrow-in-Furness (Urban with Significant Rural), Eden and South Lakeland (both Predominantly Rural). It should be noted that in 2022, Eden had the highest percentage of empty homes for Predominantly Rural areas (3.0%), so while Barrow-in-Furness will have made a significant contribution to the high percentage for this new Unitary Authority in 2023 it is not the only driver of this high percentage.

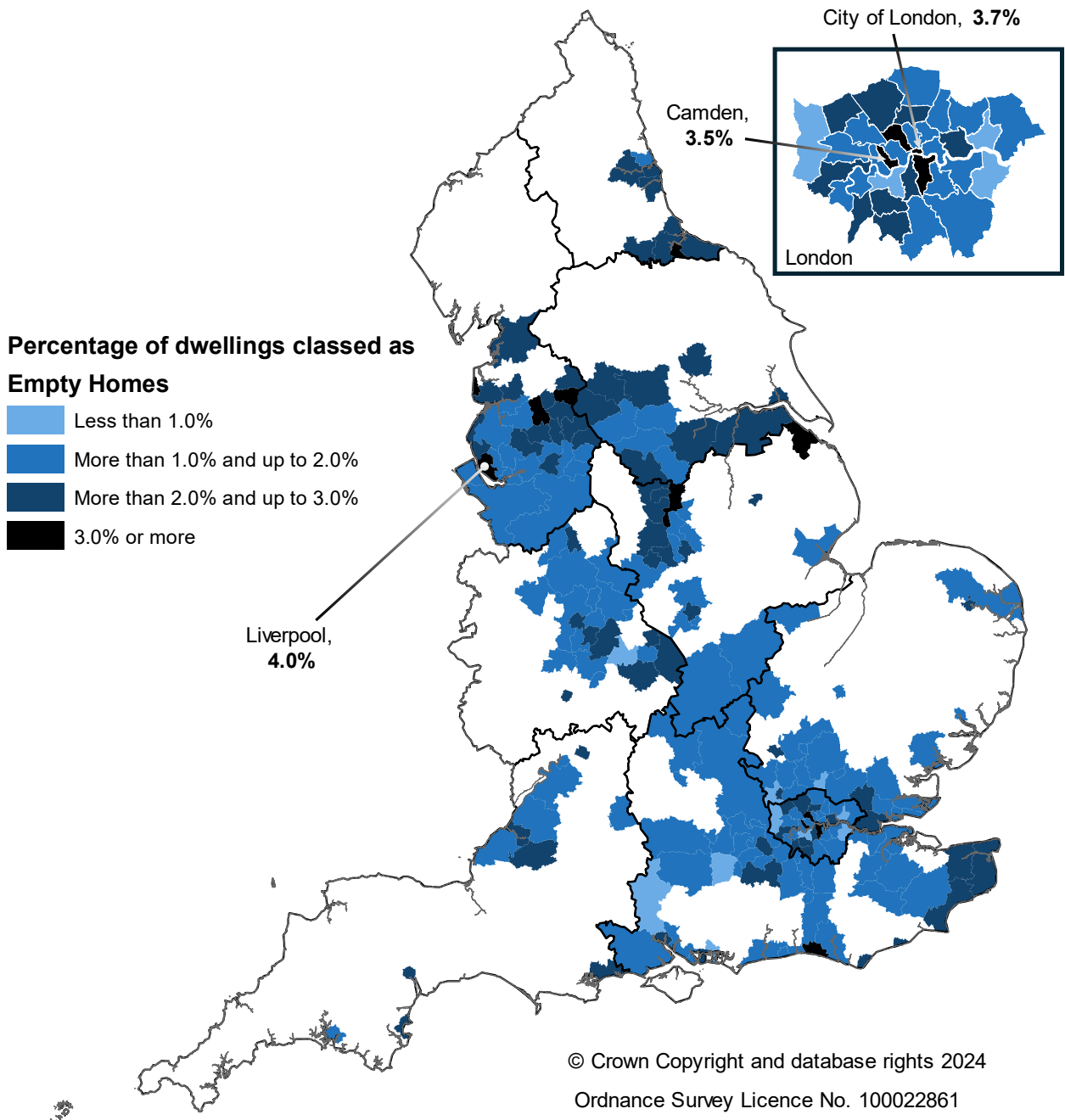
Figure E-6: Map showing percentage of dwellings classed as empty, by Local Authority in Predominantly Rural areas in England, 2 October 2023

Regions are highlighted with dark boundaries (Note E-5), 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. White areas on the map represent Predominantly Urban and Urban with Significant Rural areas, the colour grading of these areas is instead given in Figure E-7.



The Local Authority areas with the highest percentage of dwellings classed as empty homes are all Predominantly Urban Local Authorities. The map in Figure E-7 shows these areas, which are Liverpool (4.0%), City of London (3.7%), and Camden (3.5%). See Note E-2 for more information regarding reporting on empty dwellings used for Figure E-4, Figure E-5, Figure E-6 and Figure E-7.

Figure E-7: Map showing percentage of dwellings classed as empty, by Local Authority in Predominantly Urban and Urban with Significant Rural areas in England, 2 October 2023
 Regions are highlighted with dark boundaries (Note E-5), and Predominantly Urban 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. There is an inset map in the top right of the figure showing the Local Authorities within London for easier identification of the labelled Authorities. White areas on the map represent Predominantly Rural areas, the colour grading of these areas is instead given in Figure E-6.



Second and empty homes explanatory notes

- **Note E-1**

The data source is the Local Authority Council Taxbase England 2023 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-2**

The second homes council tax discount was introduced in April 2013. Information on discounts and charges relating to second and empty homes comes from the GOV.UK publication [How Council Tax works](#).

- **Note E-3**

Tables showing data given in Table E-1, Table E-2 and Table E-4, along with data behind the charts in this section, can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note E-4**

In 2023, 290 out of 296 authorities reported they were charging the premium on some of their empty dwellings. This was the fourth year where authorities have been asked to report the premium based on the length of time the dwelling had been empty. Some caution should be taken when interpreting the split of data as some authorities may only be able to report in one category (particularly where there is no variation in premium). In 2023, 290 authorities reported premiums for dwellings that have been empty for 2 to 5 years, 280 authorities reported premiums charged for dwellings empty for 5 to 10 years, and 271 authorities reported premiums charged for dwellings empty for 10 years and over.

- **Note E-5**

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.

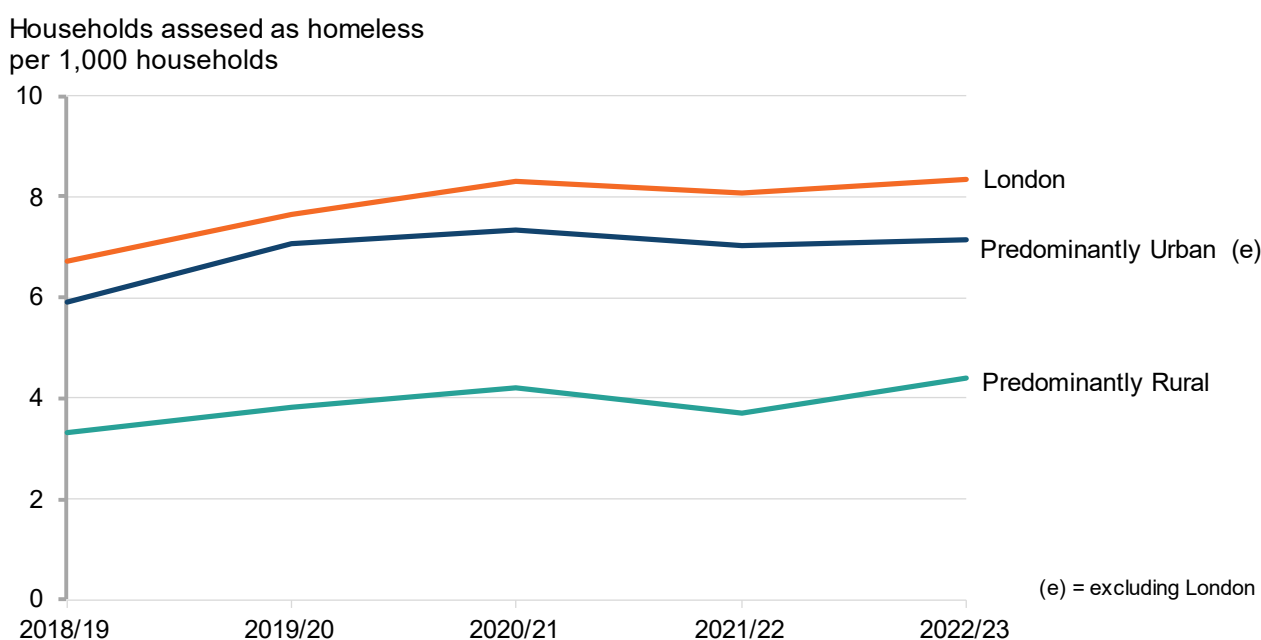
Statutory homelessness

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).

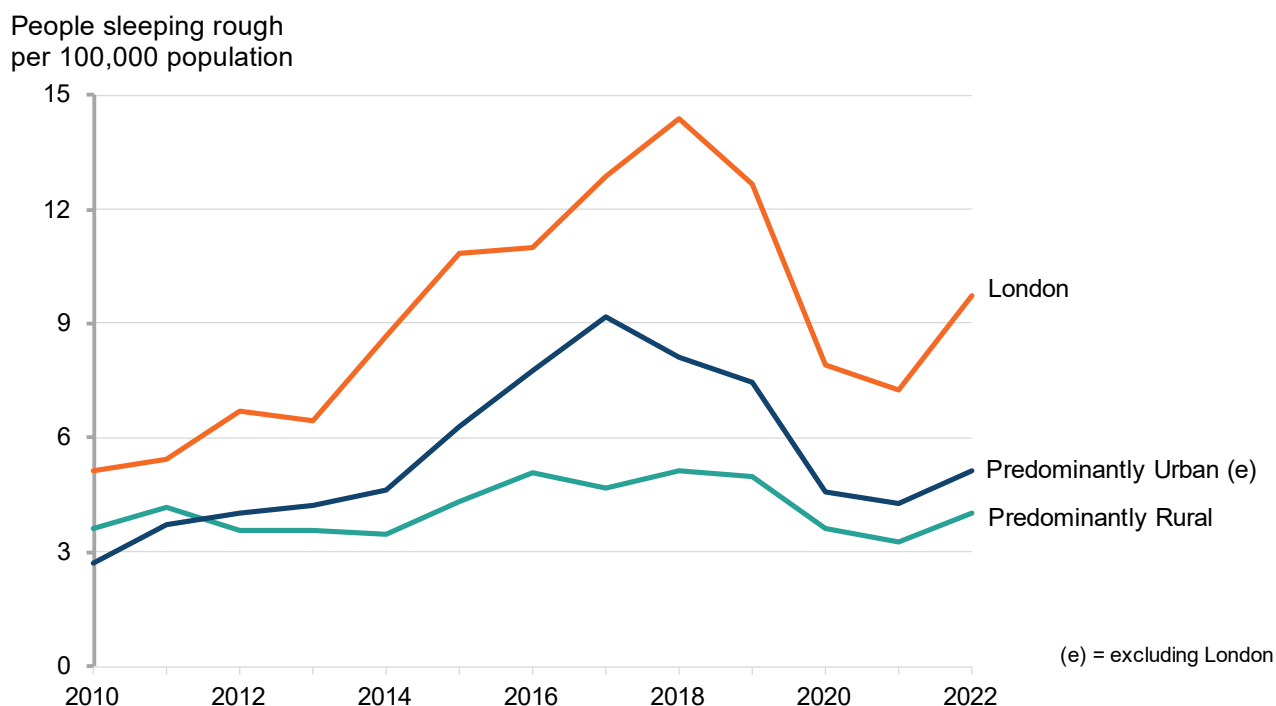
The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers. Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- **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.

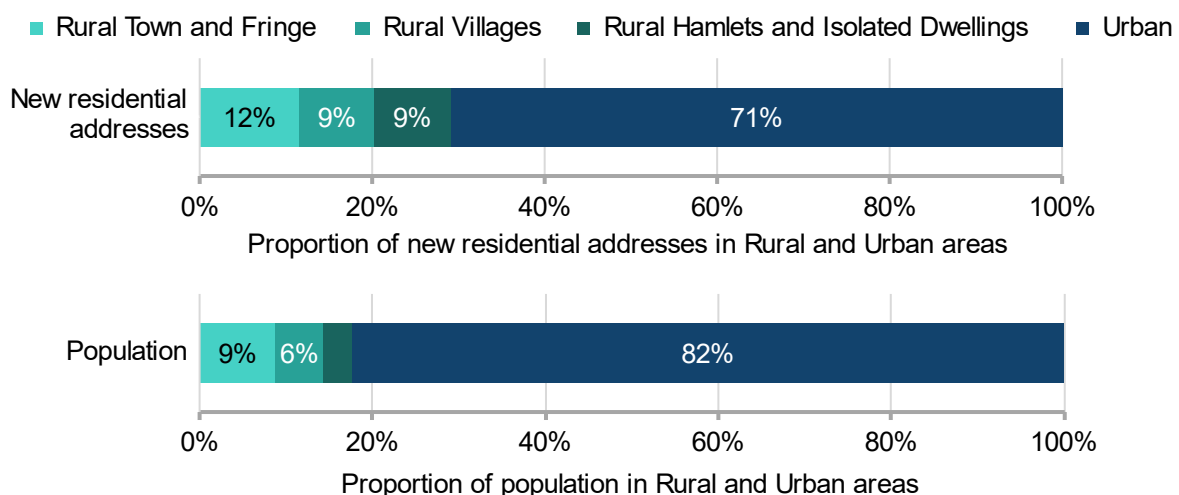
New residential addresses

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.

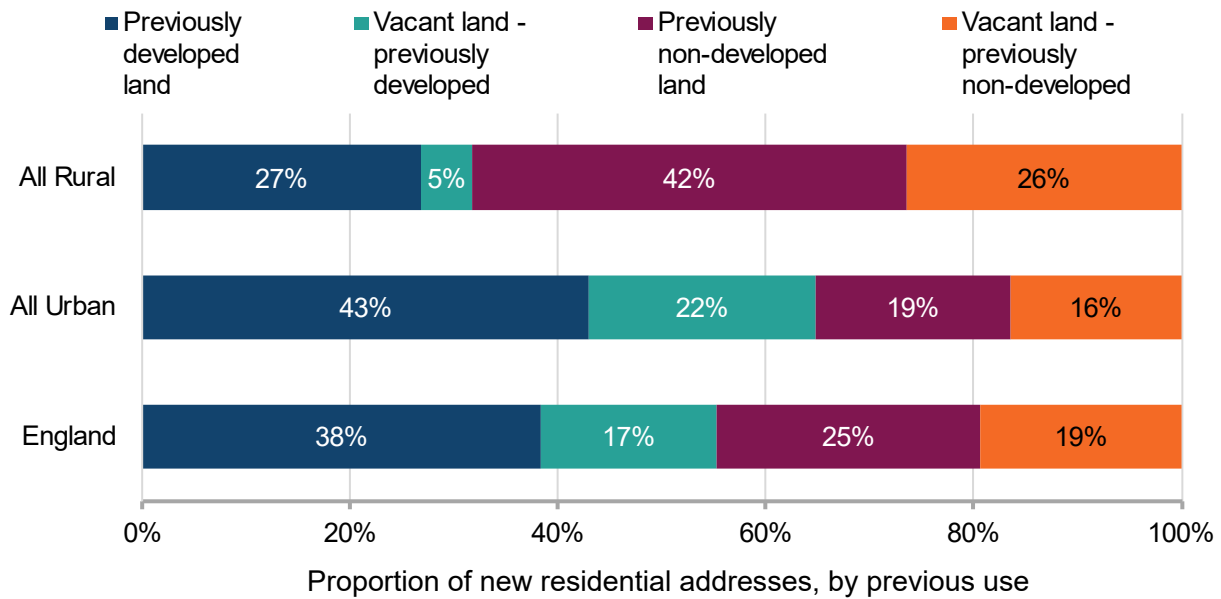
In England, 55% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (38% on land that was previously developed and 17% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 45% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (25% on land that was previously non-developed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

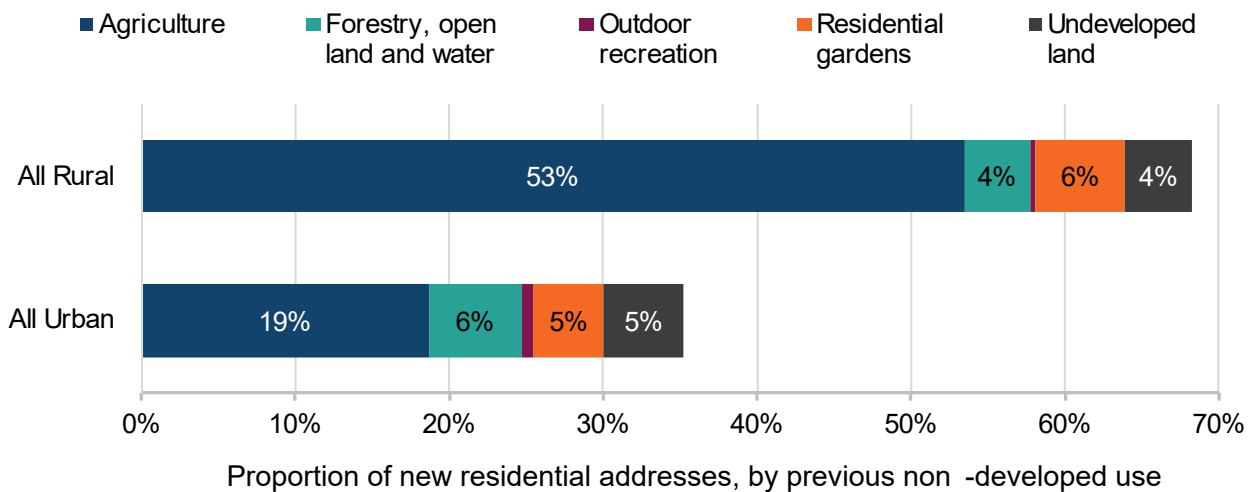
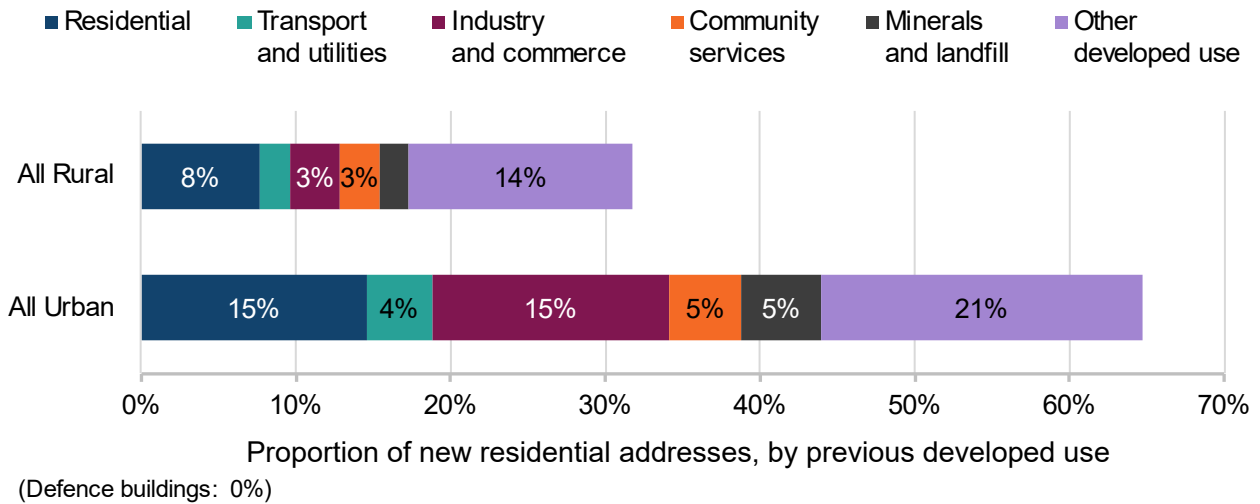


Previous land use

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:

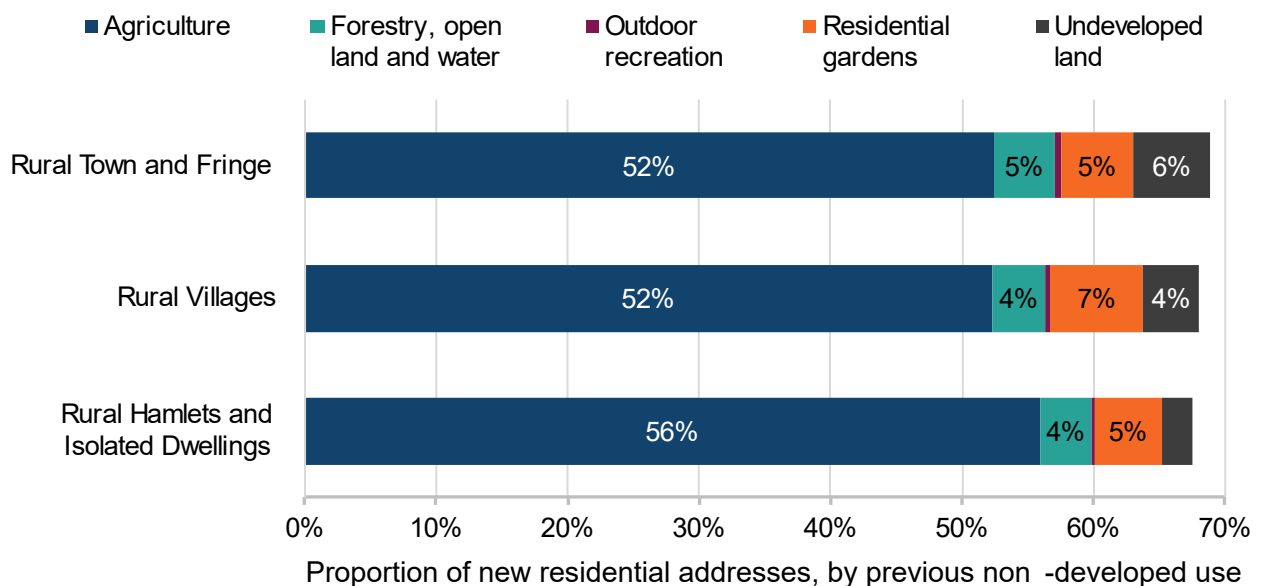
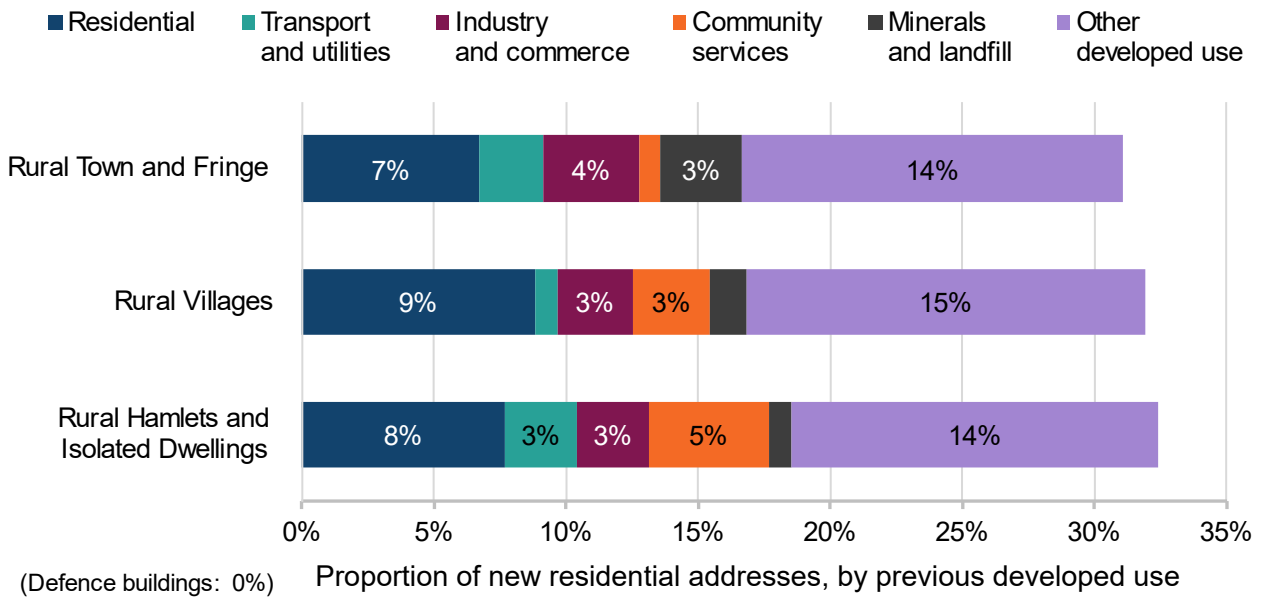
- **Agriculture:** 53% in Rural areas and 19% in Urban areas;

- **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.

H. Housing quality

There is a marginally larger proportion of homes in rural areas than in urban areas that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard; but in both cases the proportion is several percentage points higher than in suburban residential areas.

Summary

Having a minimum standard for housing is important and housing quality can be assessed using the criteria for the Decent Homes Standard alongside data from the [English Housing Survey](#).

In 2021, 20% of homes in rural areas failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard, but this proportion has fallen from over 40% in 2008. Since 2015 the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard has been 2 to 3 percentage points higher than in urban areas. In 2021 17% of urban homes failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. Within rural areas, the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Dwellings posing a Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) will fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard. Over the period 2008 to 2021 a higher proportion of homes in rural areas than homes in urban areas are not decent because they contain at least one Category 1 hazard. In 2021 16% of homes in rural areas contained at least one Category 1 hazard compared to 11% of homes in urban areas. In 2019 the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort stood at 9%, compared to 7% of homes in urban areas. Whereas in suburban residential areas only 4% of homes offered insufficient thermal comfort. This difference is likely to be due to the much lower proportion of pre-1919 homes in suburban areas than in rural areas.

Prolonged exposure to damp can have health implications for the occupants of the property. Homes in urban areas are the most susceptible to damp, and homes in suburban areas are the least susceptible to damp with homes in rural areas slotting in between these two levels. In 2021 the proportion of homes in rural areas with at least one form of damp stood at just over 4% while the proportion of homes in urban areas with damp stood at just over 6%. Back in 2008 the proportion of homes in rural areas with damp was 8%, and in urban areas it was 13%.

Defining Decent homes

The Decent Homes Standard is a technical standard originally introduced for public housing. The standard focuses on homes meeting 4 criteria (Note H-1):

1. homes must meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
2. homes must be in a reasonable state of repair;
3. homes must have reasonably modern facilities and services; and
4. homes must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

The Housing Act 2004 (Note H-2), introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to define the statutory minimum standards. The HHSRS is a risk-based assessment that identifies hazards in dwellings and evaluates their potential effects on the health and safety of occupants and their visitors, particularly vulnerable people. The underlying principle of the HHSRS is that: “Any residential premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor” ([Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance](#)).

There are 29 hazards defined under HHSRS and they can be grouped into the following 4 main groups:

1. Physiological Requirements - Hygrothermal conditions and Pollutants (non-microbial);
2. Psychological Requirements - Space, Security, Light, and Noise;
3. Protection against Infection - Hygiene, Sanitation, and Water supply;
4. Protection against Accidents - Falls, Electric shock, Burns and Scalds, and Building related Collisions.

In an assessment of the property, each hazard has a weighting for its class of harm (extreme, severe, serious, and moderate) and the likelihood of an occurrence of harm is determined. These factors are used to generate a hazard score and in turn a hazard band. These scores and bands are for the hazard and not an overall score for the property. There are 10 hazard bands, A to J - Band A is the most serious and Band J the least serious. A hazard which falls into Bands A to C is termed a ‘Category 1’ hazard while a hazard in bands D to F is a ‘Category 2’ hazard. Category 1 hazards represent a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety. Where any Category 1 hazards exist in a home, it fails to meet the statutory minimum standard for housing in England.

The hazards and how to assess them are fully described in the [Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance](#). Note H-3 contains a grid detailing all 29 hazards and the group that they are assigned to.

The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) is a national survey commissioned by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) that has been conducted since 1967. It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition 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.

The EHS does not provide results for the Rural-Urban Classification definitions used elsewhere within this document. As explained in English Housing Survey Surveyors' handbook, the surveyor decides whether the area is either urban or rural based on the immediate area surrounding the

dwelling. 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. The specific names associated with these 6 codes are: 1 Commercial City/Town Centre; 2 Urban; 3 Suburban residential; 4 Rural residential; 5 Village centre; and 6 Rural. A description of these 6 categories is included in Note H-4.

Within this Chapter on charts we have followed the convention established in the [source data tables](#) of presenting categories 1 and 2 as “all city and urban centres”, leaving category 3 on its own as “suburban residential” and grouping categories 4 to 6 as “all rural areas”. To simplify the commentary the 3 categories are just referred to as urban, rural and suburban areas respectively. Where the commentary refers to only category 6 the convention will be to use the term most rural.

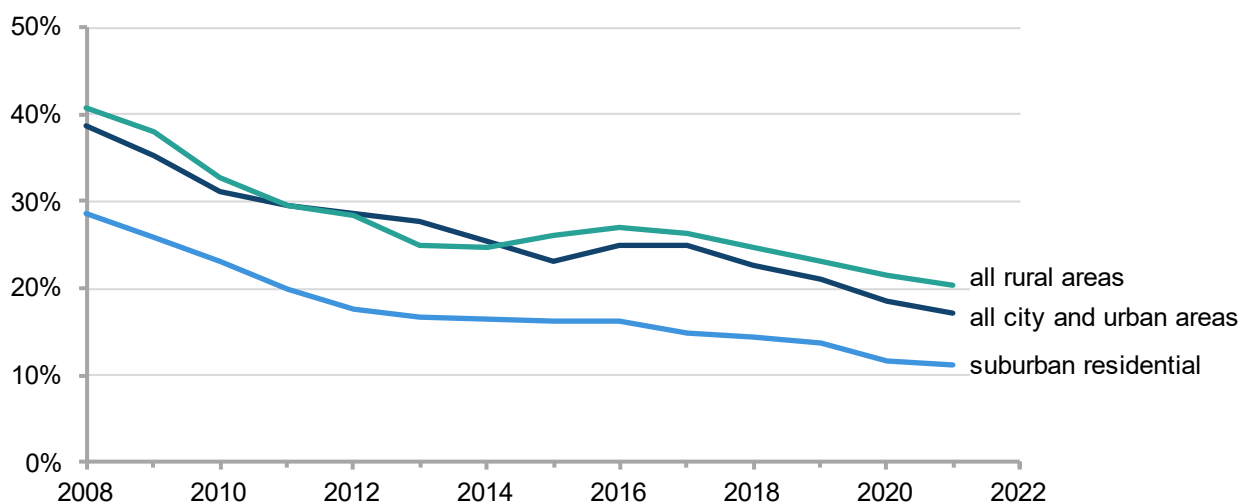
This EHS rural and urban classification system is strongly reliant on the perception of the surveyor conducting each dwelling survey. The Official Statistics Rural Urban classification has a precise definition linked to population (see Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas for details on this definition) and leaves no room for interpretation. Whereas this looser EHS definition has the potential, in certain circumstances, to result in different classifications with different surveyors.

Failure to meet the Decent Homes Standard

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) is a national survey commissioned by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). One of the pieces of information collected by the survey is whether or not homes meet the Decent Homes Standard - the section called Defining Decent homes explains this standard.

Figure H-1 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard has fallen in both rural and urban areas over the period 2008 to 2021. In 2021, 20% of homes in rural areas failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. As Figure H-1 shows, this proportion has fallen from over 40% in 2008 and there have been year-on-year falls in the proportion of non-decent homes in rural areas every year since 2016. Since 2015 the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard has been 2 to 3 percentage points higher than in urban areas.

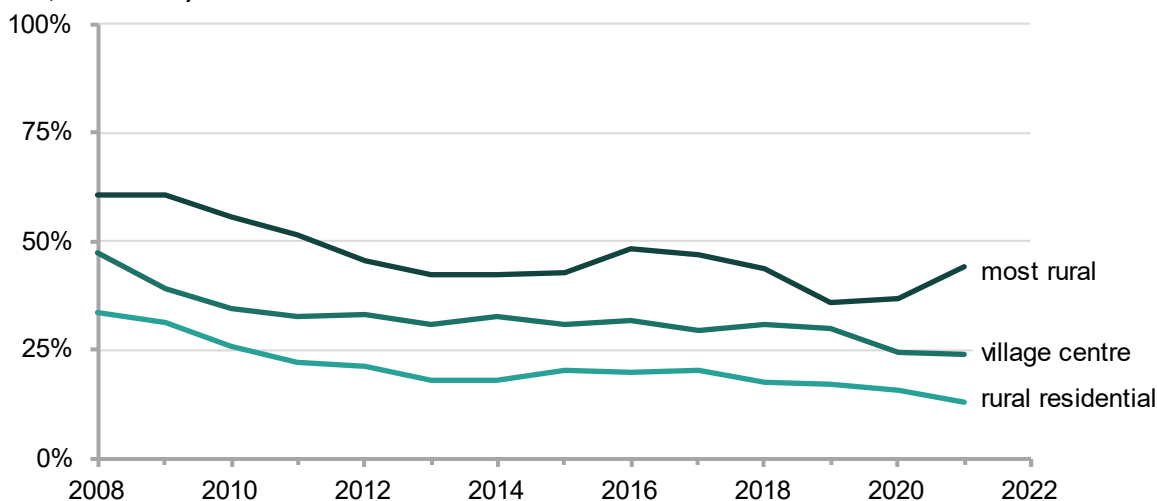
Figure H-1: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2021. (Note H-1, Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-8).



The trend in suburban areas is similar to rural areas; but on average over the period 2008 to 2022, the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 10 percentage points higher than in the suburban areas. This is likely to be due to suburban areas having a smaller proportion of pre-1919 homes than other areas.

Figure H-2 is a line chart showing the over the period 2008 to 2021, the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard. In “village centres” and in “rural residential” areas the proportion of homes failing to meet the standard has fallen over the period 2008 to 2022. In 2008, 34% of homes in “rural residential” and 47% of homes in “village centres” failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. By 2021, these figures had fallen to 13% and 24% respectively. In the most rural areas, officially known as simply “rural” in the EHS classification, the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 44% in 2021, having fallen from 60% in 2008.

Figure H-2: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard within rural areas on the EHS classification system, 2008 to 2021. (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-8).



Factors causing homes to be rated non-decent

As explained in the Defining Decent homes section, there are 4 factors involved in the Decent Homes Standard. A home that is rated as non-decent could fail on one or more of these criteria. In this section the proportion of homes failing under each of these criteria is considered. For some criteria, there is insufficient data to provide an intra-rural split, so the analysis just focuses on the overall broad rural, urban and suburban categories from the EHS classification (The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas) comparison.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible for EHS surveyors to conduct a full internal inspection of properties in both 2020 and 2021. Therefore, some data could not be collected in these years (Note H-6).

Homes failing to meet the minimum standards under HHSRS

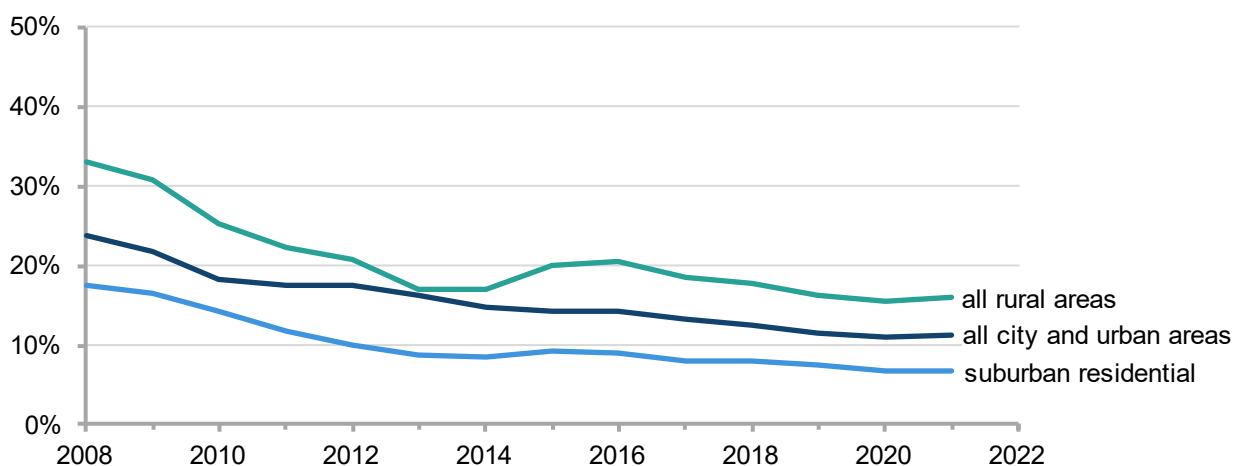
The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is used to define the statutory minimum standards that a home need to meet to be considered decent. Dwellings posing at least Category 1

hazard (Note H-2) under the HHSRS will fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard (Note H-3). Whilst the EHS does not capture every hazard (Note H-7), it still allows us to determine the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard because of the presence of at least one Category 1 hazard (Figure H-3).

Figure H-3 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard has fallen in all broad area types under the EHS classification over the period 2008 to 2021. For rural areas the proportion homes with at least one Category 1 hazard fell from 33% in 2008 to 17% in 2013. Since 2013, the change in the proportion of homes in rural areas with at least 1 category 1 hazard has been minimal and in 2021 the value stood at 16%.

The reduction in the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard has been more gradual, but also more consistent, in urban areas than it was in rural areas. The value fell from 18% in 2008 to 11% in 2019 and then remained at 11% through to 2021. The proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard has been below 10% in suburban areas since 2012 and stood at 7% in 2021.

Figure H-3: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the minimum standards set under Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2021. (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6, Note H-7, Note H-8)



Within rural areas, the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard and in the most rural areas, known as simply “rural” in the EHS classification, 40% of the homes had at least one Category 1 hazard in 2021 (Supplementary Table HB1b, Note H-8).

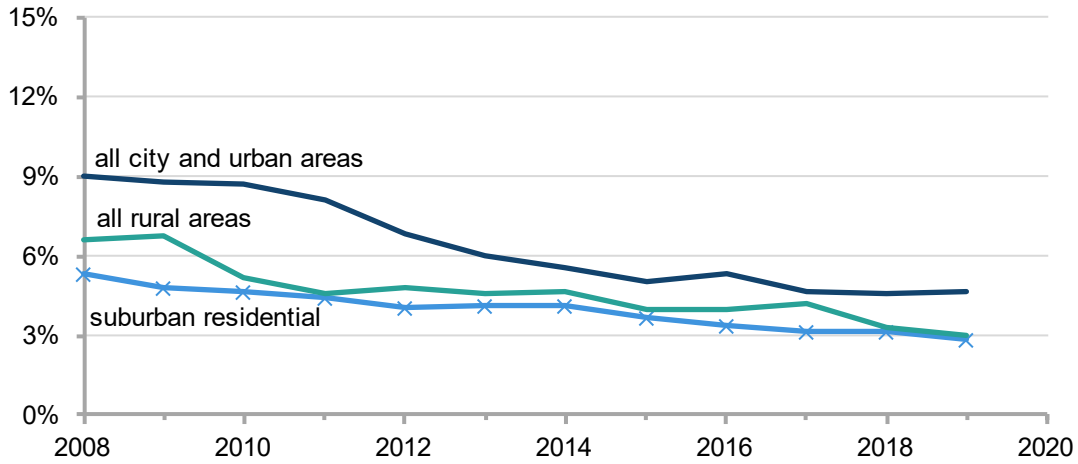
Homes in disrepair

A further factor in determining whether homes are Decent is if they are in a reasonable state of repair. Figure H-4 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes that are not in a reasonable state of repair fell over the period 2008 to 2019. In all area types fewer than 1 in 10 homes were in a poor state of repair in 2008 and by 2019 this proportion had fallen to fewer than 1 in 20. Over Proportionally fewer homes in rural areas were in a state of disrepair than in urban areas. In 2008, 7% of rural homes and 9% of urban homes were not in a reasonable state of repair. By 2019 this proportion had fallen to in 3% rural areas and to 5% in urban areas. The lowest proportion of houses in disrepair occurred in suburban areas. For most years over the period 2010 to 2019 the difference in the proportion of houses in disrepair was less than 0.7%, the exceptions were 2012 and 2017.

Figure H-4: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard due to being in a state of disrepair by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2019.

(Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6, Note H-8)

Markers have been applied to the suburban residential series because the contrast ratio between the teal and light blue is low and the lines are close together on the chart.



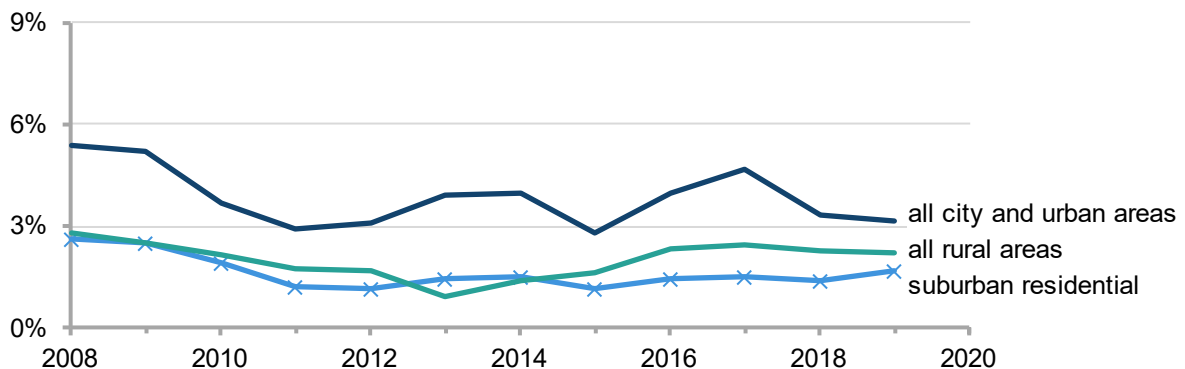
Homes without modern facilities

The third factor in the Decent Homes Standard is whether the homes have reasonably modern facilities. Figure H-5 is a line chart showing the small proportion of homes without reasonably modern facilities and how this proportion has changed over the period 2008 to 2019. In rural areas, over the period 2008 to 2019, the proportion of homes without reasonably modern facilities has fluctuated between 1% and 3%. This is a similar proportion to in suburban areas. With the exception of the period 2016 to 2020 (when the difference was 1 percentage point) there was less than 0.5 percentage points between the proportion of homes lacking modern facilities in rural areas and in suburban areas. A larger proportion of homes in urban areas are lacking reasonably modern facilities than in rural areas. In urban areas the proportion of homes lacking reasonably modern facilities fluctuated between 3 and 6%, which means that this proportion is 1 to 3 percentage points higher than in rural areas.

Figure H-5: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard due to lacking modern facilities by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2019.

(Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6, Note H-8)

Markers have been applied to the suburban residential series because the contrast ratio between the teal and light blue is low and the lines cross over on the chart.



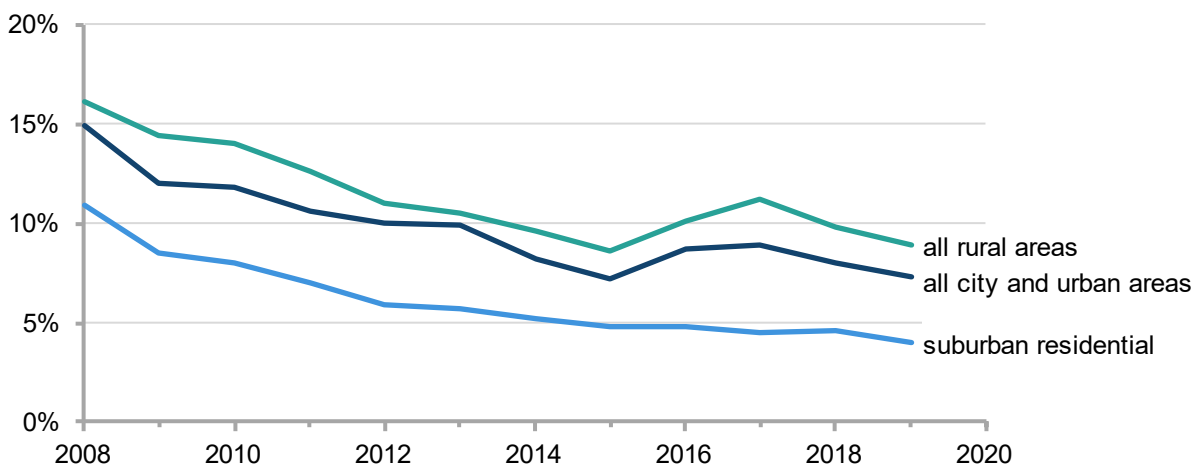
Homes not offering sufficient thermal comfort

The final factor in the Decent Homes Standard is whether the homes offer a reasonable degree of thermal comfort. Section A Housing stock: age and type showed that in 2020, there were proportionally more homes in rural areas that were either detached or pre-1919 than in urban areas. These two characteristics have the potential to make homes less energy efficient (Note H-9) and therefore harder to keep adequately warm. Given this knowledge one can hypothesise that there might be a higher proportion of homes in rural areas failing to meet the Decent Home Standard because they offer insufficient thermal comfort.

Figure H-6 is a line chart showing the proportion of homes that failed to provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort and how this proportion has fallen over the period 2008 to 2019. The chart confirms the hypothesis above; proportionally more homes in rural areas fail to provide sufficient thermal comfort than for homes in urban areas. In 2008, 16% of rural homes failed to provide sufficient thermal comfort, compared to 15% in urban areas and 11% in suburban areas.

The trend for the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort (Figure H-6) has 3 components. The first is component is for the period 2008 to 2015. Over this period, the proportion of rural homes failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort fell year-on-year with the value dropping from 16% to 8%. So, the proportion halved over the seven-year period. The second component was a rise back up to 11% over the next 2 years. The third component is for the period 2017 onwards. Over this period the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort fell to 9% in 2019.

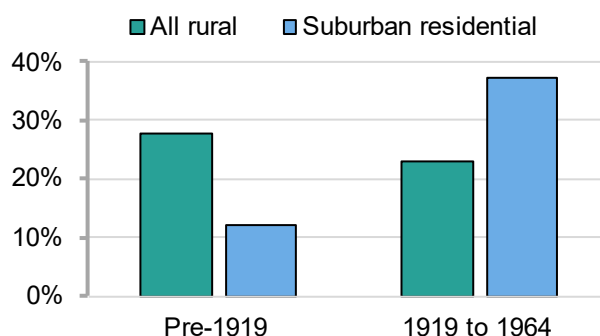
Figure H-6: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard due to not providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2019 (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6, Note H-8)



In 2019 the proportion of urban homes failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort stood at 7%. As Figure H-6 shows homes in suburban areas are much less likely to offer insufficient thermal comfort than those in rural areas. This difference is likely to be because there are proportionally far fewer pre-1919 homes in suburban areas than in rural areas (Figure H-7), with the balance being made up by homes constructed between 1919 and 1964. As explain in [Energy Statistics for Rural England](#) older homes are likely to be less energy efficient (Note H-9) and therefore harder to keep adequately warm.

Figure H-7: Bar chart showing the percentage of residential properties, constructed ‘pre-1919’ and between ‘1919 and 1964’ in rural areas and in suburban areas of England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6)

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



Dampness

Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property; it affects the building structure (such as walls, floors and ceilings) as well as home furnishings and belongings (such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture and clothing). In addition to causing damage, damp can also lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms. There are four main types of damp (Note H-12) and it can occur in homes for a variety of reasons including inadequate ventilation, inadequate heating, low building energy efficiency or structural defects of the property.

The guidance document [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home](#), published in September 2023 provides details on the risks of damp and mould (Note H-11). This document states that:

- “Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould in their home; but people with certain health conditions, children and older adults are at greater risk of more severe health impacts”;
- “Damp and mould primarily affect the airways and lungs, but they can also affect the eyes and skin. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases even death; and
- “The presence of damp and mould can also affect occupants’ mental health”.

Section A Housing stock: age and type showed that in 2020, there were proportionally more rural homes that were either detached or pre-1919. These two characteristics have the potential to make homes less energy efficient (Note H-9) and therefore potentially more susceptible to damp. Given the health implications of prolonged exposure to damp there is value in determining whether or not rural homes actually are more susceptible to damp.

Figure H-8 is a line chart showing (a) how the proportion of homes with damp (Note H-12) has reduced over the period 2008 to 2021 and (b) that homes in urban areas were the most susceptible to damp over this period. Homes in suburban areas were the least susceptible to damp over the period 2008 to 2021 with homes in rural areas homes slotting in between the urban and suburban levels but with a proportion that was usually much closer the suburban proportion.

In 2008, the proportion of rural homes with damp (Note H-12) was 8%, and in urban areas it was 13%. Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of rural homes with damp decreased year-on-year

reaching just under 4% in 2013. Since then, the proportion has fluctuated between 4% and 5% and stood at just over 4% in 2021.

The proportion of homes in urban areas with damp (Note H-12) fell sharply between 2009 and 2011. Since then, the reductions in the proportion of home with damp have been more modest with the value fluctuating between 6% and 7% over the period 2013 to 2021. In 2021, the proportion of homes in urban areas with damp stood at just over 6%. In suburban areas between 2011 and 2021 the proportion of properties with damp fluctuated between 2% and 3%.

Figure H-8: Line chart showing the proportion of homes suffering from any type of damp by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2021 (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-6, Note H-8)

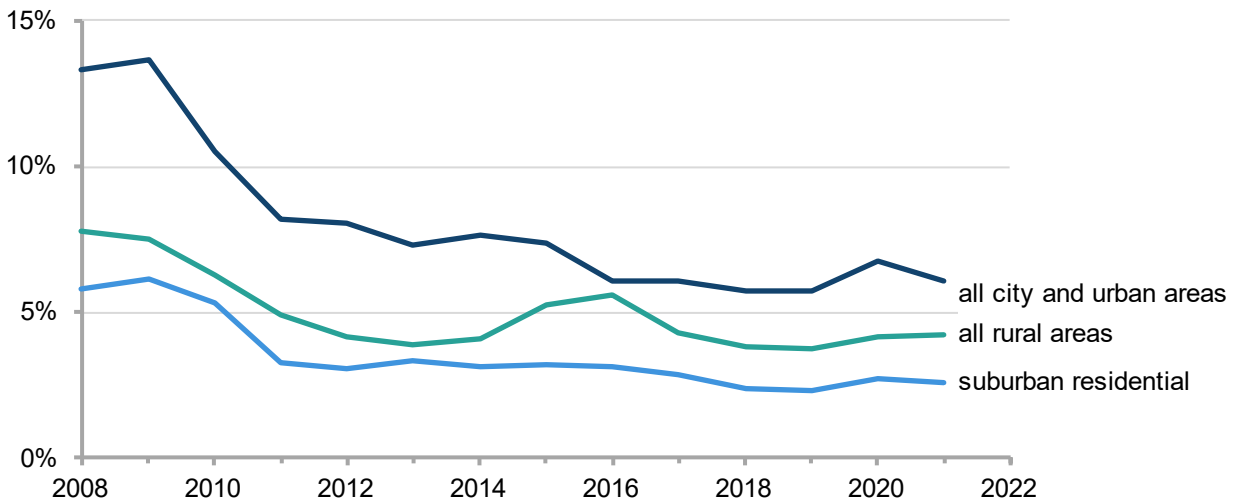
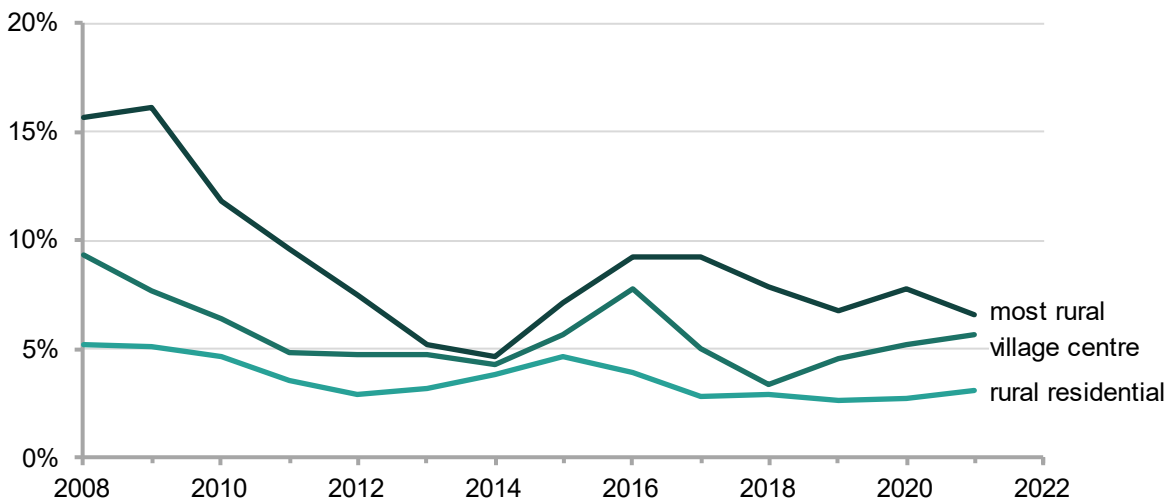


Figure H-9 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes with damp (Note H-12) changed within rural areas (according to the EHS classification) and it shows that the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes that have some form of damp (Note H-12). In the least rural areas, (known as rural residential in the EHS classification) the proportion of homes with damp fluctuated between 5% and 3% over the period 2008 to 2021 and it is a fairly stable proportion.

Figure H-9: Line chart showing the proportion homes suffering from any type of damp within rural areas on the EHS classification system, 2008 to 2021. (Note H-4, Note H-5, Note H-8).



Whereas the smaller sample sizes for the “village centre” and “most rural” categories lead to two timeseries that are much less stable. In the case of the “most rural” category there is a swing of more than 11 percentage points between 2009 when 16% of the properties had damp and 2014 when only 5% had damp. The “village centre” category varies between 3% of properties with damp in 2018 and 9% in 2008.

When considering the difference types of damp (Note H-12), the prevalence of **rising damp**, **penetrating damp** and **condensation damp** is similar in rural areas. In 2019 the values stood at just under 1.0% for penetrating damp, just over 1.5% for rising damp and just under 2.0% for condensation damp (Note H-8). For all 3 types of damp, this represents a reduction on the proportions of 3.0% to 4.0% seen in 2008. The hierarchy by rurality seen in Figure H-8 is largely replicated for each of the damp types with the greatest prevalence in “city and urban areas”, however for condensation damp there is little difference in the prevalence between rural areas and suburban areas (Note H-8). Whilst charts have not been shown for the different types of damp the time-series of data are available in sheet HC in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

Housing quality explanatory notes

- **Note H-1**

The original 4 factors in the Decent Homes standard are available on the national archives of The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG):

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20060905175526/http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1153927>

- **Note H-2**

[The Housing Act 2004](#): defines Category 1 and 2 hazards as follows:

- “**category 1 hazard**” means a hazard of a prescribed description which falls within a prescribed band as a result of achieving, under a prescribed method for calculating the seriousness of hazards of that description, a numerical score of or above a prescribed amount;
- “**category 2 hazard**” means a hazard of a prescribed description which falls within a prescribed band as a result of achieving, under a prescribed method for calculating the seriousness of hazards of that description, a numerical score below the minimum amount prescribed for a category 1 hazard of that description; and
- “**hazard**” means any risk of harm to the health or safety of an actual or potential occupier of a dwelling or HMO which arises from a deficiency in the dwelling or HMO or in any building or land in the vicinity (whether the deficiency arises as a result of the construction of any building, an absence of maintenance or repair, or otherwise).

- **Note H-3**

There are 29 hazards contained within the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. The [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\) operating guidance: housing inspections and assessment of hazards](#) provides a profile for all of these potential health and safety hazards in dwellings in Annex D. This profile describes the hazard, its potential harm, its causes and preventative measures. The 29 hazards are detailed in the grid below.

Hazard group	Hazard sub-group	Hazard
Physiological Requirements	Hygrothermal Conditions	Damp and mould growth; Excess cold; Excess heat
	Pollutants (non-microbial)	Asbestos (and MMF); Biocides; Carbon Monoxide and fuel combustion products; Lead; Radiation; Uncombusted fuel gas; Volatile Organic Compounds
Psychological Requirements	Space, Security, Light and Noise	Crowding and space; Entry by intruders; Lighting; Noise
Protection Against Infection	Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply	Domestic hygiene, Pests and Refuse; Food safety; Personal hygiene, Sanitation and Drainage; Water supply
Protection Against Accidents	Falls	Falls associated with baths etc; Falling on level surfaces etc; Falling on stairs etc; Falling between levels
	Electric Shocks, Fires, Burns and Scalds	Electrical hazards; Fire, Flames; hot surfaces etc
	Collisions, Cuts and Strains	Collision and entrapment; Explosions; Position and operability of amenities etc; Structural collapse and falling elements

- **Note H-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 H-5**

The English Housing Survey (EHS) does not define rurality according to the RUC, it uses a looser definition as explained in Note H-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.

- **Note H-6**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible for EHS surveyors to conduct a full internal inspection of properties in 2020 and 2021. This means that some data could not be collected and as a result, 2020 and 2021 data has been modelled differently to the EHS 2019.

Also due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EHS surveyors did not conduct any inspection of vacant properties in 2020. Although an external inspection of vacant homes occurred in 2021, the 2021 combined survey dwelling sample is for occupied properties only.

- **Note H-7**

Dwellings failing to meet the minimum standard are those posing a Category 1 hazard under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). From 2008 the survey is able to estimate the presence of 26 of the 29 HHSRS hazards. Prior to the EHS 2020, to maintain consistency and avoid a break in the time series from 2006, Decent Homes estimates continue to be based on 15 hazards for the 'minimum standard' criterion.

- **Note H-8**

Tables showing the data expressed in the time series charts this section, alongside some additional breakdowns discussed more briefly in the text without visual aids are available in sheets HA, HB and HC in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

Please note that the time series charts use different vertical scales, take care when making comparisons between charts.

- **Note H-9**

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) provides information on the energy efficiency of a building. Since 2007, an EPC is required when a building is constructed, sold or let; the higher the energy efficiency score the more efficient the building. EPCs and the energy efficiency of homes is covered in sections B and C of the: [Statistical Digest of Rural England: 8 - Energy](#).

- **Note H-10**

The information used in this chapter comes from the [English Housing Survey 2021 to 2022: housing quality and condition](#) including its associated [data sets](#). Specifically we used Table [DA3202](#) and [DA5102](#).

- **Note H-11**

[Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home](#), a guidance document published by Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities on 7 Sep 2023.

- **Note H-12**

As explained in [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home](#) there are 4 types of damp.

Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.

Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the buildings in contact with the ground (walls and floors); it is usually found in older properties and is often misdiagnosed. It can be identified through visual inspection; however chemical testing is the most appropriate way of confirming it. Often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding.

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 and affordable housing
- C. Housing costs: purchases and rentals
- D. House purchase affordability
- E. Second and empty homes
- F. Homelessness
- G. Land use change for housing
- H. Housing quality

3. [Health and Wellbeing](#)

- A. Life expectancy and Mortality
- B. Wellbeing
- C. NHS Dentistry provision
- D. NHS 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 and mobile
- B. Travel behaviours
- C. Access to personal transport
- D. Access to services
- E. Home working

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

- A. Secondary education attainment
- B. School inspections
- C. Free school meals - eligibility
- D. Alternative and specialist education provision
- E. Progression to 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. Business demographics
- G. Businesses by industry
- H. 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
- F. CO₂ emissions

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.

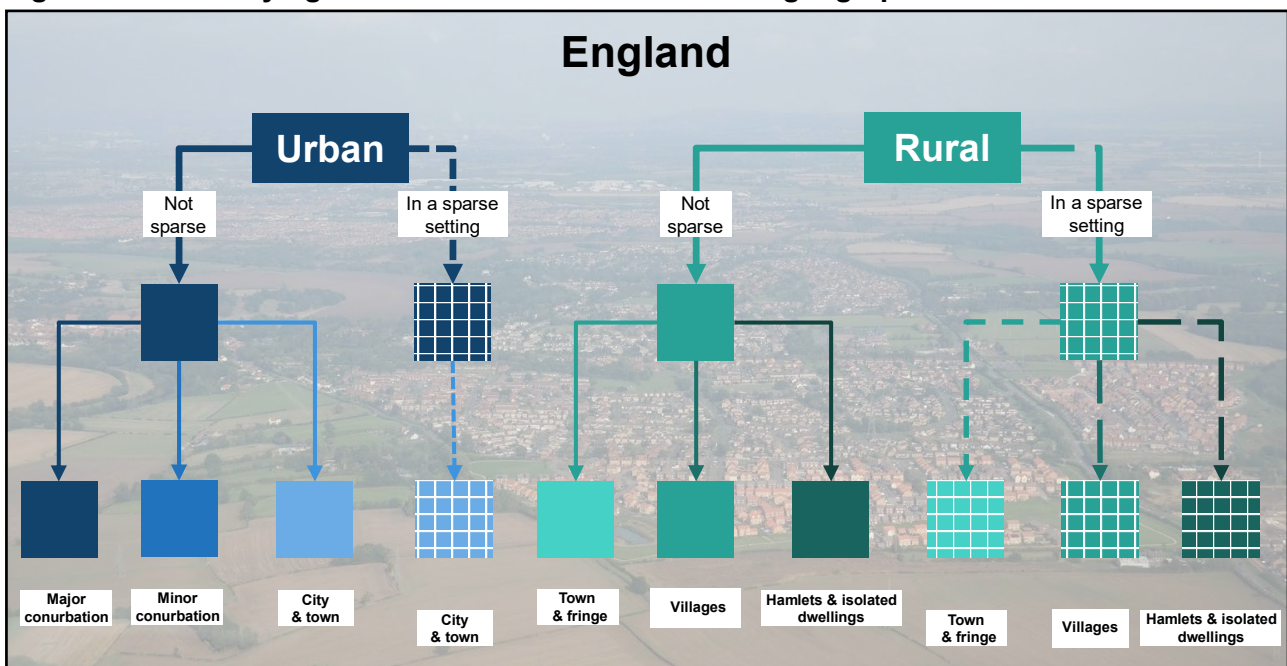
There is a further document including the individual Local Authority data tables, which have been separated for ease of use.

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

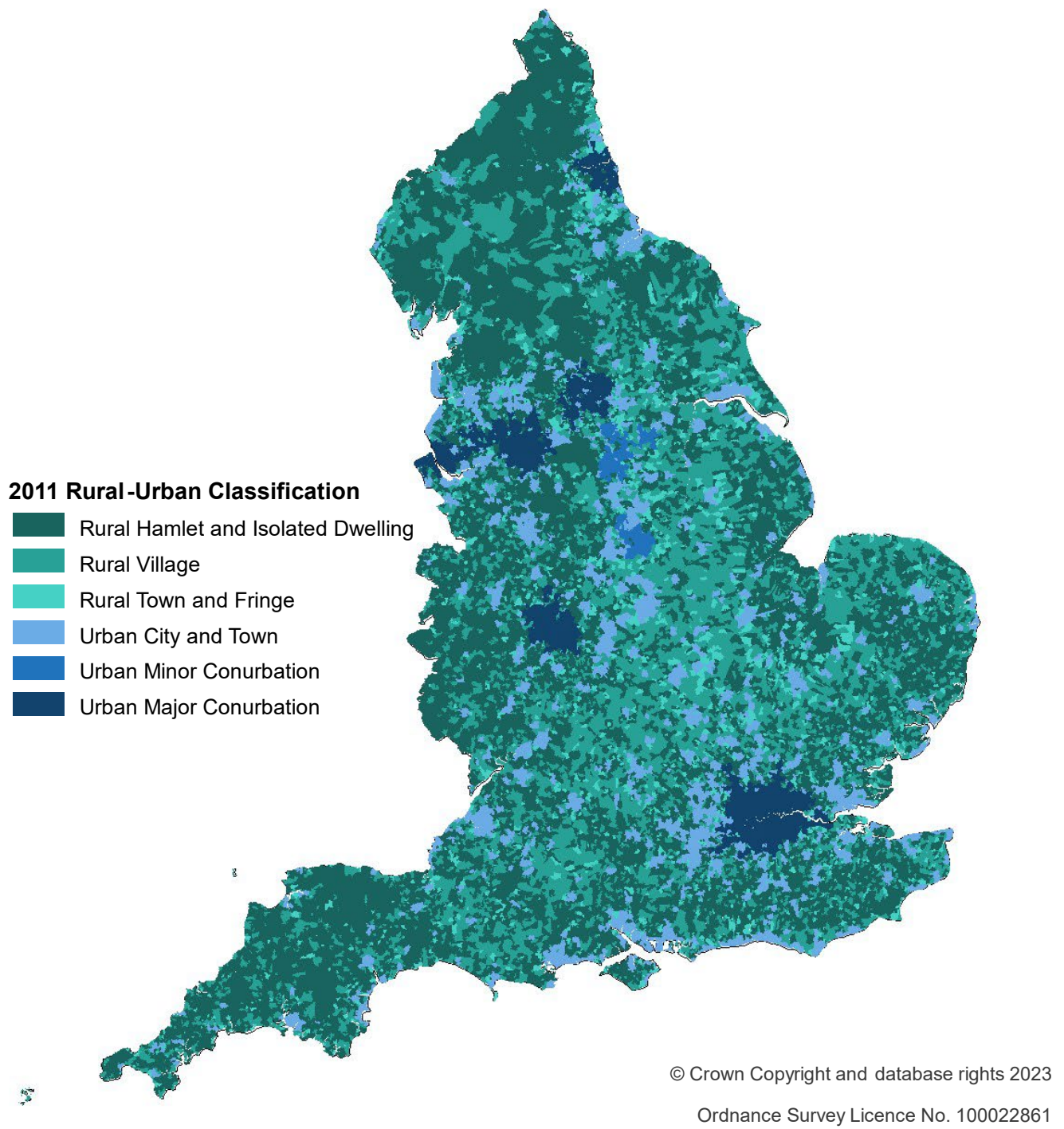
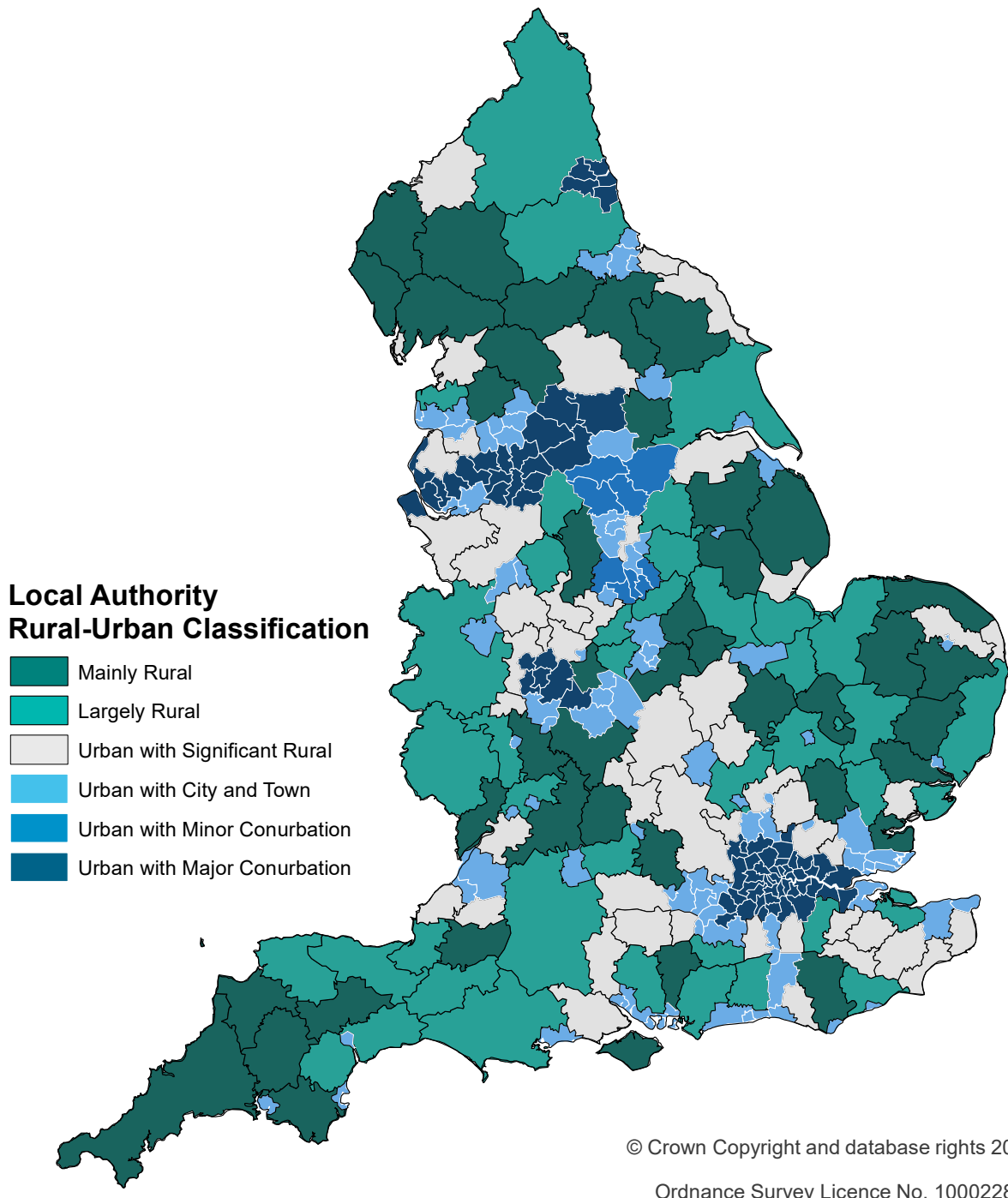
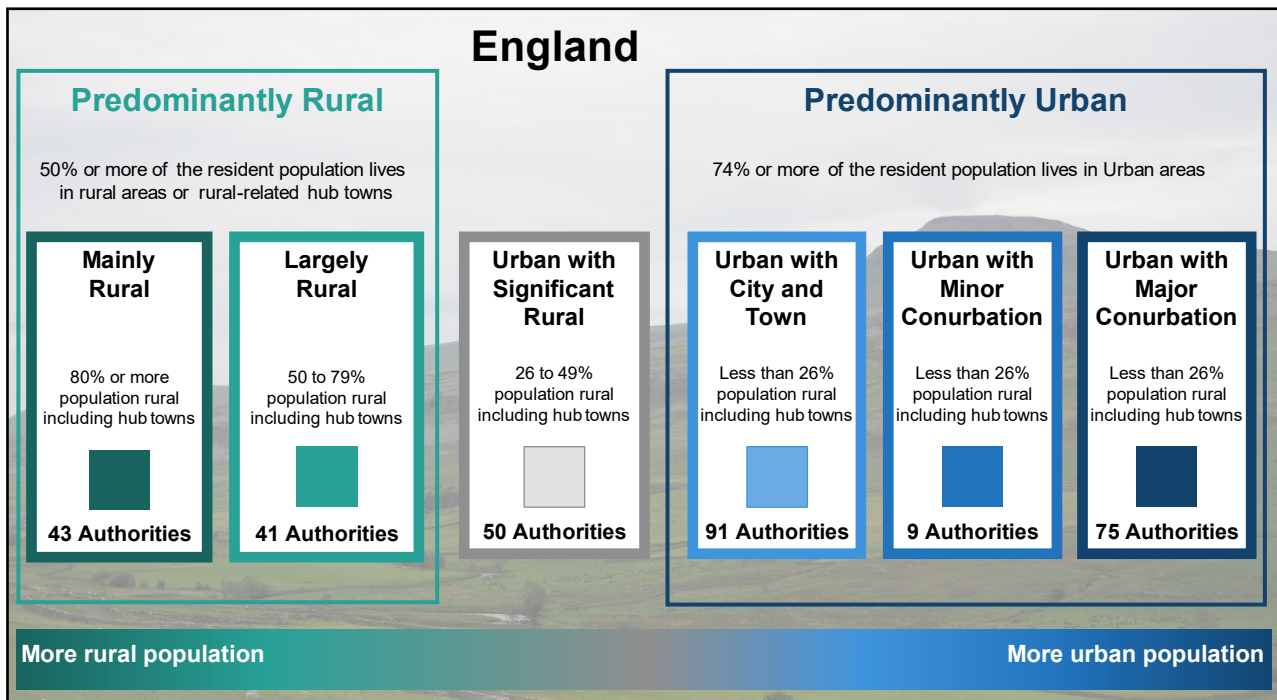


Figure X-3: Map of the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Local Authority Districts and Unitary Authorities in England



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 Authorities in England



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](#).

A similar approach to that for Local Authorities was used to create a classification for Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies. Under this classification, which is shown in Figure X-5, each Parliamentary Constituency 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'. A map of the geographical distribution of the Rural and Urban Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies is shown in Figure X-5. This map depicts a classification for the new rebalanced Parliamentary Constituencies that were introduced for 2024 General Election. The Parliamentary Constituency Classification categories are frequently aggregated to 'Predominantly Rural', 'Urban with Significant Rural' and 'Predominantly Urban' as shown on Figure X-6.

Figure X-5: Map of the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in England

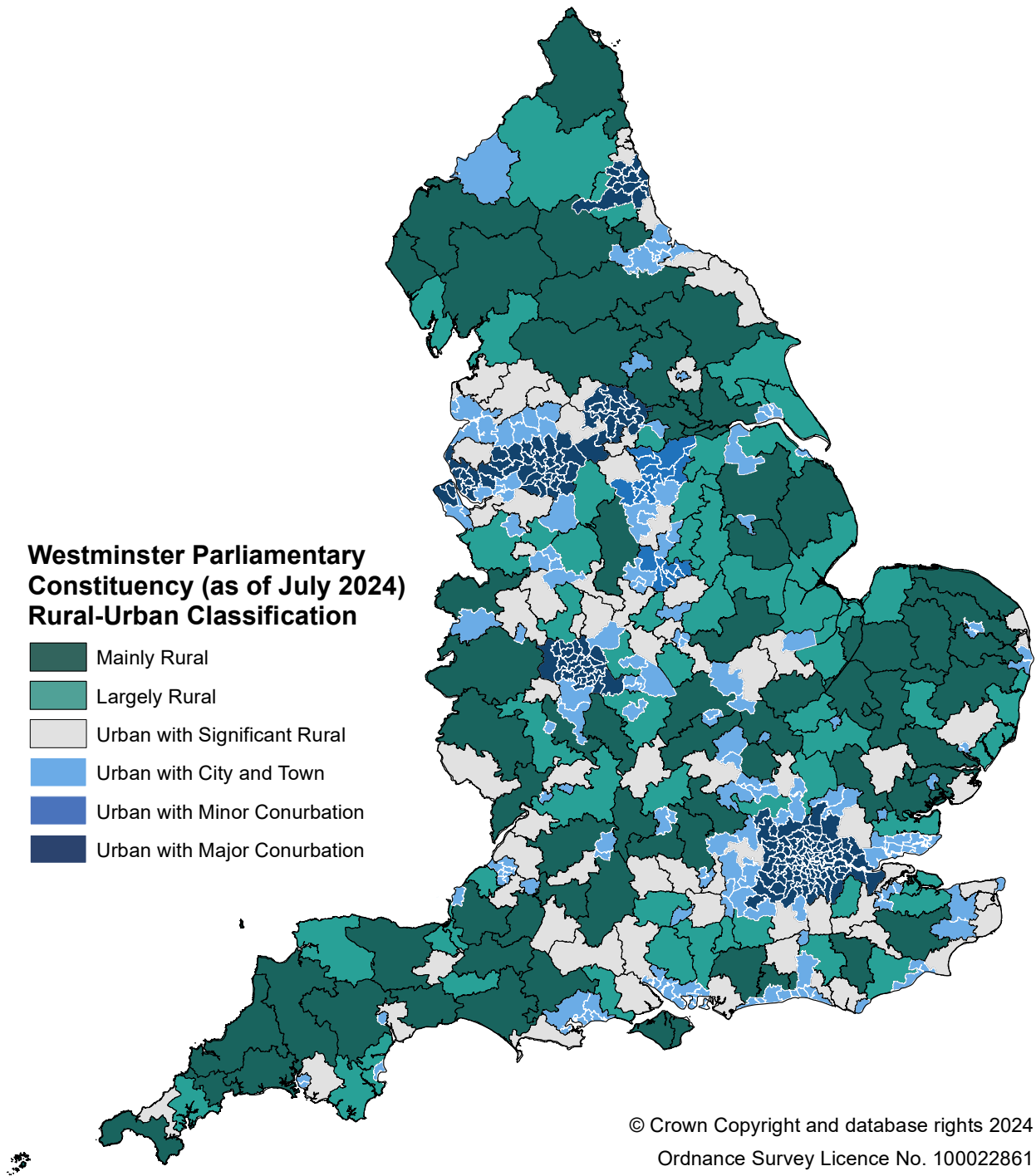
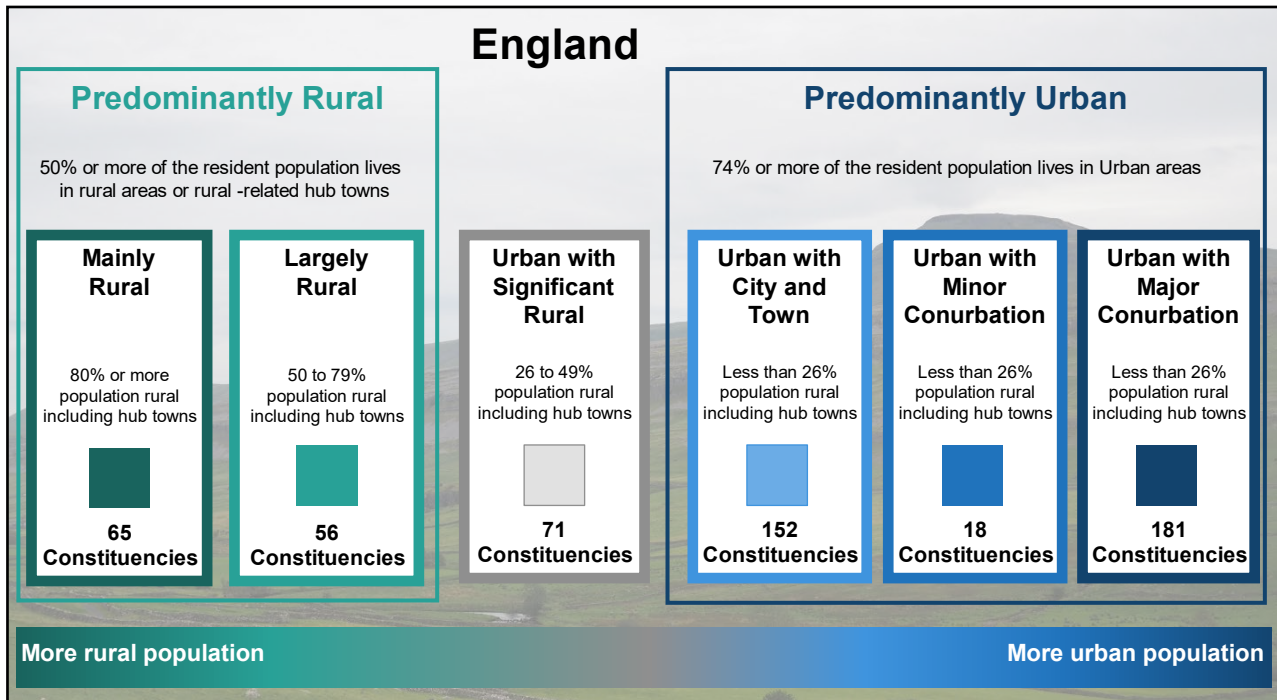


Figure X-6: 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in England



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