



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Government
Statistical Service

Statistical Digest of Rural England:

2 - Housing

October 2025





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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 Ribbleshead 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: The 8 thematic reports that make up the Statistical Digest of Rural England' 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 October 2025, the previous 'Housing costs: purchases and rentals' and 'House purchase affordability' sections were combined into a single new section named 'Housing market', with new analysis using the 2021 rural-urban classification.

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	Nov 2023	Jul 2024	Jun 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025
Housing stock: age and type	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Housing stock: additions and affordable housing	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Housing market					New
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](#).

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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>

The 2021 Rural-Urban Classification was released on 6 March 2025. Details of the 2021 Rural Urban Classification can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rural-urban-classification>. It will take some time for the Digest to be updated throughout using the new classification. Where relevant Statistics drawing on the 2021 Census will be added to Digest thematic reports.

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, as well as affordability (Section C)
- second homes and empty dwellings (Section D)
- people who are homeless, in priority need or “sleeping rough” (Section E)
- land use change statistics for new residential addresses (Section F)
- housing quality (Section G)

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.

Housing stock: age and type - key findings

A higher proportion of the housing stock in rural areas is older than in urban areas

- In 2020, 28% of “rural residential” properties were pre-1919 homes compared to 18% of those in urban areas.
- There is a greater proportion of urban properties (16%) dating from the period 1919-1945 than rural properties (9%). Overall, the proportion of pre-1945 homes in rural and urban areas is similar.
- Over 1 million rural homes are pre-1919 and these are the most likely to have features that are harder to update and improve from an energy efficiency perspective such as solid walls.

A higher proportion of detached houses in rural areas

- In 2020, 49% of homes in rural areas were detached compared to 16% in urban areas.
- 2021 Census data showed that the more rural the area, the greater the proportion of detached homes; for smaller rural settlements, 54% of the homes were detached compared to 35% in larger rural settlements and 21% in urban areas outside of London.

A lower proportion of flats in rural areas

- In 2020, 7% of homes in rural areas were flats compared to 26% in urban areas.
- There were just 0.25 million flats in rural areas in 2020 compared to over 5 million in urban areas.

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 were just under 23.5 million homes in England and 31% of them were semi-detached, but in the most rural areas 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 2021

Data from the 2021 Census can be used to create estimates of the housing stock by type and 2021 rural-urban classification. More recent data can then be compared against this to determine how the addition of new housing has changed the overall housing stock profile.

In 2021, there were just under 23.5 million residential properties in England (Table A-1). The most common property type was 'semi-detached' (31%). There was a similar number of 'detached' and 'terraced' properties with both accounting for 23% of the residential properties in England, while 'flats, maisonettes or apartments' accounted for 22% of all residential properties.

When considering the type of property that makes up the total housing stock for England, proportionally there is little change between 2011 and 2021. Semi-detached properties continue to be the most dominant property type with 31% of the housing stock for both in 2011 and 2021. Terraced properties and detached properties have shown a slight shift in dominance between 2011 and 2021. In 2011, terraced properties represented a greater share of the housing stock than detached properties (25% and 22% respectively). This has changed in 2021 and both property types now represent 23% of the housing stock which is a small increase (1%) in share for detached properties and a small decrease (2%) in share for terraced properties. Flats, maisonettes and apartments continue to represent the smallest proportion of housing stock in both 2011 and 2021 at 22% of all residential properties for both years.

Table A-1: Number (millions) and proportion (%) of residential properties, by housing type, Census 2011 and 2021 (Note A-2)

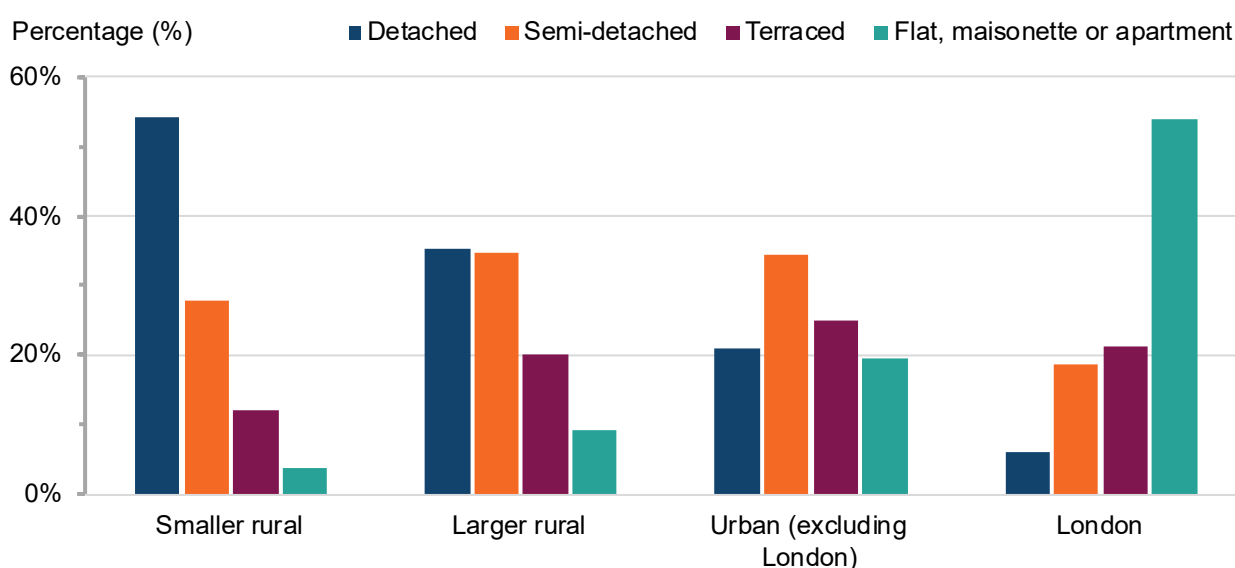
Numbers of residential properties have been rounded to the nearest 0.1 million and proportions to the nearest 1%. Individual components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Property type	Number of residential properties, 2011	Proportion, 2011	Number of residential properties, 2021	Proportion, 2021
Detached	5.1	22%	5.4	23%
Semi-detached	7.1	31%	7.4	31%
Terraced	5.6	25%	5.4	23%
Flat, maisonette or apartment	5.1	22%	5.2	22%
All properties	22.9	100%	23.4	100%

The bar chart in Figure A-1 shows that in 2021 the majority of dwellings in smaller rural settlements were detached properties (54%), while in larger rural settlements the most common housing types were detached and semi-detached properties both with 35% of the housing stock for the settlement type. The proportion of dwellings which were flats, maisonettes or apartments is lower as the settlement becomes more rural, falling from 54% in London to just 4% in smaller rural settlements. Terraced properties are more common in urban areas, being highest in urban areas excluding London (25%) and lowest in smaller rural settlements (12%). Semi-detached properties are equally common in larger rural settlements and urban areas outside of London (35% and 34% respectively) and are least common in London (19%).

Figure A-1: Bar chart showing the percentage of residential properties, by building type, by Census output area rural urban classification (2021), in England, at 2021 Census (Note A-1, 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.

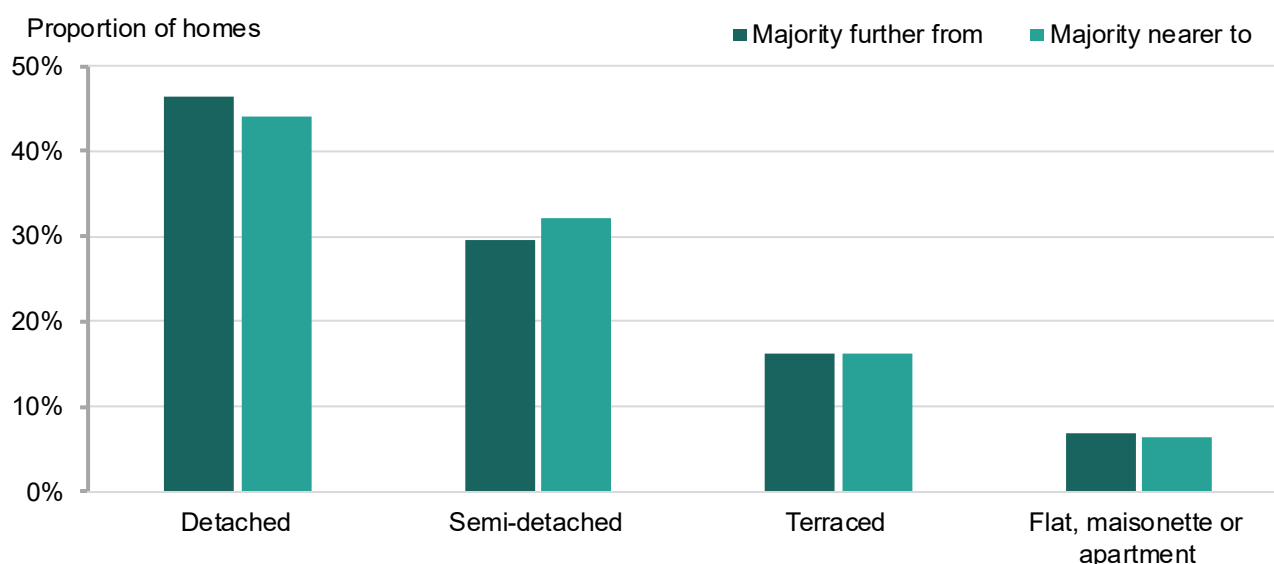


The bar chart in Figure A-2 shows how proximity to major towns or cities impacts the distribution of property type in rural areas. When rural settlements are further from a major town or city, detached

properties are slightly more common than for those settlements that are closer to a major town or city (46% and 44% respectively). Semi-detached properties are more common in rural settlements that are nearer to major town or city than those that are further from a major town or city (32% and 29%, respectively). For terraced properties and flats, maisonettes or apartments, proximity to a major town or city has little impact on the proportion of dwellings for these property types.

Figure A-2: Bar chart showing the percentage of residential properties, by building type and proximity to a major town or city, rural areas only, England, at 2021 Census (Note A-1, Note A-2)

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



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-1) 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-1).

EHS data distinguishes between end-terraced and mid-terraced properties. As Figure A-1 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-1) 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-3: 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.

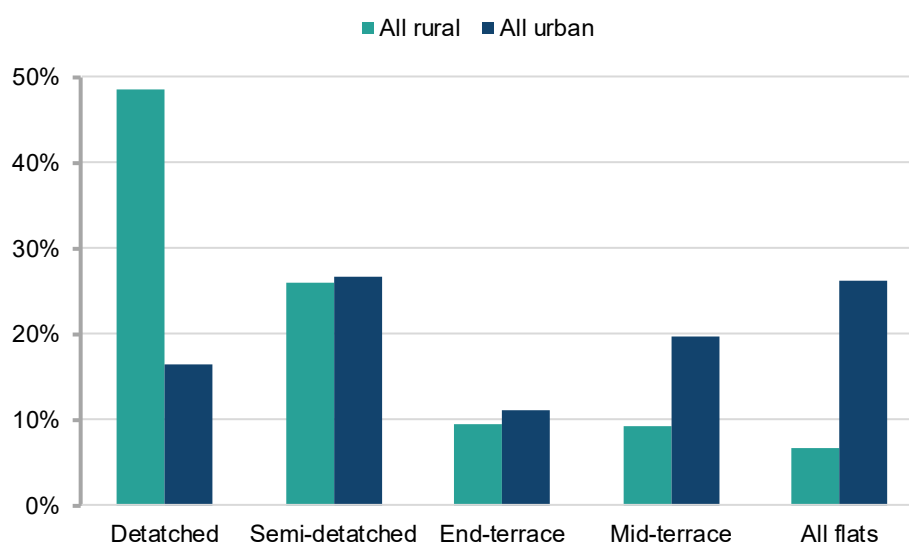


Table A-2: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

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-2). 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-2).

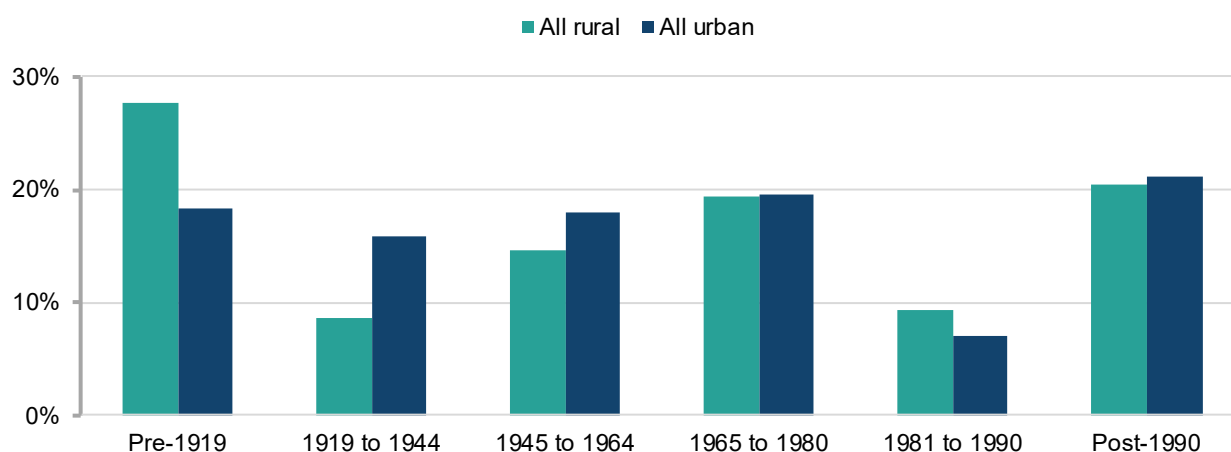
Figure A-2 also shows that there is a greater proportion of urban properties (16%) dating from the period 1919-1945 than rural properties (9%). There is a similar proportion of residential properties originating from the periods 1965 to 1980 and post-1990 in both rural and urban areas but there is a marginally higher proportion in rural areas that date from the period 1981 to 1990 than in urban areas (Figure A-2).

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-4: 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-3). 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.

Figure A-5: 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.

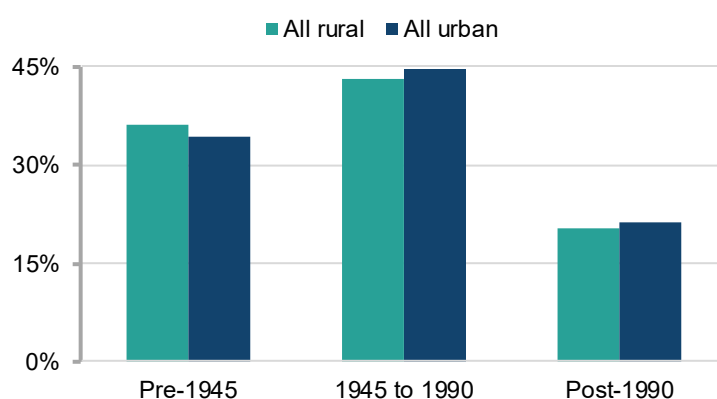
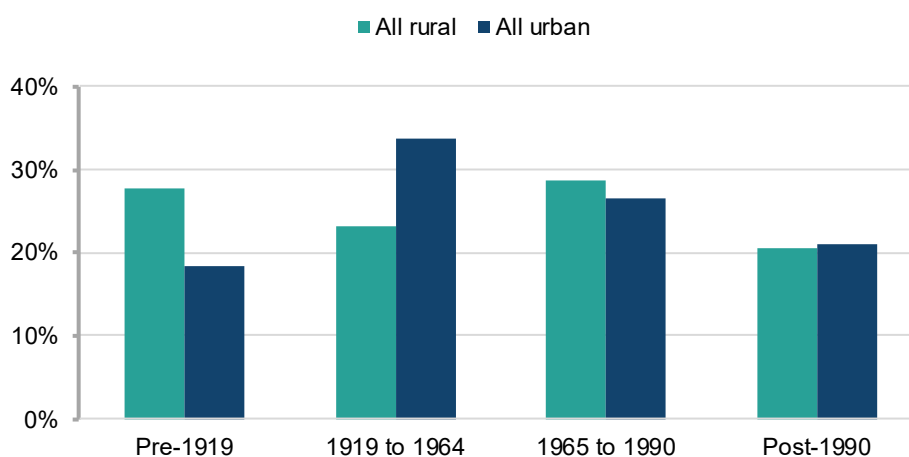


Figure A-6: Percentage of residential properties, by 4-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note A-4, Note A-5)

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



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-4, and it shows that rural areas have a higher proportion of Pre-1919 residential buildings than urban areas. Figure A-4 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.

Housing stock: age and type - explanatory notes

- **Note A-1**

Tables showing the data expressed in Figure A-1 and Figure A-2 are available in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note A-2**

The category 'Flat, maisonette or apartment' covers the following types of property: purpose-built block of flats or tenement; part of a converted or shared house, including bedsits; part of another converted building, for example, former school, church or warehouse; property in a commercial building, for example, in an office building, hotel or over a shop.

- **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

The size of the total dwelling stock in majority rural authorities increased faster than in other classifications of local authority in England, with 3 in every 4 new homes completed by private enterprise; affordable housing accounts for 25% of housing delivery in majority rural authorities.

Housing stock: additions and affordable housing - key findings

Outside of London, the housing stock is growing fastest in majority rural authorities

- As of 2023, there were around 2.8 million homes in majority rural authorities. In urban authorities outside of London, there were more than 12.4 million homes in 2023.
- The total dwelling stock increased by 9% in majority rural authorities between 2016 and 2023; in urban authorities outside of London, it increased by around 6%.

The majority of newly built homes were for private sale or rent

- In majority rural authorities, 75% of newly built homes were for Private Enterprise (new dwellings built for private sale, private renting, and or by non-registered providers), and 25% were via Housing Associations. Less than 1% of new dwellings completed were via the local authorities themselves.
- In urban areas outside of London, 78% of new homes were for Private Enterprise, 21% were via Housing Associations, and just over 1% were via the local authorities themselves.

There were not enough council houses, particularly in majority rural authorities

- In 2022/23, 4% of households were on the waiting list for council housing in majority rural authorities; however, only 2% of homes were owned by local authorities for council housing.
- In urban areas outside of London, there was a higher proportion of households on the council housing waiting list (5%) compared to majority rural authorities; however, there are also more council-owned dwellings.

Outside of London, affordable housing delivery was highest in majority rural areas

- There were 3.3 additions to affordable housing per 1,000 households in majority rural authorities in 2022/23; this compares to 2.0 additions per 1,000 households in urban authorities outside of London.
- The number of affordable homes delivered on all rural exception sites decreased by nearly 50% between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.
- In 2022/23, twice as many homes were delivered via Section 106 agreements in majority rural authorities as were delivered in 2015/16.

Summary

The availability of housing, and especially affordable housing, is a challenge in both rural and urban areas; to understand the development of new housing we track housing completions and the net additions to the housing stock.

As of 2023, there were around 2.8 million dwellings in majority rural authorities, with an additional 3.3 million dwellings in intermediate rural authorities. In urban authorities outside of London, there were more than 12.4 million dwellings in 2023. The total dwelling stock increased by 9% in majority rural authorities between 2016 and 2023; in urban authorities outside of London, it increased by around 6%.

In majority rural authorities, there were 24,600 new dwellings completed in year ending March 2024; 75% of these (18,500 dwellings) were for Private Enterprise (new dwellings built for private sale, private renting, and or by non-registered providers), and 25% (6,100 dwellings) were via Housing Associations. Less than 1% (less than 100 dwellings) of new dwellings completed were via the majority rural local authorities themselves in year ending March 2024. In urban areas outside of London, there were 65,300 new dwellings completed in the same year; 78% of these were for Private Enterprise, 21% were via Housing Associations, and just over 1% were via the local authorities themselves.

In year ending March 2023, there were 114,700 households on council housing waiting lists in majority rural authorities. These authorities owned 51,400 dwellings in year ending March 2023, indicating that the demand for council housing was far greater than the supply in majority rural authorities. In urban authorities outside of London, there were 642,500 households on the waiting lists for council housing, compared to the 923,800 dwellings owned by these local authorities. Between year ending March 2021 and year ending March 2023, the proportion of households on the council housing waiting list in majority rural authorities increased from 3.5% to 4.4%.

In year ending March 2023, there were 8,600 affordable homes delivered in majority rural authorities; this was double the number delivered in year ending March 2016 when 4,300 affordable homes were delivered. In urban authorities outside of London, there were 23,200 affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2023; this was 66% more than in year ending March 2016 when 14,000 affordable homes were delivered.

Total dwelling stock

As of 31 March 2023, there were 2.8 million dwellings in majority rural authorities, and 3.3 million in intermediate rural authorities; this is equivalent to 11% and 13% of the total dwelling stock in England, respectively. Table B-1 gives the total number of dwellings by 2021 rural-urban classification in 2023.

Table B-1: Total dwelling stock as at March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities as at 2023, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

The numbers of dwellings are presented in millions, rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Total number of dwellings (millions)	Proportion of total dwelling stock in England	Proportion of households
Majority rural	2.8	11.0%	10.7%
Intermediate rural	3.3	12.8%	12.8%
Intermediate urban	3.1	12.2%	12.2%
Urban (excluding London)	12.4	49.0%	49.2%
London	3.8	14.9%	15.1%
England	25.4	100.0%	100.0%

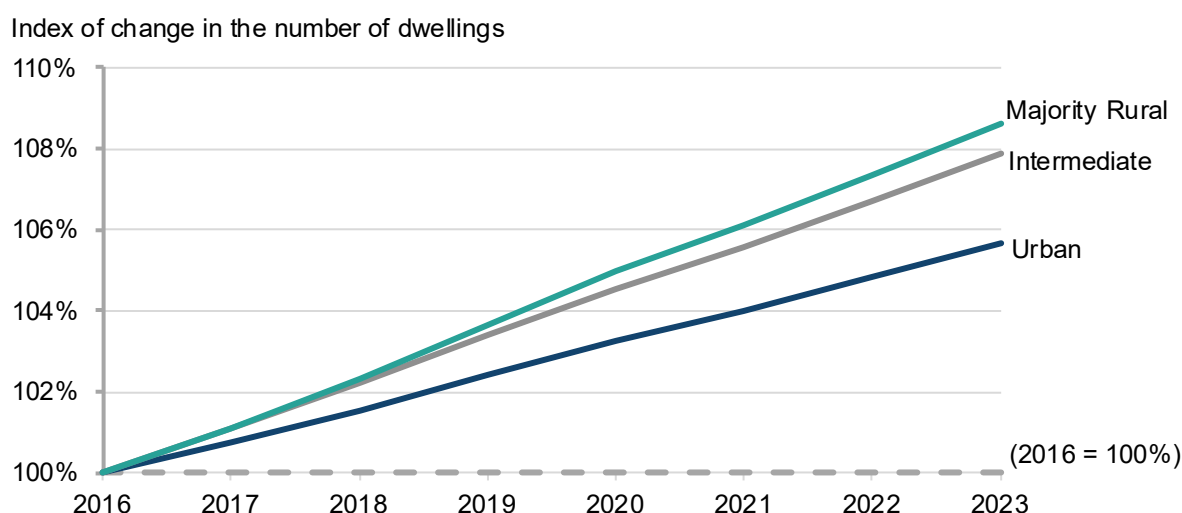
The line chart in Figure B-1 provides the index of change in the number of dwellings between 2016 and 2023. In this index of change chart, the number of dwellings in each given year has been divided by the number of dwellings in 2016; this allows the calculation of percentage changes. With index charts, it is possible to calculate percentage change by subtracting 100% from each value; for example, an index of 108% means there has been an 8% 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 majority rural authorities than in intermediate or urban authorities outside of London between 2016 and 2023.
- In majority rural authorities, the number of dwellings in 2023 was 109% of the total in 2016; this means that the total dwelling stock in majority rural authorities had increased by 9% between 2016 and 2023. This was the greatest proportional increase of all local authority classifications in England. In absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 2.6 million to 2.8 million between 2016 and 2023.
- In intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities, 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 5.9 million to 6.4 million between 2016 and 2023.
- In urban authorities 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 local authority classifications in England. In absolute terms, the dwelling stock increased from 11.8 million to 12.4 million between 2016 and 2023.

Figure B-1: Line chart showing the index (2016 = 100%) of change in the number of dwellings between 2016 and 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities as at 2023, as at 31st March of each year, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Urban’ excludes London. An index value of 100% is equivalent to the size of the dwelling stock in 2016; this is indicated by a horizontal dashed line. By extension, an index of 99% or 101% mean the dwelling stock was 1% smaller or larger than in 2016, respectively.



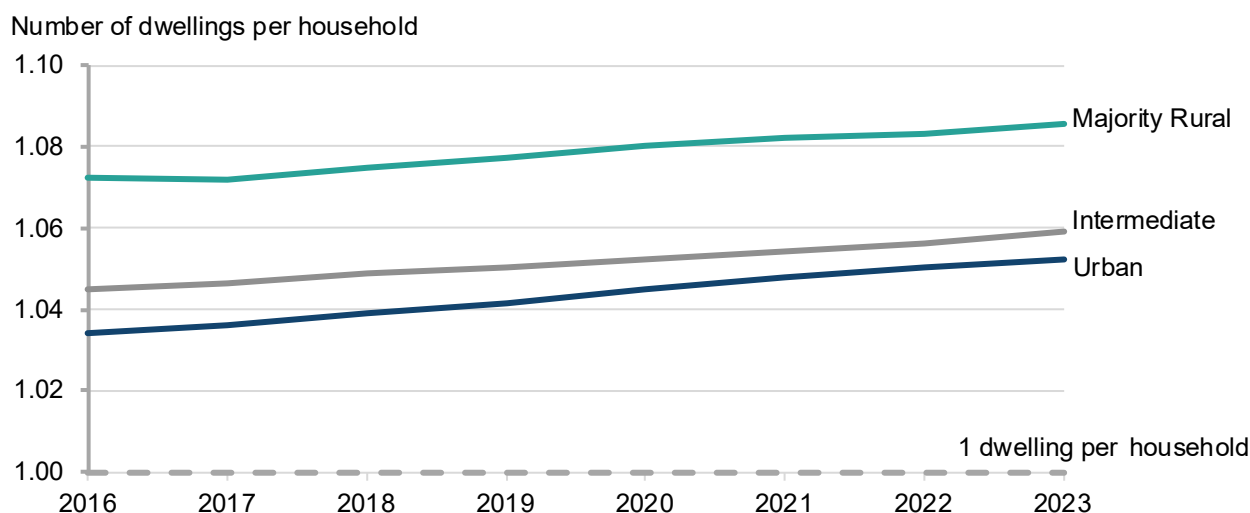
Detailed classifications specified within RUC21 provide information regarding the areas' proximity to a major town or city to indicate relative access. When considering proximity to a major town or city for the majority of the population in majority rural authorities, there was a minimal difference in the rate of total dwelling stock growth. In majority rural authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city, the total dwelling stock increased by 8% between 2016 and 2023; in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population reside nearer to a major town or city, the dwelling stock increased by 9%.

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 the declared households 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. It can be described as follows:

- Majority rural authorities have consistently had the highest number of dwellings per household of all local authority classifications in England between 2016 and 2023.
- In majority rural authorities, there were 1.07 dwellings per household in 2016 and 2017. This steadily increased to 1.09 dwellings per household in 2023. This indicates that the size of the housing stock in majority rural authorities grew faster than households (through formation or due to migration) between 2017 and 2023.
- Between 2016 and 2023, the number of dwellings per household increased gradually in urban authorities outside of London, from 1.03 to 1.05 dwellings per household. These increases were similar to those seen in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, where the number of dwellings per household increased from 1.04 to 1.06 between 2016 and 2023.

Figure B-2: Line chart showing the number of dwellings per household between 2016 and 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities as at 2023, as at 31st March of each year, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Urban’ excludes London. A ratio of 1.00 (i.e., 1 dwelling per household) has been indicated on the chart with a horizontal dashed line.



In majority rural authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city, there were 1.12 dwellings per household in 2023; this was higher than in authorities where the majority of the population reside nearer to a major town or city (1.06), indicating more second or empty homes further from urban centres.

Table B-2 shows the local authority with the highest number of dwellings per household in March 2023, within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification. These figures highlight areas where there may be particularly high proportions of second and empty homes, or properties used for non-residential purposes.

Table B-2: Local Authorities with the highest number of dwellings per household in England, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, 2023

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Isles of Scilly’ and ‘City of London’ represented the highest ratios in majority rural authorities and in London respectively, but have been excluded from the table due to their small number of resident households.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Local Authority	Dwellings per household
Majority rural	East Lindsey	1.32
Intermediate	East Riding of Yorkshire	1.16
Urban (excluding London)	Cambridge	1.32
London	Kensington and Chelsea	1.18
England	Cambridge	1.32

The highest ratio in majority rural authorities was in ‘East Lindsey’, where there were 1.32 dwellings per household. A higher ratio was seen in the Isles of Scilly of 1.58 dwellings per household, though as a small island community, this is not comparable with mainland authorities.

In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, the highest ratio was seen in ‘East Riding of Yorkshire’ (intermediate rural), where there were 1.16 dwellings per household. In urban authorities outside of London, ‘Cambridge’ had 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. However, as with the ‘Isles of Scilly’, this ratio was likely inflated by the small number of resident households. The second highest ratio in London was ‘Kensington and Chelsea’, where there were 1.18 dwellings per household.

With the ‘Isles of Scilly’ and ‘City of London’ excluded, ‘Cambridge’ had the highest number of dwellings per household in England on 31st March 2023 (ratio = 1.32); ‘Camden’ in London had the smallest (ratio = 0.93).

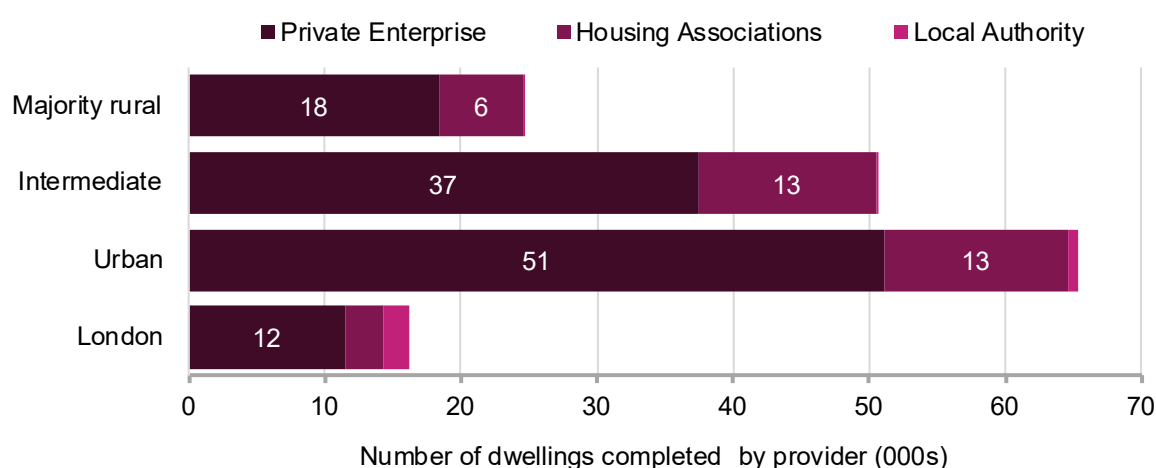
Housebuilding completions

Increases to the size of the dwelling stock arise from building new dwellings or converting existing dwellings. In majority rural authorities, there were 24,600 new dwellings completed in year ending March 2024. In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, there were 50,700 new dwelling completions. In urban authorities outside of London, there were 65,300 housebuilding completions. In London, there were 16,200 housebuilding completions.

The stacked bar chart in Figure B-3 shows the number of new dwellings completed by provider and 2021 rural-urban classification in 2023/24.

Figure B-3: Bar chart showing the total number of dwellings completed in year ending March 2024, by provider and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities as at 2023, in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Values are given in thousands (000s), and have not been labelled on the bars where there were fewer than 5,000 dwelling completions. ‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Urban’ excludes London. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars.



Private Enterprise (new dwellings built for private sale, private renting, and or by non-registered providers) delivered proportionally more dwellings than any other provider in year ending March 2024. In majority rural authorities, 75% of new dwelling completions were for Private Enterprise; this was similar to intermediate (rural or urban) authorities at 74%. In urban authorities outside of

London, 78% of new dwellings were for Private Enterprise; this was the highest of all local authority classifications in England. In London, 71% of new dwellings were for Private Enterprise.

Housing Associations (organisations who manage and build affordable housing) delivered 25% of new dwellings in majority rural authorities; this is similar to intermediate (rural or urban) authorities at 26%. In urban authorities outside of London, 21% of new dwellings were via Housing Associations, compared to 17% of new dwellings in London.

Local authorities delivered the smallest proportions of new dwellings in year ending March 2024. Majority rural and intermediate (rural or urban) authorities delivered fewer than 1% of the total number of new dwellings. Urban authorities outside of London delivered just over 1%. Overall local authorities in London delivered 12% of new dwellings.

In majority rural authorities, a smaller proportion of new dwellings were delivered via Housing Associations in local authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city (20%), compared to those where the majority of the population reside nearer to a major town or city (27%). In all majority rural authorities, fewer than 1% of new dwelling completions were delivered by the local authorities themselves. Therefore, a larger proportion of new dwellings were delivered for Private Enterprise in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city (80%), compared to those where the majority of the population reside nearer to a major town or city (73%).

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. Table B-3 shows the number of dwellings owned by the local authorities (i.e., council houses and flats), by 2021 rural-urban classification, in year ending March 2023.

Table B-3: Number of council dwellings in year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

The numbers of local authority owned dwellings have been rounded to the nearest 100.

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Number of council dwellings
Majority rural	51,400
Intermediate	119,100
Urban (excluding London)	923,800
London	388,900
England	1,563,200

In year ending March 2023, there were 51,400 council dwellings in majority rural authorities, which accounted for 2% of the total dwelling stock; this was the lowest proportion compared with other types of authority. A smaller proportion of the total dwelling stock was owned by the local authority in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city (1.3%), compared to those where the majority reside nearer to a major town or city (2.2%).

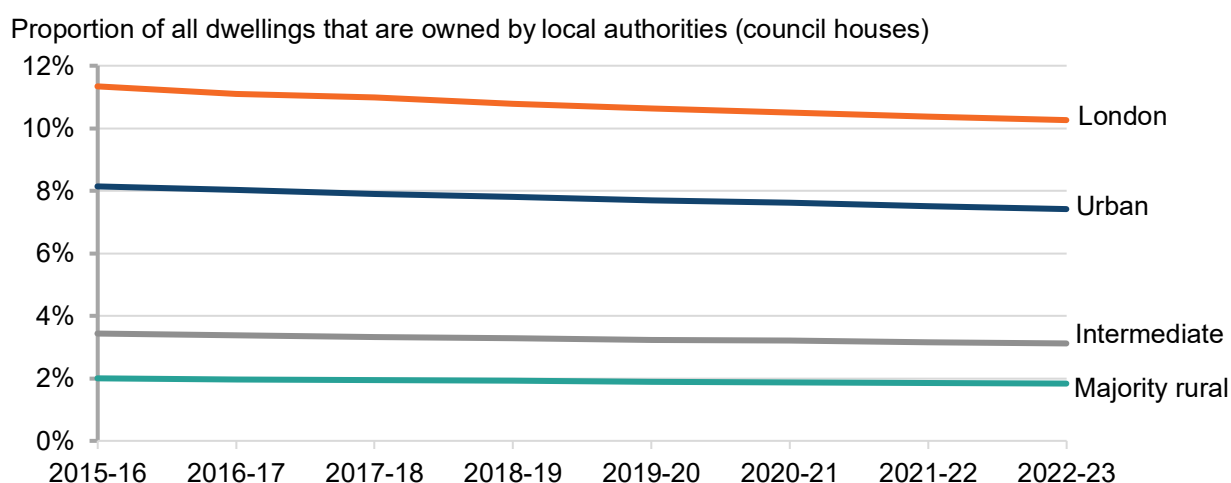
In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, 3% of the total dwelling stock was owned by the local authority (119,100 dwellings); proportionally, this was slightly higher than in majority rural

authorities. In urban authorities outside of London, 7% of the total dwelling stock was owned by the local authority (923,800 dwellings); this was more than 3 times higher than in majority rural authorities. In London, 10% of the dwelling stock was owned by the local authority (388,900).

The line chart in Figure B-4 shows the change in the proportion of dwellings owned by local authorities (i.e., council dwellings) between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.

Figure B-4: Line chart showing the change in the proportion of dwellings that were owned by local authorities between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Urban’ excludes London.



The line chart in Figure B-4 can be described as follows:

- There were proportionally fewer council dwellings in 2022/23 than in 2015/16 for all settlement types. The smallest proportional decrease was in majority rural authorities, whilst the greatest was in London.
- In majority rural authorities, the proportion of dwellings owned by councils was similar between 2015/16 and 2022/23, at around 2%; in absolute terms, the number of local authority-owned dwellings decreased from 52,400 to 51,400 dwellings across this period.
- In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, there was a minimal decrease in the proportion of dwellings owned by councils between 2015/16 and 2022/23, with both being around 3%. In absolute terms, the number of local authority-owned dwellings decreased from 224,200 to 199,100 dwellings across this period. This indicates a greater proportional and absolute decrease in the proportion of council dwellings in intermediate authorities compared to majority rural authorities.
- In urban authorities outside of London, 8% of dwellings were owned by councils in 2015/16; by 2022/23, this decreased to 7%, indicating a greater rate of change than in majority rural and intermediate authorities. In absolute terms, the number of local authority-owned dwellings decreased from 992,400 to 923,800 dwellings across this period.
- In London, more than 11% of dwellings were owned by councils in 2015/16; by 2022/23, this decreased to 10%. In absolute terms, the number of local authority-owned dwellings decreased from 411,200 to 388,900 dwellings across this period.

Table B-4 gives the number of households on the waiting list for Local Authority housing by 2021 rural-urban classification in year ending March 2023.

Table B-4: Number of households on waiting lists for council housing in year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

The numbers of households have been rounded to the nearest 100. 'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Number of households on council housing waiting lists
Majority rural	114,700
Intermediate	202,200
Urban (excluding London)	642,500
London	323,600
England	1,283,000

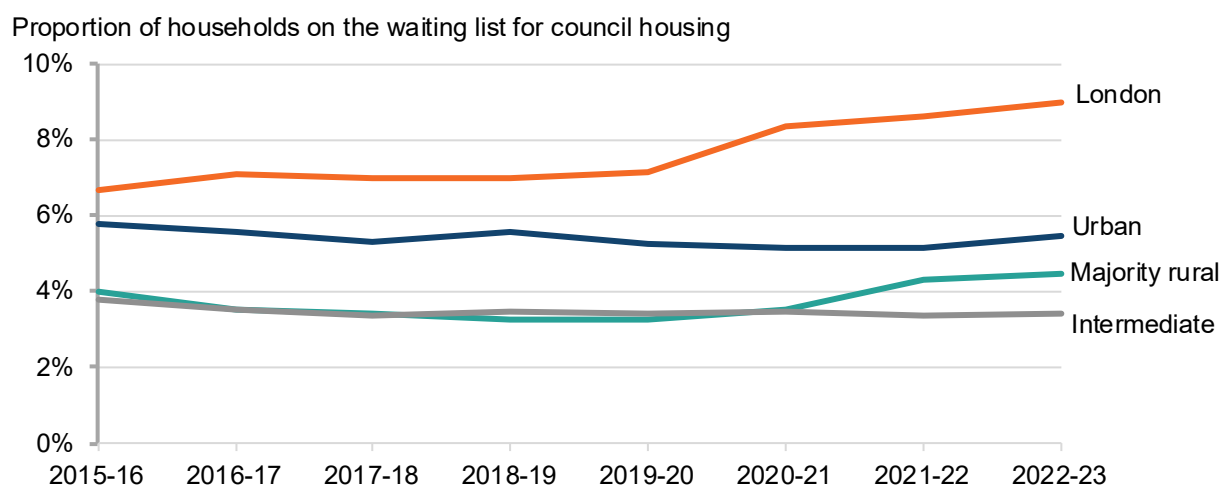
In year ending March 2023, 4% of households in majority rural authorities were on the waiting list for council housing, equivalent to 114,700 households; there were proportionally more households on the waiting list in authorities where the majority of the population reside further from a major town or city (5%; 60,600 households), than nearer to (4%; 54,100 households).

The proportion of households on the waiting list in majority rural authorities was higher than in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities (3%; 202,200 households), but lower than in urban authorities outside of London (5%; 642,500 households). Proportionally more households in London were on the waiting list for council housing than in other types of authority (9%; 323,600 households).

Waiting lists for council housing have grown in recent years for some categories of the 2021 rural-urban classification. The line chart in Figure B-5 shows the change in the proportion of households on council housing waiting lists between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.

Figure B-5: Line chart showing the change in the proportion of households on council housing waiting lists between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3)

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. 'Urban' excludes London.



The line chart in Figure B-5 can be described as follows:

- Between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2021, there was little difference in the proportion of households on the waiting list for council housing in majority rural and intermediate (rural or urban) authorities; across this period, the proportions fluctuated between 3.3% and 4.0% of households. There was consistently a higher proportion of households on the council housing waiting list in urban authorities outside of London (and even more so in London) compared to majority rural or intermediate authorities between 2015/16 and year ending 2020/21.
- Between year ending March 2021 and year ending March 2023, the proportion of households on the council housing waiting list continued along the same trend in intermediate authorities. However, in majority rural authorities, the proportion of households increased between year ending March 2021 and year ending March 2023 to 4.4%.
- In urban authorities outside of London, the proportion of households on the council housing waiting list followed similar trends to intermediate authorities, albeit at a greater magnitude. In year ending March 2016, 5.8% of households were on the council housing waiting list in urban authorities outside London. Between 2015/16 and 2022/23, this proportion fluctuated between 5.1% and 5.8%. In year ending March 2023, 5.5% of households were on the council housing waiting list in urban authorities outside London.
- In London, there has consistently been a higher proportion of households on the waiting list for council housing compared to other types of authority. Between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2020, the proportion increased marginally, from 6.7% to 7.1%. By year ending March 2023, 9.0% of households in London were on the waiting list for council housing; this was twice the proportion in majority rural authorities.

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 (based on new building completions, acquisitions, or rehabilitations), by 2021 rural-urban classification, in year ending March 2023. A full time series since year ending March 2016 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

There were 8,600 additions to affordable housing in majority rural authorities in 2022/23; this is equivalent to 3.3 homes per 1,000 households, or 25% of all additions to housing stock. In urban authorities outside of London, the proportion of net additional dwellings that were affordable was similar to majority rural authorities, but total affordable housing delivery was higher (23,200 dwellings). There were proportionally fewer affordable homes delivered in urban authorities outside of London (2.0 dwellings per 1,000 households) compared to majority rural authorities.

In London, the proportion of net additional dwellings that were affordable was higher than any other classification of authority in England (23%). The rate of affordable housing delivery was also highest in London, at 4.4 dwellings per 1,000 households in year ending March 2023.

Table B-5: Number of affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Affordable home delivery has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. 'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.

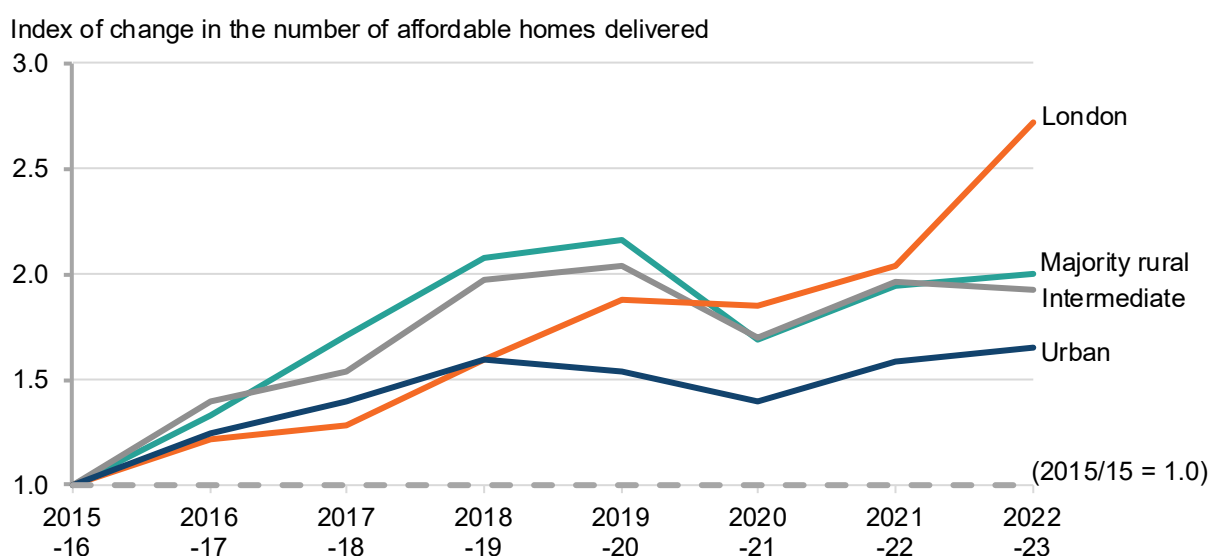
Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Number of affordable homes delivered	Affordable homes delivered per 1,000 households	Proportion of additions that were affordable
Majority rural	8,600	3.3	25%
Intermediate	16,400	2.8	23%
Urban (excluding London)	23,200	2.0	25%
London	15,800	4.4	45%
England	63,900	2.7	27%

Note: this table has been revised since the previous publication. To calculate the proportion of additions that were affordable, the number of affordable homes delivered (including completions and acquisitions) has been divided by the total housing additions (new builds plus acquisitions).

The line chart in Figure B-6 provides the index of change in the number of affordable homes delivered between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023. 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 year ending March 2016.

Figure B-6: Line chart showing the index (2015/16 = 1.0) of change in the number of affordable homes delivered between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. 'Urban' excludes London. An index value of 1.0 is equivalent to the number of affordable homes delivered in 2016; this is indicated by a horizontal dashed line. By extension, an index of 2.0 would mean the number of council dwellings had doubled since 2016.



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

- Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, majority rural authorities generally saw the greatest proportional increases to the affordable housing stock compared to other local authority classifications in England. However, this decreased to a lower rate of delivery in 2020/21, potentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2020/21 and 2022/23, the number of affordable homes delivered in London increased proportionally more than in other types of authority. Between 2015/16 and 2022/23, trends in the number of affordable homes delivered annually were similar between majority rural authorities and intermediate authorities.
- In majority rural authorities, the number of affordable homes delivered doubled between 2015/16 (4,300 dwellings) and 2022/23 (8,600 dwellings). The greatest increase was in 2019/20, where there were 9,200 affordable homes delivered; this is about 2.2 times higher than in 2015/16.
- In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, affordable home delivery in 2022/23 (16,400) was almost 2 times higher than in 2015/16 (8,500 dwellings). In a similar manner to majority rural authorities, the greatest increase was in 2019/20, where there were 17,300 affordable homes delivered; this is just over 2 times higher than in 2015/16.
- In urban authorities outside of London, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (23,200) was 1.7 higher than in 2015/16 (14,000 dwellings). In London, the number of affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (15,800) was 2.7 times higher than in 2015/16 (5,800 dwellings).

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 2021 rural-urban classification in year ending March 2023. Outside of London, more than 4 in every 10 affordable homes were delivered for Affordable Rent in year ending March 2023. In the same year, more than 3 in every 10 affordable homes were delivered for Shared Ownership.

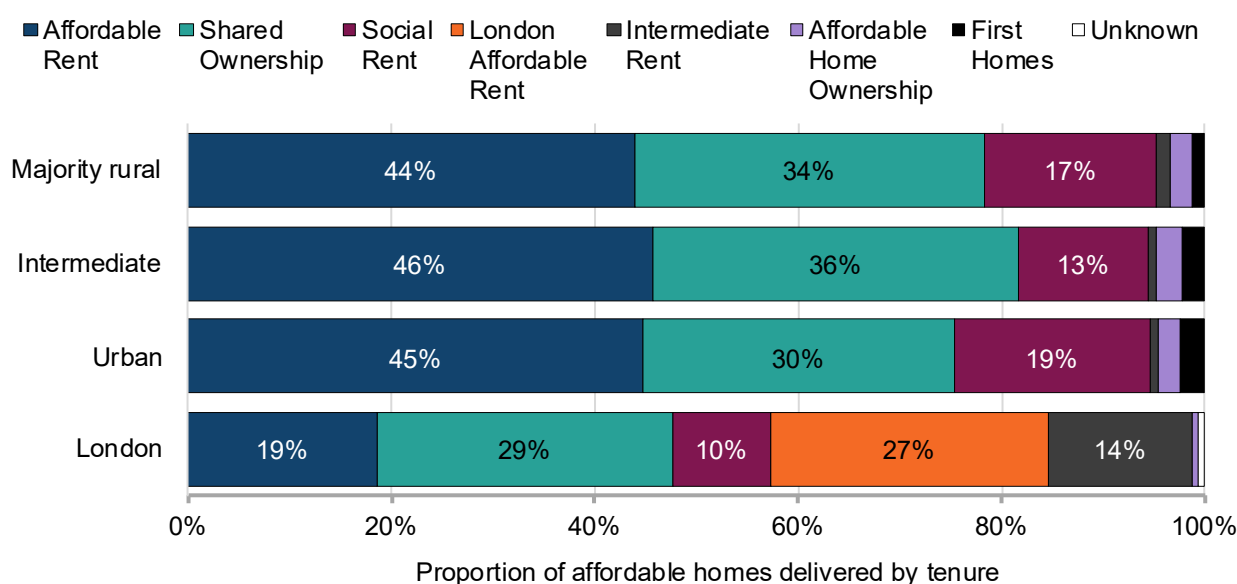
The bar chart in Figure B-7 can be described as follows:

- Across England, Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership were typically the two most common tenures for affordable home delivery in year ending March 2023 and accounted for more than 3 in every 4 homes delivered.
- In majority rural authorities, Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership represented 44% and 34%, respectively. In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, the proportions represented were slightly higher, with 46% for Affordable Rent and 36% for shared ownership. In urban authorities outside of London, 45% of affordable homes delivered were for Affordable Rent, whilst the proportion for Shared Ownership was 30%. In London, 19% of affordable housing delivery was for Affordable Rent, and 29% was for Shared Ownership.
- Outside of London, Social Rent represented the next largest proportion of affordable housing delivery in year ending March 2023. In majority rural authorities, Social Rent represented 17%; this was higher than in intermediate authorities (13%), but lower than in urban authorities (19%). In London, Social Rent only represented 10% of affordable housing delivery in year ending March 2023, preceded by London Affordable Rent (27%) and Intermediate Rent (14%).

- All other tenures each represented less than 5% of affordable housing delivery for each local authority classification. First Homes represented 1% of delivery in majority rural authorities, and 2% each in intermediate or urban authorities.

Figure B-7: Bar chart showing the proportion of affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2023, by tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4, Note B-5)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘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.



Rural exception sites

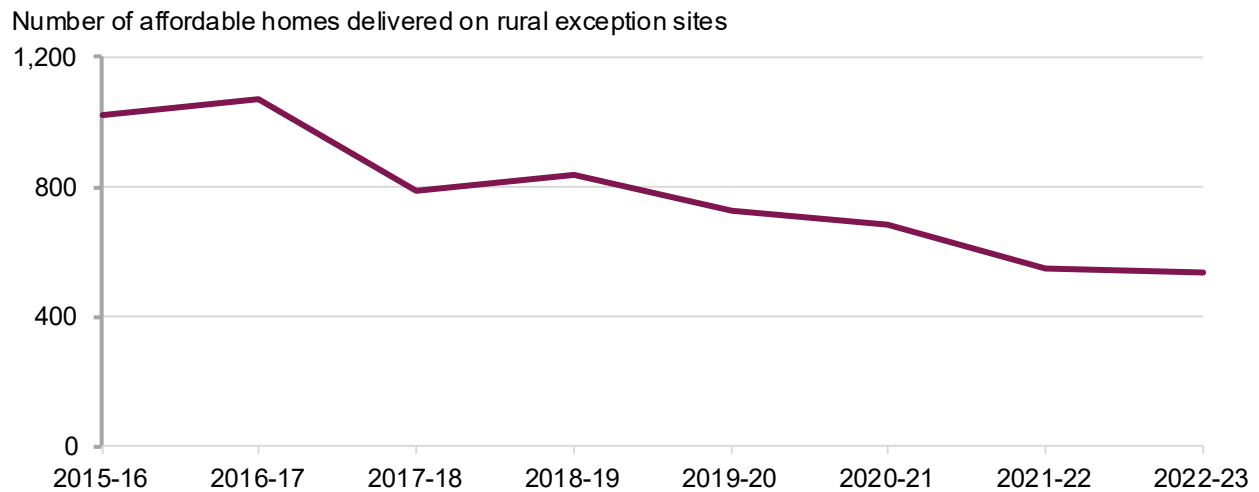
Rural exception sites are a mechanism for providing affordable housing in rural areas where it might not otherwise be permitted under standard planning rules. These sites are small plots of land, often on the edge of settlements, that can be developed to build affordable homes for local people. The key principle is that development is allowed on these sites, even if it deviates from normal planning guidelines, as long as the homes are affordable and targeted at local residents with a strong need. Intermediate (rural or urban) and urban local authorities can include rural settlements and hence rural exception sites.

The line chart in Figure B-8 shows the number of affordable homes delivered on all rural exception sites between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

The number of affordable homes delivered on all rural exception sites decreased by nearly 50% between year ending March 2016 (1,020 homes) and year ending March 2023 (530 homes); this was the lowest number of homes delivered across the period. The highest number of affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites per year was in year ending March 2017, where there were 1,070 homes delivered.

Figure B-8: Line chart showing the number of affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites in England, 2015/16 to 2022/23 (Note B-2, Note B-4)

The chart represents all areas in England, as there will be rural settlements within urban authorities. However, majority rural authorities will represent the majority of the values shown.

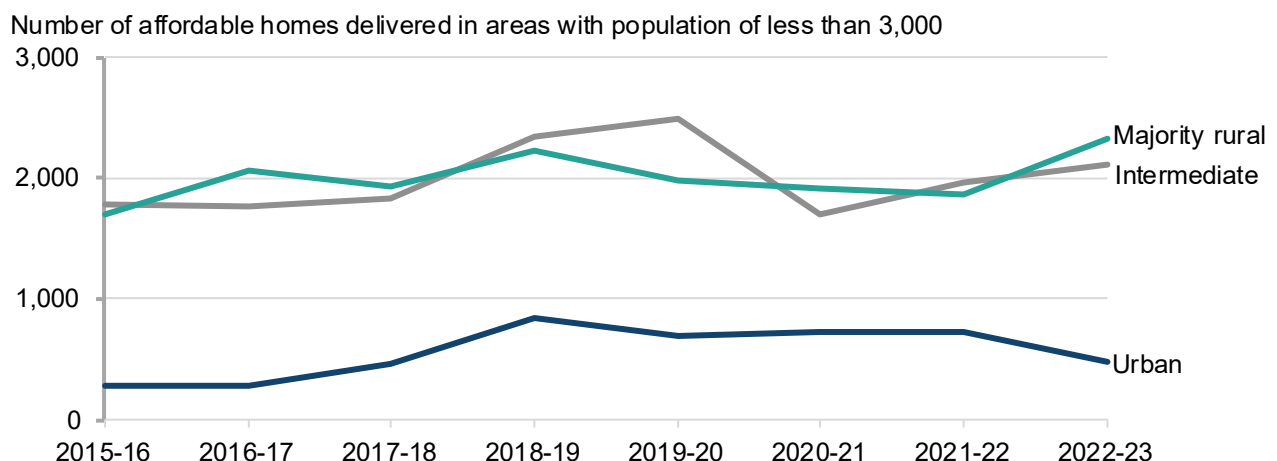


Areas with a population of less than 3,000

For settlements with populations of 3,000 or less there are specific regulations and mechanisms in place to enable the provision of affordable housing. The line chart in Figure B-9 shows the number of affordable homes delivered in areas with a population of less than 3,000, by 2021 local authority rural-urban classification, between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.

Figure B-9: Line chart showing the number of affordable homes delivered in areas with population of less than 3,000, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, year ending March 2016 to year ending March 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. 'Urban' excludes London.



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 year ending March 2023. A full time series since year ending March 2016 can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table B-6 can be described as follows:

- In year ending March 2023, there were 2,700 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in majority rural authorities; this was equivalent to 1.1 homes delivered via Homes England funding per 1,000 households.
- In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, there were nearly twice as many affordable homes delivered (5,200 homes) compared to majority rural authorities; however, as there more than double the number of households, the rate of delivery was lower (0.9 homes delivered via Homes England funding per 1,000 households).
- In urban authorities outside of London, there were 11,800 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding; this was equivalent to 1.0 homes delivered per 1,000 households, indicating a lower delivery rate than in majority rural authorities.
- In London, there were 6,600 affordable homes delivered via Greater London Authority funding in year ending March 2023; this was equivalent to 1.8 homes delivered per 1,000 households.

Table B-6: Number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England (HE) or Greater London Authority (GLA) funding in year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Affordable home delivery via HE/GLA funding has been rounded to the nearest 100 homes.

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.

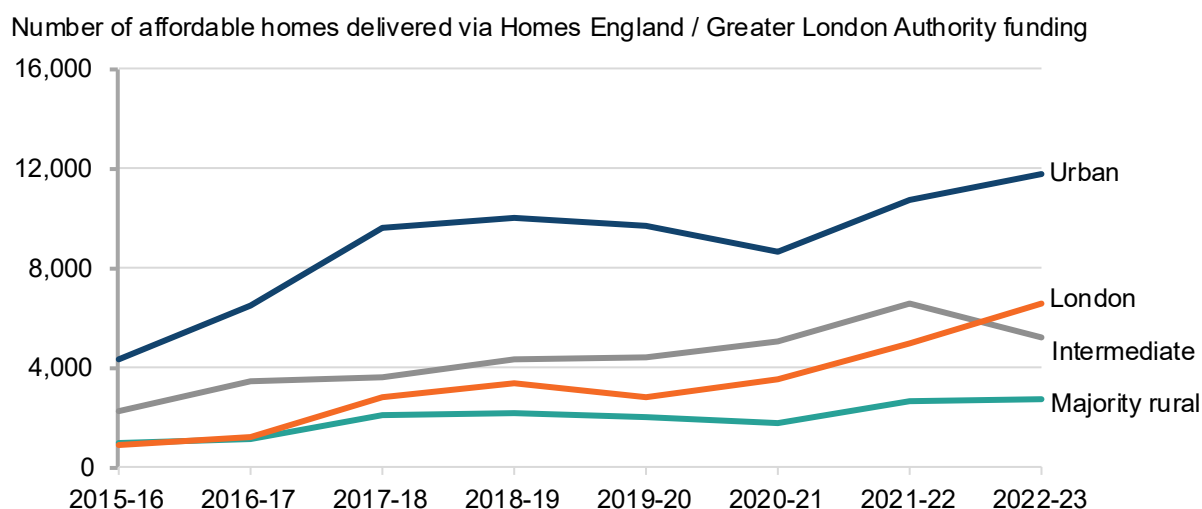
Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Number of affordable homes delivered via HE/GLA funding
Majority rural	2,700
Intermediate	5,200
Urban (excluding London)	11,800
London	6,600
England	26,300

In majority rural authorities where the majority of the population resided further from a major town or city, there were 1,200 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in year ending March 2023. The delivery rate in these authorities was marginally lower than in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population resided nearer to a major town or city, where 1,500 affordable homes were delivered via Homes England funding.

The line chart in Figure B-10 shows the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England (HE) or Greater London Authority (GLA) funding between 2015/16 and 2022/23.

Figure B-10: Line chart showing the number of affordable homes delivered via Homes England/Greater London Authority funding between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.
'Urban' excludes London.



The chart can be described as follows:

- Across England, all classifications of authorities saw overall proportional increases in the number of affordable homes delivered via HE/GLA funding between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2022. Except for intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, all local authorities saw continual increases in year ending March 2023.
- Majority rural authorities consistently had the lowest number of affordable homes delivered via HE/GLA funding between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023, except for at the start of the series where there were similar numbers delivered in London until year ending March 2017.
- Urban authorities outside of London had the highest number of affordable homes delivered via HE/GLA funding between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.
- In majority rural authorities, there were 2,700 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in year ending March 2023; this compares to 1,000 affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2016.
- In intermediate authorities, there were 5,200 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in year ending March 2023. This was less than the previous year (6,600 affordable homes). In comparison, there were 2,300 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in intermediate authorities in year ending March 2016.
- In urban authorities outside of London, there were 11,800 affordable homes delivered via Homes England funding in year ending March 2023; this compares to 4,300 affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2016.

In London, there were 6,600 affordable homes delivered via Greater London Authority funding in year ending March 2023; this compares to 900 affordable homes delivered in year ending March 2016.

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 year ending March 2023. It can be described as follows:

- In year ending March 2023, there were 5,300 affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in majority rural authorities; this was equivalent to 2.1 homes per 1,000 households, which was the highest rate of delivery of all local authority classifications in England. This was largely driven by the particularly high delivery rate in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population resided nearer to a major town or city (4,000 homes; equivalent to 2.9 homes per 1,000 households).
- In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, there was nearly double the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements (9,900 homes) compared to majority rural authorities; however, the delivery rate was lower, at 1.7 homes per 1,000 households.
- In urban authorities outside of London, there were 7,800 affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements in year ending March 2023; this was equivalent to 0.7 homes per 1,000 households, which was the lowest rate of delivery all local authority classifications in England.
- In London, there were a similar number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements (7,300 homes) to urban authorities outside of London. The delivery rate in London was similar to, but still marginally lower than, that in majority rural authorities (2.0 homes per 1,000 households).

Table B-7: Number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 (s106) agreements in year ending March 2023, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

Affordable home delivery via s106 agreements has been rounded to the nearest 100 homes.

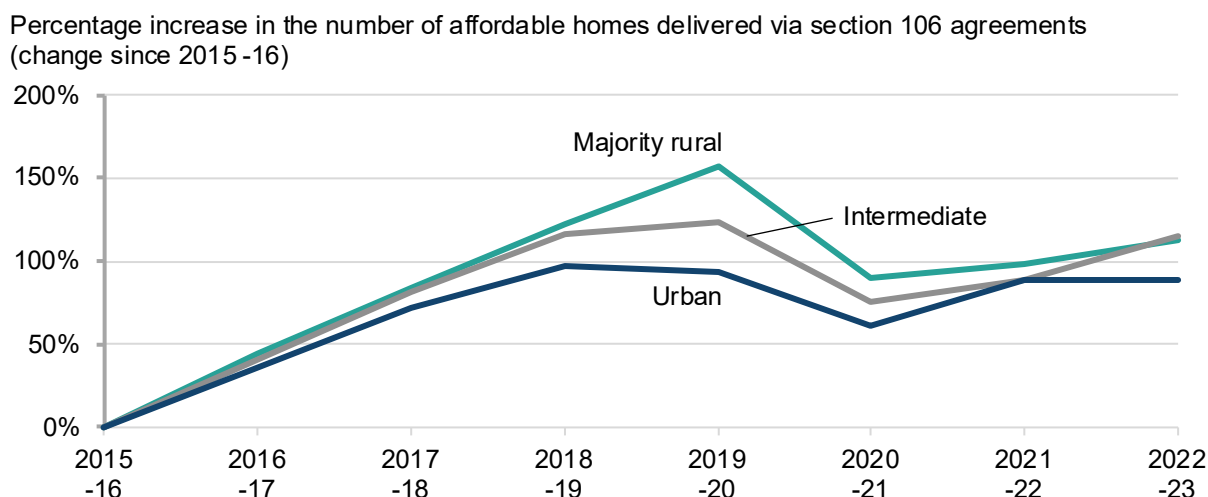
‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements	Number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements per 1,000 households
Majority rural	5,300	2.1
Intermediate	9,900	1.7
Urban (excluding London)	7,800	0.7
London	7,300	2.0
England	30,200	1.3

The line chart in Figure B-11 provides the index of change in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023. 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 year ending March 2016.

Figure B-11: Line chart showing the percentage increases in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements between 2015/16 and 2022/23, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note B-2, Note B-3, Note B-4)

'Intermediate' represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities.
'Urban' excludes London. London has been excluded from the chart.



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

- Across England, all classifications of authorities saw overall proportional increases in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023.
- Between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023, majority rural authorities generally had the greatest proportional increases in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements compared to other local authority classifications in England.
- In majority rural and intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, the greatest proportional increase in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements since year ending March 2016 was in year ending March 2020. In majority rural authorities, the rate of delivery had increased by 157% across this period, from 2,500 homes to 6,400 homes being delivered via Section 106 agreements. In intermediate authorities, the rate of delivery had increased by 123%, from 4,600 homes in year ending March 2016 to 10,300 homes in year ending March 2020.
- In urban authorities outside of London, the greatest proportional increase in the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements since year ending March 2016 (4,100 homes) was in year ending March 2019 (8,100 homes), where the rate of delivery had increased by 97%.
- In year ending March 2023, there were 113% more affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements than in year ending March 2016 in majority rural authorities. In intermediate authorities, the number of affordable homes delivered had increased by 115% between year ending March 2016 and year ending March 2023; this was higher than in majority rural authorities. Across the same period, the number of affordable homes delivered via Section 106 agreements increased by 88% in urban authorities outside of London; this was lower than in majority rural authorities.

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

For the relative access categories, 'nearer to a major town or city' is defined as being within a 30-minute drive of a major town or city. Conversely 'further from a major town or city' is defined as being more than a 30-minute drive by car from a major town or city (built-up area with a population of at least 75,000 residents). More information regarding the 2021 Census-based rural-urban classification, including detailed data tables, can be found via: [2021 Rural Urban Classification - Office for National Statistics](#)

• 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 market

The area of the country 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.

Housing market - key findings

Properties are typically twice as much to buy in the South than in the North

- In June 2025, a typical terraced property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England might cost £125,300 to buy.
- In June 2025, a typical terraced property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the South East of England might cost £329,200 to buy.

Properties are less affordable to buy in the South than in the North

- In year ending March 2025, a terraced property at the lower end of the housing market in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in the North East might cost 3.1 times a lower-income individual's annual earnings to buy.
- In year ending March 2025, a terraced property at the lower end of the housing market in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in the South East of England might cost 8.0 times a lower-income individual's annual earnings to buy.

Properties are typically twice as much to rent in the South than in the North

- In June 2025, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England might cost £435 pcm to rent.
- In June 2025, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the South East of England might cost £905 pcm to rent.

Properties are less affordable to rent in the South than in the North

- In year ending March 2024, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England might cost an individual 14% of their monthly earnings to rent.
- In year ending March 2024, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the South East of England and near London might cost an individual 26% of their monthly earnings to rent.

Summary

Within this publication, house purchase affordability ratios are based on both median and lower quartile house prices and workplace-based earnings for Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in England. Private rent affordability is based on the mean of rent prices to median workplace-based earnings for Local Authorities in England. The latest house purchase and rent prices are also based on geometric means.

In majority rural authorities, the average house price in June 2025 ranged from £156,500 for a flat/maisonette to £457,300 for a detached house. However, a typical flat/maisonette in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England might cost £89,200, whereas in the South East it might cost more than double (£207,700).

House purchase affordability varies more by region than it does by rural-urban classification. When considering majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in England only, there was just one constituency in which an individual with lower quartile earnings could afford to buy a detached property at the lower end of the housing market, located in the North West. However, a lower-income individual might afford to buy a lower market flat/maisonette in almost any majority rural or intermediate rural constituency, with the exception of a few in the South East and East of England.

In majority rural authorities, the average private rent price in June 2025 ranged from around £670 per calendar month (pcm) for a one-bedroom property, to £1,540 pcm for a property with four or more bedrooms. However, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East might cost £435 pcm to rent, whilst a similar one-bedroom property in the South East might cost more than double (£905 pcm).

Private rent affordability varies more by region than it does by rural-urban classification, although majority rural authorities tend to be slightly more affordable than urban authorities. If a person lived in the South or East of England, their options for renting three-bedroom properties were limited; there was just one majority rural authority in the South West and one intermediate rural authority in the East of England where a typical individual could afford to rent a three-bedroom property. However, a typical individual might afford to rent a typical one-bed property in almost any majority rural or intermediate rural authority, with the exception of a few in the South East of England.

House purchases – background information

The ONS publish an annual [housing affordability publication](#), showing the ratio of house purchase prices to annual earnings; the latest data are for year ending March 2025. Westminster Parliamentary Constituency-level data is used to provide house purchase affordability ratios that are often more granular than the previous Local Authority-level estimates (Note C-8). For the purposes of this publication, two average affordability ratios are analysed:

Median – the middle value of a data set; the ‘median house purchase price’ in an area would be the point where 50% of all properties sold were cheaper and 50% were more expensive.

Lower quartile – the 25th percentile; the ‘lower quartile house purchase price’ in an area would be the point where 25% of all properties sold were cheaper and 75% were more expensive. This can be used as a proxy for the lower end of the housing market, such as first-time buyers.

Monthly average house price trends can also be found within the [UK House Price Index](#) (UK HPI); at the time of writing, the latest data are for June 2025. Data within this resource are at Local Authority-level. As this data is timelier than the housing affordability publication, the house prices shown may not match. Additionally, averages from the UK HPI are geometric means (Note C-7) – not medians or lower quartiles. However, both publications provide valuable insights into the housing market, and are therefore included within this publication.

Latest house price estimates

The housing market is ever-changing, with average prices fluctuating frequently. The UK House Price Index aims to track these changes each month. Within this publication, a snapshot of the latest prices – taken from June 2025 – is provided. To aggregate local authority-level house price data up to the categories within the rural-urban classification, the number of dwellings by property type (taken from the [Number of dwellings by housing characteristics in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)) has been used.

Table C-1 shows that house prices are affected by both the property type and authority type; however, it should be noted that these are not the only factors. In majority rural authorities, the average house price in June 2025 ranged from £156,500 for a flat/maisonette to £457,300 for a detached house. For detached properties and flats/maisonettes, average purchase prices were lower in majority rural authorities compared to all other authority types. However, for semi-detached and terraced properties, average purchase prices were higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London.

Table C-1: Average house purchase prices (£), by property type and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, June 2025 (Note C-2, Note C-3, Note C-4, Note C-6)

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Prices have been rounded to the nearest £100.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes
Majority rural	457,300	290,100	232,900	156,500
Intermediate	492,300	292,000	233,900	164,300
Urban (excluding London)	494,000	279,300	222,500	167,400
London	1,250,600	765,300	675,900	491,300
England	515,700	325,500	286,600	281,000

Average purchase prices are also impacted by regionality; this is shown in Table C-2. Average purchase prices for houses in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities have been combined in the table. Other authority types can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North of England typically have the lowest average house prices, whilst those in the South of England typically have the highest. For example, in June 2025, a typical detached house in majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England might cost £285,400. In comparison, a typical detached house in the South East would cost more than double at £669,400. This is the case regardless of the property type.

Table C-2: Average house purchase prices (£) in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by property type and region, June 2025 (Note C-2)

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Prices have been rounded to the nearest £100. ‘London’ is excluded from the table as there are no majority rural or intermediate rural constituencies in Greater London. ‘MR’ refers to majority rural authorities, whilst ‘IR’ refers to intermediate rural authorities.

Regions	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes
North East	285,400	155,400	125,300	89,200
North West	336,900	205,400	158,300	114,400
Yorkshire and the Humber	370,500	228,300	191,000	125,500
East Midlands	347,400	220,100	179,000	119,600
West Midlands	454,000	281,100	222,600	147,000
East of England	475,700	307,000	247,200	155,100
South East	669,400	406,900	329,200	207,700
South West	473,300	303,300	243,700	155,500
All MR and IR authorities	459,700	280,300	223,700	155,500

House purchase affordability

As explained within the [quality and methodology information](#) provided by the ONS, mortgages have traditionally been offered at multiples of four to five times income (typically gross income). This means that within this publication, only those Parliamentary Constituencies with an affordability ratio of less than 5 could be considered realistic for an individual to purchase in. That is not to say that a person could definitely not afford to buy a house in an area with an affordability ratio of more than 5, but rather that the majority of mortgage lending happens below this threshold.

Table C-3 shows the overall affordability ratios of Westminster parliamentary constituencies in England, based on lower quartile house prices in year ending March 2025 and lower quartile workplace-based earnings in 2024, by 2021 rural-urban classification. These affordability ratios are based on all house prices within the specified property type and constituency type; therefore, affordability within the specified constituency type – and within constituencies themselves – will vary. These ratios should instead indicate the “average” affordability for first-time buyers and other lower-income individuals within the specified constituency types, regardless of where they live in England.

Table C-3: Ratio of lower quartile house purchase prices to lower quartile workplace-based earnings, by property type and 2021 rural-urban classification of Westminster parliamentary constituencies in England, year ending March 2025 (Note C-2, Note C-9)

Affordability ratios are rounded to the nearest 0.1, and are based on an individual's earnings.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes
Majority rural	10.4	7.1	5.8	3.7
Intermediate rural	10.5	7.3	6.0	3.8
Intermediate urban	10.6	7.4	6.0	3.8
Urban (excluding London)	10.1	7.1	5.7	3.6
London	25.7	18.6	14.9	8.0
England	12.3	9.0	7.3	4.4

Based on the mortgage lending threshold (where homes are considered 'affordable' to purchase if they are less than 5 times an individual's earnings), flats/maisonettes at the lower end of the housing market were generally the only property type that an individual with lower quartile earnings could afford to buy; this was true for all constituency types outside of London, from majority rural to urban. The overall lower quartile affordability ratios for all other property types were higher than 5, indicating they were unaffordable for lower-income individuals.

Outside of London, there was little difference in affordability between constituency types when considering overall lower quartile house prices in year ending March 2025 and overall lower quartile workplace-based earnings in 2024.

- Detached properties at the lower end of the housing market were slightly less affordable in majority rural constituencies; here, lower quartile purchase prices were around 10.4 times higher than the lower quartile workplace-based earnings, compared to 10.1 times earnings in urban constituencies outside of London.
- Lower quartile purchase prices for semi-detached properties were around 7.1 times higher than lower quartile workplace-based earnings in both majority rural and urban constituencies outside of London.
- Terraced properties at the lower end of the housing market cost around 5.8 times lower quartile earnings in majority rural constituencies, compared to 5.7 times earnings in urban constituencies outside of London.
- Purchase prices for flats/maisonettes at the lower end of the housing market were around 3.7 times higher than the lower quartile workplace-based earnings in majority rural constituencies, and 3.6 times higher than earnings in urban constituencies outside of London.
- London was the least affordable constituency type overall for all property types, with lower quartile affordability ratios more than double that of other constituency types.

Whilst Table C-3 highlights lower quartile affordability ratios in England, based on house purchase prices at the lower end of the housing market and earnings for lower-income individuals, the trends for median affordability were similar. However, the ratio of median property purchase prices to median workplace-based earnings are no longer included in the main commentary; a brief summary is instead included in Note C-10.

Although Table C-3 ignores geographic trends, in England, being able to afford to buy a house is affected by regionality: homes in the North of England are typically more affordable to buy compared to those in the South East. This is shown in the ONS interactive map: [Figure 3 - Housing affordability in England and Wales](#).

Table C-4 shows the lower quartile affordability ratios of majority rural and intermediate rural Westminster parliamentary constituencies in England, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by region. Majority rural constituencies have at least 50% of their population living in rural settlements, and in intermediate rural constituencies, it is between 35% and 50%. These two constituency types have been combined to create a single affordability ratio for each region and property type. Whilst intermediate urban and urban constituencies are not represented in the table, their affordability ratios by region can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table C-4: Ratio of lower quartile house purchase prices to lower quartile workplace-based earnings in majority rural and intermediate rural Westminster parliamentary constituencies as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by property type and region, year ending March 2025 (Note C-2)

Affordability ratios are rounded to the nearest 0.1, and are based on an individual's earnings. 'London' is excluded from the table as there are no majority rural or intermediate rural constituencies in Greater London. 'MR' refers to majority rural constituencies, whilst 'IR' refers to intermediate rural constituencies.

Regions	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes
North East	8.0	4.3	3.1	2.6
North West	8.0	5.0	3.8	2.9
Yorkshire and the Humber	8.6	5.6	4.3	3.0
East Midlands	8.8	6.0	4.9	3.2
West Midlands	10.1	6.8	5.5	3.4
East of England	10.8	7.8	6.5	4.1
South East	13.4	9.4	8.0	4.9
South West	11.0	7.6	6.4	3.9
All MR and IR constituencies	10.4	7.2	5.9	3.8

Detached properties were the least affordable property type across all regions. Focussing on majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies only, the 'North East' and 'North West' regions had the lowest lower quartile affordability ratios at 8.0. In contrast, the 'South East' had the highest at 13.4. In all regions, lower quartile affordability ratios for detached properties exceeded the mortgage lending threshold, making them generally unaffordable for individuals with lower quartile earnings.

Semi-detached properties were most affordable in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in the 'North East', where lower quartile purchase prices were 4.3 times higher than lower quartile workplace-based earnings; this was the only region where such properties were within reach for lower-income individuals based on the mortgage-lending threshold. The 'South East' was again the least affordable region, as lower quartile house prices were 9.4 times higher than earnings in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies.

Terraced properties followed a similar pattern, where majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in the North of England were typically more affordable than the South East. Terraced properties were most affordable in the 'North East', where lower quartile purchase prices were 3.1 times higher than lower quartile workplace-based earnings. In comparison, the 'South East' was generally the least affordable region, as the lower quartile affordability ratio was 8.0; therefore, based on the mortgage lending affordability threshold, terraced properties were generally only affordable to individuals in the 'North East', 'North West', 'Yorkshire and the Humber' and the 'East Midlands' when focussing on majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies.

Flats and maisonettes were most affordable in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in the 'North East' of England, where the lower quartile purchase price was 2.6 times lower quartile workplace-based earnings. In contrast, the 'South East' was the least affordable region, with a lower quartile affordability ratio of 4.9. Despite regional differences, affordability ratios for flats and maisonettes remained below the typical mortgage lending threshold of 5 times earnings across all regions.

Whilst Table C-4 highlights lower quartile affordability ratios for majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in England, the trends for median affordability were similar. However, ratio of median property purchase prices to median workplace-based earnings in each region are no longer included in the main commentary; a brief summary is instead included in Note C-11.

The maps in Figure C-1 highlight the majority rural and intermediate rural parliamentary constituencies in England where an individual might afford to buy a property, based on lower quartile workplace-based earnings and lower quartile house prices, by property type. Whilst intermediate urban and urban constituencies are not highlighted on the maps, their affordability ratios are presented within the [supplementary data tables](#).

In the year ending March 2025, house purchase affordability for individuals with lower quartile earnings varied considerably by property type and region. For all property types, there were more constituencies in the North of England that were considered affordable for a lower-income individual than in the South.

- Detached properties, even at the lower end of the housing market, were largely unaffordable to lower-income individuals in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies across England. There were no majority rural constituencies where detached properties were affordable for an individual with lower quartile earnings, and 'Whitehaven and Workington' in the North West was the only intermediate rural constituency meeting this criteria; this is shown in the top-left map of figure C-1.
- Semi-detached (top-right map) and terraced (bottom-left map) properties at the lower end of the housing market were more affordable to first-time buyers and other lower-income individuals than detached properties, although there were still many constituencies – particularly in the South of England – where these properties would still be unaffordable. Of the 119 majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in England, an individual with lower quartile earnings could afford to buy a semi-detached property at the lower end of the housing market in just 14 constituencies; these were located primarily in the North, although there were some in the East Midlands. Similarly, a lower-income individual could afford to buy a terraced property at the lower end of the housing market in just 32 of the 119 majority rural or intermediate rural constituencies, none of which were in the South of England.

Figure C-1: Maps highlighting which majority rural and intermediate rural Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies would be affordable for an individual to purchase a property in, based on lower quartile workplace-based earnings in 2024 and house prices in year ending March 2025 (Note C-1, Note C-2)

Could an individual afford to buy a property in a majority rural or intermediate rural constituency, based on lower quartile workplace-based earnings and house prices?



- Flats and maisonettes - especially those at the lower end of the housing market - were the most affordable property type for individuals with lower quartile earnings. There were just 16 majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies where a lower-income individual might not afford to buy a flat/maisonette; these were located mainly in the South East of England, although some appeared in the East of England and two were in the South West.
- Of all majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies in England, 'Whitehaven and Workington' – an intermediate rural constituency in the North West - was the most affordable overall in terms of lower quartile house prices and workplace-based earnings. As well as being the only constituency where a lower-income individual might afford to purchase a detached property, it was also the joint most affordable constituency for semi-detached properties, along with 'Easington' in the North East. In these constituencies, the lower quartile semi-detached property purchase prices were 2.8 times higher than the lower quartile workplace-based earnings. 'Whitehaven and Workington' was also the most affordable in terms of terraced property or flat/maisonette purchases, as lower quartile house prices here were 1.8 times and 1.6 times higher than lower quartile earnings, respectively.

Lower quartile house purchase affordability varied between 'majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies' and 'intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London' depending on the property type an individual is seeking to purchase.

For detached properties at the lower end of the housing market, affordability showed a similar trend to majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies; there was just one urban constituency ('Derby South' in the East Midlands) where a lower-income individual could afford to buy.

For semi-detached and terraced properties, lower-income individuals had greater accessibility to affordable house purchases in intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London than in majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies; that is, there were proportionally more constituencies that an individual with lower quartile earnings could afford to buy a semi-detached (21%) or terraced (42%) house in.

Flats/maisonettes were equally as affordable to lower-income individuals in intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London than they were in majority rural or intermediate rural constituencies; out of the 349 intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London, a lower-income individual might not afford to buy a flat/maisonette in 47 constituencies, located primarily in the South East, South West, and East of England; this is equivalent to 13% of intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London.

Number of house purchases

The ONS publishes housing affordability statistics, within which they include the number of [residential property sales](#). 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 can often be true for a village.

Table C-5 shows the proportion of residential property sales, by property type, in year ending March 2024. This information should be treated as an estimate; the property registration process can take time, particularly for new build properties. Therefore, the proportions presented may not

fully reflect all transactions that have taken place in the year ending March 2024 and may be subject to revision. Whilst more recent data are available, year ending March 2024 has been presented as it is likely to be subject to fewer revisions, meaning the estimates will be more robust. However, 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](#).

Table C-5: Proportion of residential property sales, by property type and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, year ending March 2024 (Note C-2, Note C-6)

Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 1%.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats/ maisonettes
Majority rural	40%	27%	23%	10%
Intermediate rural	34%	30%	26%	10%
Intermediate urban	32%	31%	24%	12%
Urban (excluding London)	19%	33%	32%	16%
London	5%	16%	29%	49%
England	24%	30%	29%	18%

In year ending March 2024, 40% of all registered sales of properties in majority rural authorities were for 'detached' homes. As 'detached' properties are typically the most expensive property type, this increases average house prices, and therefore reduces affordability, in majority rural authorities. 'Flats/maisonettes' were the least commonly sold property type in majority rural authorities, representing just 10% of sales in year ending March 2024.

In intermediate rural authorities, 'detached' properties represented the greatest proportion of property sales in year ending March 2024, at 34%. Intermediate urban authorities had a similar proportion of sales being for 'detached' properties, at 32%. In comparison, in urban authorities outside of London, 'detached' properties represented just 19% of property sales. Instead, 'semi-detached' and 'terraced' properties were the most commonly sold in urban authorities outside of London, representing 33% and 32% of sales, respectively. In London, just 5% of sales in year ending March 2024 were for 'detached' properties. 'Flats/maisonettes' were the most commonly sold property type in London, representing nearly half of all sales.

House purchase affordability is affected by regionality, in that properties in the North of England are typically the most affordable, whereas those in the South of England and near London are typically the least affordable. Given affordability is also influenced by the sales composition, it follows that these regions likely have different housing markets.

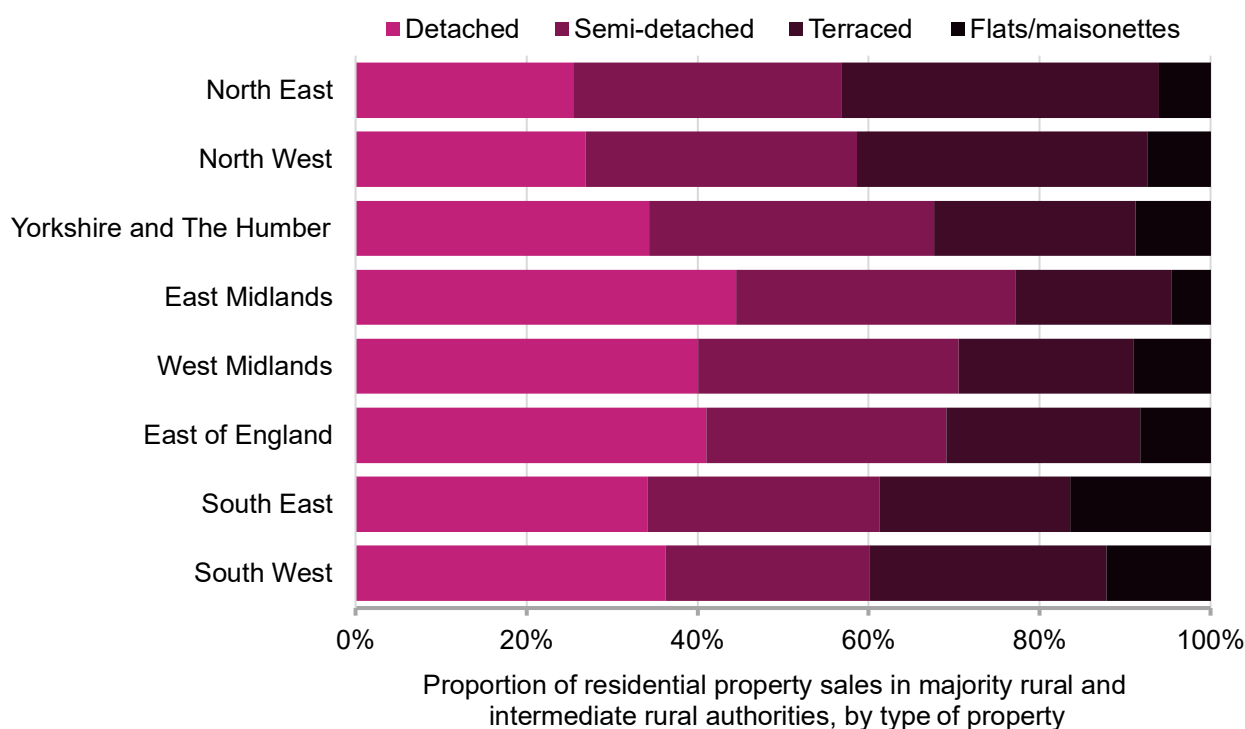
The bar chart in Figure C-2 highlights the distribution of residential property sales between property types for majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England, by region. Whilst intermediate urban and urban authorities are not shown in the chart, their sales distributions can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

The proportion of semi-detached and terraced property sales in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North of England was generally higher than in the South of England. In contrast, the proportion of sales of flats/maisonettes was generally highest in the South of England, whilst the proportion of sales of detached properties was highest in the Midlands and East of England.

Across most regions, detached properties represent the largest share of sales in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities – particularly in the East Midlands (44%) and East of England (41%). Similarly, in the West Midlands, detached homes comprised just over 40% of sales in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in year ending March 2024. This prevalence enhances the robustness of the affordability ratios for detached properties presented earlier within this section; despite the fact that this sales distribution represents year ending March 2024, in real terms it is unlikely to have changed much in year ending March 2025 once the revisions have taken place.

Flats/maisonettes accounted for less than 10% of sales in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in most regions in England, followed by 12% in the South West and 16% in the South East. Individuals with limited affordability may face challenges in accessing homeownership in majority rural and intermediate rural areas, where such property types are relatively scarce; this is particularly true in the East Midlands region, where fewer than 5% of sales were for flats/maisonettes in year ending March 2024.

Figure C-2: Bar chart showing the proportion of residential property sales in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by property type and region, year ending March 2024



House rentals – background information

The ONS publish an annual [private rental affordability publication](#), showing the ratio of private rent prices to monthly household income. In order to create a measure that is more comparable to the house purchase affordability, the analysis within this publication instead uses a ratio of private rent prices to monthly workplace-based earnings. Therefore, whilst the analysis is based on the private rental affordability publication, values shown in this publication will differ.

In the same manner as the ONS private rental affordability publication, the averages used are a combination of the mean private rent prices and the median earnings. Private rent prices are from the Price Index of Private Rents (PIPR), which use the geometric means (Note C-7); for more information, see the [Private rental affordability, England, Wales and Northern Ireland QMI - Office for National Statistics](#).

The [PIPR](#) presents monthly average private rent prices; the data within this publication is as of June 2025. As the PIPR data is timelier than the private rental affordability publication, the rent prices shown may not match. However, both publications provide valuable insights into the rental market, and are therefore included within this publication.

Latest rent estimates

The housing market is ever-changing, with average rent prices fluctuating frequently. The Price Index of Private Rents aims to track these changes each month. Within this publication, a snapshot of some of the latest prices – taken from June 2025 – is provided.

Table C-6 shows that rent prices are affected by both the size of the property (in terms of the number of bedrooms), and the authority type; however, it should be noted that these are not the only factors affecting rent prices. In majority rural authorities, the average rent prices in June 2025 ranged from around £670 per calendar month (pcm) for a one-bedroom property, to £1,540 pcm for a property with four or more bedrooms. These were the cheapest rent prices of all authority types; the most expensive were urban authorities – especially those in London.

Table C-6: Average private monthly rent prices (£), by number of bedrooms and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, June 2025 (Note C-2, Note C-3, Note C-4, Note C-6)
'Average' refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Rents have been rounded to the nearest £5.

Rural-urban classification 2021	One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four or more bed
Majority rural	670	845	1,035	1,540
Intermediate	730	900	1,095	1,670
Urban (excluding London)	775	930	1,090	1,665
London	1,685	2,025	2,215	3,075
England	1,000	1,095	1,205	1,825

Prices are also impacted by regionality; this is shown in Table C-7. Only average rents in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities are shown; other authority types can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#). Majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North East of England typically have the lowest average private rent prices, whilst those in the South East of England typically have the highest. For example, in June 2025, a typical one-bedroom property in majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in the North East might cost £435 pcm to rent. In comparison, a similar one-bedroom property in the South East would cost more than double the price to rent at £905 pcm. This is the case regardless of the number of bedrooms.

Table C-7: Average private monthly rent prices (£) in majority rural or intermediate rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by number of bedrooms and region, June 2025

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Rents have been rounded to the nearest £5.

‘London’ is excluded from the table as there are no majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in Greater London. ‘MR’ refers to majority rural authorities, whilst ‘IR’ refers to intermediate rural authorities.

Regions	One bed	Two bed	Three bed	Four or more bed
North East	435	550	665	995
North West	530	665	800	1,165
Yorkshire and the Humber	530	685	825	1,225
East Midlands	555	710	870	1,285
West Midlands	620	800	980	1,445
East of England	725	925	1,140	1,685
South East	905	1,155	1,450	2,150
South West	660	860	1,065	1,540
All MR and IR authorities	675	840	1,030	1,560

Rent affordability

Within the [Private rental affordability, England, Wales and Northern Ireland QMI - Office for National Statistics](#), an area is considered “affordable” to rent in if a private-renting household would spend the equivalent of 30% or less of their gross income on rent. Within this publication, the same principle applies: if the mean rent price is less than 30% of the median workplace-based earnings, then the area can be considered “affordable”. That is not to say a person definitely could not afford to rent a property in an area where mean private rent prices are more than 30% of the median monthly workplace-based earnings, but rather that the majority of renting happens below this threshold.

Table C-8 shows the overall rental affordability of local authorities in England, based on the geometric mean of private monthly rent prices in year ending March 2024 and median workplace-based earnings in 2024, by 2021 rural-urban classification. Previous sections highlighting house purchase affordability focussed on lower quartile house prices and lower quartile earnings, and therefore are not comparable to this analysis of ‘average’ rent affordability.

Affordability varies depending on the property type; detached properties are typically larger and therefore more expensive to rent than flats and maisonettes, for example. However, this publication instead focusses on the number of bedrooms a property has, as this is a more typical determinant of prices in the rental market. As median earnings within this publication are for an individual, and it is not common that an individual would rent a property with four or more bedrooms, this data has been excluded from the main commentary. However, rent affordability of properties of this size are included within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rental affordability in this table is based on all monthly rent prices within the specified number of bedrooms and authority type; therefore, affordability within the specified authority type – and within authorities themselves – will vary. These proportions should instead indicate the “average” rental affordability for typical earners within the specified authority types.

Table C-8: Average private monthly rent prices, as a proportion of median monthly workplace-based earnings, by number of bedrooms and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, year ending March 2024

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 1%, and are based on an individual’s earnings. Data for properties with four or more bedrooms can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-urban classification 2021	One bed	Two bed	Three bed
Majority rural	21%	27%	33%
Intermediate rural	21%	27%	34%
Intermediate urban	22%	28%	35%
Urban (excluding London)	22%	28%	34%
London	38%	49%	57%
England	24%	31%	37%

The higher the number of bedrooms, the less affordable a property is to rent. Based on the rent affordability threshold (where properties are considered ‘affordable’ if the monthly rent is less than 30% of an individual’s earnings), properties with one or two bedrooms were generally the only property sizes that an individual with median earnings could afford to rent; this was true for all authority types outside of London, from majority rural to urban. For properties with three bedrooms, the average monthly rent prices were typically more than 30% of an individual’s median workplace-based earnings, indicating they were generally unaffordable for the typical earner.

Outside of London, there was little difference in rental affordability between authority types when considering overall average private monthly rent prices in year ending March 2024 and overall median workplace-based earnings in 2024.

- Private rent prices of typical one-bed properties were around 21% of the median monthly earnings in majority rural authorities, or around 22% in urban authorities outside of London.
- Private rent prices of typical two-bed properties were around 27% of the median monthly earnings in majority rural authorities, or around 28% in urban authorities outside of London.
- Private rent prices of typical three-bed properties were around 33% of the median monthly earnings in majority rural authorities, or around 34% in urban authorities outside of London. Typical three-bed properties were the least affordable in intermediate urban authorities, where private monthly rent prices were 35% of the median monthly earnings.
- London was the least affordable authority type for properties with any number of bedrooms, with rental affordability proportions almost double that of other authority types.

Although Table C-8 ignores geographic trends, in England, being able to rent a house is affected by regionality: homes in local authorities in the North of England are typically more affordable to rent compared to those in the South East. Table C-9 highlights the rental affordability of majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban

classification, by region. Majority rural authorities have at least 50% of their population living in rural settlements, and in intermediate rural authorities, it is between 35% and 50%. Whilst intermediate urban and urban authorities are not represented in the table, their affordability by region can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table C-9: Average private monthly rent prices, as a proportion of median monthly workplace-based earnings, in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by number of bedrooms and region, in England, year ending March 2024

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note C-7). Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 1%, and are based on an individual’s earnings. ‘London’ is excluded from the table as there are no majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in Greater London. ‘MR’ refers to majority rural authorities, whilst ‘IR’ refers to intermediate rural authorities. Data for properties with four or more bedrooms can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Regions	One bed	Two bed	Three bed
North East	14%	18%	22%
North West	15%	19%	23%
Yorkshire and the Humber	16%	21%	25%
East Midlands	18%	23%	28%
West Midlands	20%	26%	31%
East of England	22%	28%	35%
South East	26%	34%	43%
South West	21%	28%	35%
All MR and IR authorities	21%	27%	33%

Focussing on majority rural and intermediate rural authorities only, the ‘North East’ of England was the most affordable region for all property sizes, whilst the ‘South East’ was the least affordable.

- Private monthly rent prices for typical one-bed properties were 14% of the median workplace-based earnings in the ‘North East’, compared to 26% of earnings in the ‘South East’. However, despite regional differences, one-bed properties were generally affordable for individuals to privately rent across all regions.
- Private monthly rent prices for typical two-bed properties were 18% of the median earnings in the ‘North East’, compared to 34% of earnings in the ‘South East’. Therefore, based on the 30% affordability threshold, individuals with typical earnings could afford to privately rent two-bed properties in any region in England, except for the ‘South East’.
- Private monthly rent prices for typical three-bed properties were 22% of the median earnings in the ‘North East’, compared to 43% of earnings in the ‘South East’. Considering regional differences, individuals with typical earnings could afford to privately rent three-bed properties in the North of England and in the ‘East Midlands’ only; private rent prices in the ‘West Midlands’, ‘East of England’ and the South of England were generally more than 30% of the median workplace-based earnings.

The maps in Figure C-3 highlight which majority rural and intermediate rural authorities an individual could afford to rent a property in, based on mean private rent prices and median monthly workplace-based earnings. Property size affects affordability, in that properties with four or more bedrooms are typically more expensive to rent than those with just one bedroom.

In the year ending March 2024, private rent affordability varied considerably by property size and region. For properties with any number of bedrooms, there were proportionally more majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in the North of England that were considered affordable to rent in than the South.

- Properties with four or more bedrooms were largely unaffordable for individuals in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities to rent across England. ‘Cumberland’ in the North West was the only majority rural authority where an individual might afford to privately rent a property with four or more bedrooms, with mean rent prices costing 29% of the median monthly earnings. This is shown in the top-left map.
- Properties with three bedrooms were more affordable to rent than those with four or more bedrooms, although there were still many local authorities – particularly in the South of England – where these properties would still be unaffordable. Of the 78 majority rural and intermediate rural authorities with data (as there was no data for the Isles of Scilly), an individual with median workplace-based earnings might afford to rent a three-bedroom property in 27 authorities. This is shown in the top-right map.
- Two-bedroom properties were affordable for an individual with median workplace-based earnings to privately rent in many majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England. There were 9 majority rural and 12 intermediate rural authorities where an individual with median earnings might not afford to rent a typical two-bed property in England based on the affordability threshold; these were primarily located in the South or East of England.
- Typical one-bedroom properties were affordable for an individual with median earnings to privately rent in most majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England. ‘Wealden’, ‘Sevenoaks’, and ‘Tonbridge and Malling’ were the only three intermediate rural authorities where an individual might not afford to privately rent a one-bed property, all of which are located in the South East region. Based on median workplace-based earnings and mean private rent prices, individuals should be able to afford to rent a typical one-bedroom property in any majority rural authority in England.
- Of all majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England, ‘Cumberland’ in the North West was the most affordable overall in terms of mean private rent prices and median workplace-based earnings. As well as being the only authority where an individual might afford to rent a four-bed property, it was also the most affordable authority for properties with three bedrooms (20% of monthly earnings), two bedrooms (17%), or one bedroom (13%).

Private rent affordability varied between ‘majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies’ and ‘intermediate urban and urban constituencies outside of London’ depending on the property size an individual is seeking to rent. For properties with two or three bedrooms, private rent affordability was still better in the North of England and in the Midlands than the South, although affordability increases with smaller property sizes. Of the 216 intermediate urban and urban authorities with data, there were 41 authorities (equivalent to 19%) where an individual could not afford to rent a typical one-bedroom property on their own; these were primarily located in London, although there were some in the South East, South West, and East of England.

Figure C-3: Maps highlighting which majority rural and intermediate rural authorities would be affordable for an individual to rent a property in, based on median monthly workplace-based earnings and mean private rent prices in year ending March 2024 (Note C-2)

Could an individual afford to rent a property in a majority rural or intermediate rural authority, based on median workplace-based earnings and mean private rent prices?



Housing market - explanatory notes

- **Note C-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 (2024) which provides a snapshot of earnings at April in each year (via [NOMIS](#)). At the time of analysis, earnings from 2024 were the latest available. Earnings relate to gross full-time individual earnings on a place of work basis, regardless of where they live. Annual earnings were used where available, but where they were not, annualised weekly earnings were used as an estimate. Annualised weekly earnings are not produced on an identical basis to annual earnings and are therefore not directly comparable. 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 C-2**

Data were not available for the “Isles of Scilly” or “City of London” and therefore house prices, rent prices, and affordability ratios could not be calculated and are excluded from all rural-urban classification totals.

- **Note C-3**

To aggregate local authority-level house price data up to the rural-urban classifications, the number of dwellings by property type (taken from the [Number of dwellings by housing characteristics in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)) has been used. Similarly, to aggregate local authority-level rent data up to the rural-urban classifications, the number of occupied dwellings by number of bedrooms has been used.

- **Note C-4**

‘Intermediate’ refers to the combination of two categories within the 2021 [Rural-Urban Classification](#): ‘intermediate rural’ and ‘intermediate urban’.

- **Note C-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 C-6**

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.

Similarly, several Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies had no data for detached property prices: ‘Barking’, ‘Bermondsey and Old Southwark’, ‘Bethnal Green and Stepney’, ‘East Ham’, ‘Hackney North and Stoke Newington’, ‘Hackney South and Shoreditch’, ‘Holborn and St Pancras’, ‘Islington North’, ‘Peckham’, ‘Poplar and Limehouse’, ‘Stratford and Bow’, ‘Tottenham’, ‘Vauxhall and Camberwell Green’, ‘West Ham and Beckton’. For semi-detached properties, only ‘Bethnal Green and Stepney’ had no data. All specified constituencies without data were in London.

- **Note C-7**

There are different ways of calculating average prices. These include the arithmetic mean (simple mean), the geometric mean and the median. The arithmetic mean is greatly influenced by the few high value properties and will therefore not give a true reflection of the average price of a standardised property. The geometric mean reduces the weighting given to high value properties when compared to the arithmetic mean and is

typically lower, usually closer to that of the median. The geometric mean is used within the UK HPI and the PIPR, and therefore unless otherwise stated, is the average used in this publication.

- **Note C-8**

Westminster Parliamentary Constituency boundaries used are as of the 2024 General Election. Local Authorities are as of 2024. The 2021 Census-based Rural-Urban Classification has been applied in both cases; more information can be found via [Rural Urban Classification - GOV.UK](#), or directly from the ONS Geoportal: [Rural Urban Classification \(2021\) of Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies \(2024\) in EW | Open Geography Portal](#), and [Rural Urban Classification \(2021\) of Local Authority Districts \(2024\) in EW | Open Geography Portal](#)

- **Note C-9**

Data are split by constituency type. Within this publication, 75 Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies were classed as being ‘in London’. These are the constituencies contained within the region of Greater London, which includes the City of London, as well as many boroughs in ‘Outer London’.

- **Note C-10**

The ratio of median property purchase prices in year ending March 2025 and median workplace-based earnings in 2024 are given within the [supplementary data tables](#). Flats/maisonettes were generally the only property type that was affordable for a typical individual to purchase, based on the mortgage-lending threshold; this was true for all constituency types outside of London, whether in majority rural or urban constituencies. Detached properties were generally the least affordable property type for all constituency types. There was little difference in median affordability ratios between majority rural and urban constituencies outside of London. However, the ratio of median property purchase prices and median workplace-based earnings in London were generally much higher than other constituency types.

- **Note C-11**

The ratio of median property purchase prices in year ending March 2025 and median workplace-based earnings in 2024, by region, are given within the [supplementary data tables](#). Mid-market flats/maisonettes were generally the most affordable property type across all regions, whilst detached properties were the least affordable. Based on the mortgage-lending threshold, a typical individual could only afford to buy a flat/maisonette in the North of England or in the Midlands, but not in the East of England or the South. They might also afford to buy a mid-market terraced property in majority rural or intermediate rural constituencies in the North East or North West regions. All other regions and property types were generally unaffordable for a typical individual with median earnings to purchase. Mid-market flats and maisonettes, as well as mid-market detached properties, were generally the most affordable in Yorkshire and the Humber. Mid-market semi-detached or terraced properties were generally the most affordable in the North East of England. For all property types, the South East region was typically the least affordable, in terms of median purchase prices and median workplace-based earnings within majority rural and intermediate rural constituencies.

D. Second and empty homes

In 2024, the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes was more than three times as high in majority rural authorities (2.5%) than in urban authorities outside of London (0.8%), however rurality has little impact on the proportion of dwellings classed as empty.

Second and empty homes - key findings

Around one in four second homes in England were in majority rural authorities

- In 2024, there were 279,900 dwellings classed as second homes in England, with 67,000 (24%) in majority rural authorities and 96,600 (35%) in urban authorities outside of London.
- In majority rural authorities, 2.5% of dwellings were classed as second homes, which is more than three times higher than in urban areas outside of London (0.8%).

There were more 'Band A' properties as second homes compared to other bands

- 15,100 'Band A' (the lowest Council Tax band) properties in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes in 2024; these were more prevalent as second homes than properties in other Council Tax bands.
- This was equivalent to 3.2% of all 'Band A' properties in majority rural authorities being classed as second homes; in comparison, in urban authorities outside of London, just 0.8% of 'Band A' properties were classed as second homes.

Just over one in ten empty homes in England were in majority rural authorities

- In 2024, there were 502,300 dwellings classed as empty in England; 53,800 of these (11%) were in majority rural authorities and 260,900 (52%) were in urban authorities outside of London
- In majority rural authorities, 2.0% of dwellings were empty; this was similar to in urban authorities outside of London (2.1%).

There were more empty 'Band A' properties compared to other bands

- 3.2% of all 'Band A' (the lowest Council Tax band) properties in majority rural authorities were empty in 2024; this was proportionally higher than in urban authorities outside of London (3.0%).

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 2024, 2.5% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes for Council Tax purposes; this was more than three times higher than the proportion of second homes in urban authorities outside of London (0.8%). Of all local authorities, those that are part of a Protected Landscape typically had a higher proportion of second homes. For example, 'North Norfolk' - which had the highest rate of second homes of all majority rural authorities – intersects both the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and The Broads National Park. When considering second homes by Council Tax band, the proportion of second homes is much higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London, for all bands.

In 2024, 2.0% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as empty for Council Tax purposes; this was similar to the proportion in urban authorities outside of London (2.1%). Therefore, the rurality of an area had little impact on the proportion of empty dwellings.

Second homes

Second homes are domestic dwellings owned by individuals who have another dwelling as their primary residence. Within this publication, the [Council Taxbase](#) has been used to estimate the number of second homes. Since 1 April 2013, local authorities in England have had the choice to apply council tax discounts of between 0% and 50% for second homes. These are properties that may be empty for part of the year and are furnished. Since 1 April 2025, some authorities have charged a second homes premium, where they charge up to two times the normal Council Tax for a property. For more information, see the guidance on [how Council Tax works](#).

Within this section, second homes are typically presented as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings. Where data are given by Council Tax band, the number of chargeable dwellings have been adjusted subject to disability reductions; some people have their Council Tax bill reduced to the next lowest band where they live in a larger property than needed were they not disabled. For example, a person living in a 'Band B' property may instead pay the 'Band A' rate, and therefore the property would appear as a 'Band A' for the purposes of this publication. For more information regarding the Disabled Band Reduction Scheme, see [discounts for disabled people](#).

Second homes in 2024

As shown in Table D-1, on 7 October 2024 there were 279,900 dwellings classed as second homes in England, with around one in four being in majority rural authorities (67,000 dwellings). 2.5% of all chargeable dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes for Council Tax purposes in 2024.

The number of second homes in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities was similar to majority rural authorities, however this represented a smaller proportion of all chargeable dwellings within these authorities.

In urban authorities outside of London, there were 96,600 dwellings classed as second homes in 2024, representing 35% of all second homes in England. However, compared to all chargeable dwellings in urban authorities outside of London, second homes represented just 0.8%.

Table D-1: Number of second homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-1)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. The number of second homes has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Number of second homes	Number of second homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Majority rural	67,000	2.5%
Intermediate	67,400	1.1%
Urban (excluding London)	96,600	0.8%
London	48,800	1.3%
England	279,900	1.1%

Whilst Table D-1 shows the proportion of dwellings that are second homes for overall rural-urban categories, there will be variation in the second homes rate for local authorities within these classifications. Table D-2 specifies the local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are second homes, by rural-urban classification, as of 7 October 2024.

Table D-2: Local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as second homes within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-1)

Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Local authority	Number of second homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Majority rural	North Norfolk	10.8%
Intermediate rural	Westmorland and Furness	5.1%
Intermediate urban	Great Yarmouth	6.1%
Urban (excluding London)	Brighton and Hove	3.3%
London	City of London	25.2%
England	City of London	25.2%

As of 7 October 2024, ‘North Norfolk’ – in the East of England - had the highest proportion of dwellings that were classed as second homes of all majority rural authorities, at 10.8%. This was equivalent to 6,000 out of a total 55,400 chargeable dwellings being second homes. The second homes rate in ‘North Norfolk’ was more than four times higher than average of majority rural authorities overall (2.5%). ‘North Norfolk’ also had the highest proportion of second homes of all local authorities outside of London.

Of all intermediate rural authorities, ‘Westmorland and Furness’ – in the North West of England - had the highest proportion of second homes, at 5.1%; this was half the proportion of ‘North Norfolk’. Of all intermediate urban authorities, ‘Great Yarmouth’ – in the East of England – had the

highest proportion of second homes, at 6.1%; this was higher than in 'Westmorland and Furness', and therefore the highest of all intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, but still lower than in 'North Norfolk'.

Of all urban authorities outside of London, 'Brighton and Hove' – in the South East of England – had the highest proportion of second homes, at 3.3%; this was more than three times lower than in 'North Norfolk'. The second homes rate in 'Brighton and Hove' was more than four times higher than the average of all urban authorities outside of London (0.8%).

Outside of London, all of the local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes were in or near Protected Landscapes (National Parks and National Landscapes, previously named Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). For example, 'North Norfolk' intersects both the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and The Broads National Park. In these areas in particular, but also in coastal areas more generally, second home owners are likely to use their properties as holiday lets.

In London, the 'City of London' had the highest proportion of second homes, at 25.2%; this was more than double the second homes rate in 'North Norfolk', but was equivalent to 1,900 out of a total 7,500 chargeable dwellings being second homes. Therefore, the higher second homes rate is largely driven by the smaller number of dwellings within the 'City of London'.

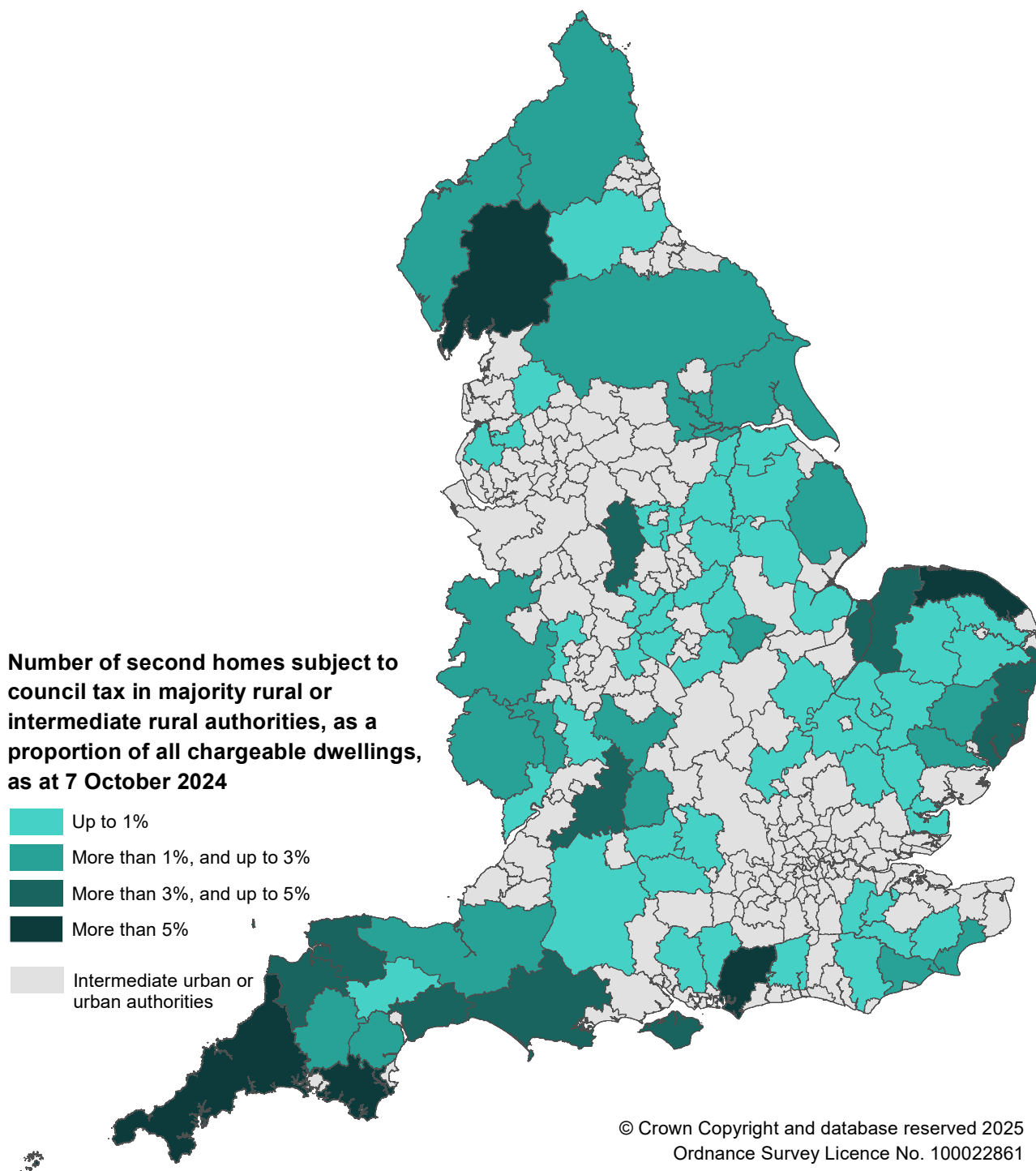
Whilst Table D-2 highlights the authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes, the map in Figure D-1 shows the second homes rate of all majority rural or intermediate rural authorities. Intermediate urban and urban authorities, as well as those in London, are not included on the map; their proportions of second homes can instead be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

As of 7 October 2024, there were 79 majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in England:

- In 46 of these authorities – equivalent to 58% - up to 1% of chargeable dwellings were classed as second homes for Council Tax purposes.
- In 18 of these authorities – equivalent to 23% - between 1% and 3% of dwellings were classed as second homes.
- In 9 of these authorities – equivalent to 11% - between 3% and 5% of dwellings were classed as second homes.
- In 6 of these authorities – equivalent to 8% - more than 5% of dwellings were classed as second homes.
- The majority rural and intermediate rural authorities with particularly high proportions of dwellings classed as second homes were either in and around Protected Landscapes, or were coastal.

Figure D-1: Map showing the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural or intermediate rural local authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 7 October 2024

The darker the colour of an authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as second homes. Light grey areas on the map represent intermediate urban or urban authorities.



Second homes by Council Tax Band

Comparing between Council Tax bands gives 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: 'Band A' (lowest), 'Band B', 'Bands C, D, and E', and 'Bands F, G, and H' (highest). Generally, the higher the Council Tax band, the fewer the number of dwellings. For example, as of 7 October 2024, 23% of all chargeable dwellings in England were in Band A. In comparison, just 1% were in Band H. Therefore, combining bands allows for more appropriate comparisons between the higher and lower bands.

Table D-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 as of Q2 2025; the [Nationwide house price calculator](#) has been used to work out estimated progression in house value.

Table D-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 Q2 2025
Band A	up to £40,000	up to £197,000
Band B	up to £52,000	up to £256,000
Bands C, D, and E	up to £120,000	up to £591,000
Bands F, G, and H	over £120,000	over £591,000

The bar chart in Figure D-2 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes, by grouped Council Tax bands, as of 7 October 2024. The chart portrays the differences between majority rural and urban authorities outside of London; proportions of dwellings classed as second homes by Council Tax band in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities or in London can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

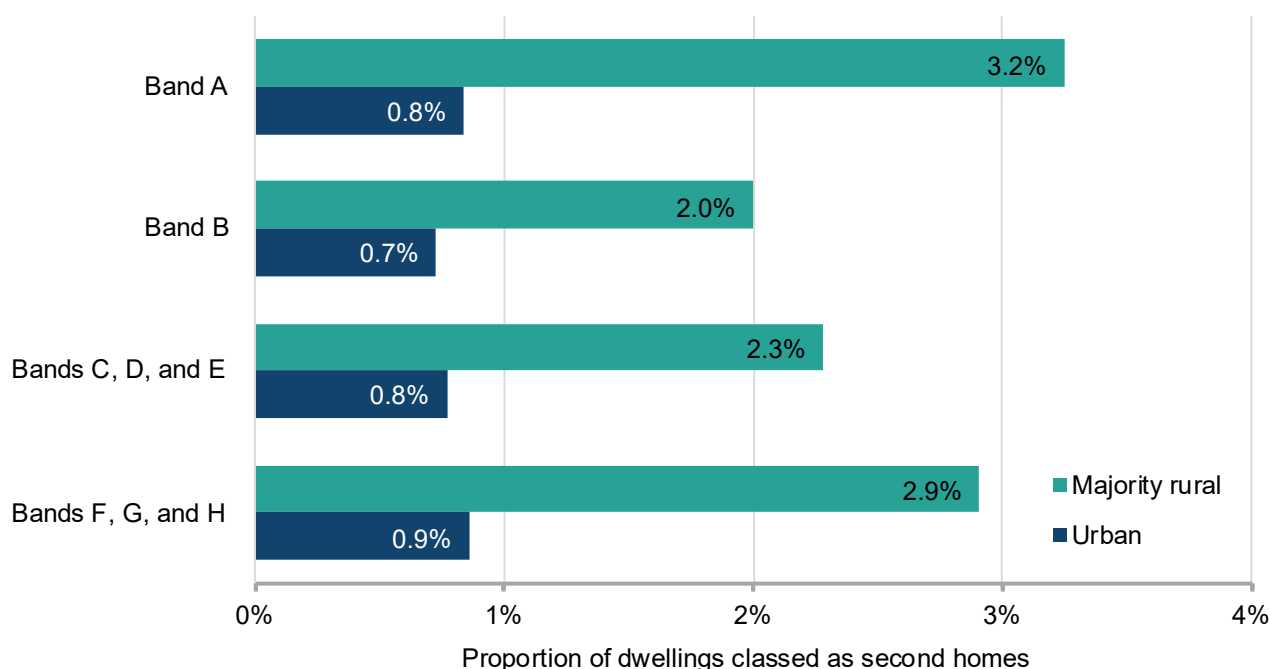
Figure D-2 can be described as follows:

- As of 7 October 2024, there were proportionally more second homes in 'Band A' than in any other band or groups of bands in majority rural authorities, at 3.2%. This is equivalent to 15,100 out of a total 463,800 chargeable dwellings in 'Band A' being classed as second homes.
- The proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in 'Band B' in majority rural authorities was 1.2 percentage points lower than in 'Band A', at 2.0%.
- When combining 'Bands C, D, and E', 2.3% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes. When combining 'Bands F, G, and H', 2.9% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes; this was just 0.3 percentage points lower than in 'Band A'.
- In urban authorities outside of London, there was little difference in the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes between bands, ranging from 0.7% to 0.9%. This means that the proportion of second homes was typically three times higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London for 'Band B', 'Bands C, D and E', or 'Bands F, G and H'.

For 'Band A' properties, the proportion of second homes was around four times higher in majority rural authorities compared to urban authorities outside of London.

Figure D-2: Bar chart showing the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural and urban authorities outside of London, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped Council Tax bands, England, 7 October 2024

The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend. 'Urban' excludes London. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Whilst Figure D-2 shows the proportion of dwellings that are second homes by Council Tax band for overall rural-urban categories, there will be variation in the second homes rate for local authorities within these classifications and bands. Table D-4 specifies the majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are second homes, by Council Tax band, as of 7 October 2024.

Table D-4: Local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as second homes within majority rural authorities, by Council Tax band, in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-1)

Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Council Tax band	Local authority	Number of second homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Band A	Chichester	20.0%
Band B	Isles of Scilly	12.5%
Band C	North Norfolk	10.6%
Band D	Isles of Scilly	10.8%
Band E	South Hams	9.5%
Band F	North Norfolk	12.2%
Band G	Isles of Scilly	17.3%
Band H	Cornwall	30.1%

Every majority rural local authority listed in Table D-4, which had the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes within their respective Council Tax bands, were in or near Protected Landscapes:

- ‘Chichester’ – which intersects with both the Chichester Harbour National Landscape and the South Downs National Park - had the highest proportion of ‘Band A’ properties being classed as second homes of all majority rural authorities as at 7 October 2024 (20.0%).
- The ‘Isles of Scilly’ – which themselves form a National Landscape – had the highest proportion of ‘Band B’, ‘Band D’, and ‘Band G’ properties being classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, at 12.5%, 10.8%, and 17.3%, respectively. However, it should be noted that these proportions correspond to low counts of second homes; overall, there were just 120 second homes in this authority.
- ‘North Norfolk’ – which intersects with the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and The Broads National Park – had the highest proportion of ‘Band C’ (10.6%) and ‘Band F’ (12.2%) dwellings being classed as second homes in majority rural authorities.
- ‘South Hams’ – which intersects with the Dartmoor National Park and the South Devon National Landscape – had the highest proportion of ‘Band E’ properties being classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, at 9.5%.
- The local authority of ‘Cornwall’ – which intersects with the Cornwall and Tamar Valley National Landscapes – had the highest proportion of ‘Band H’ properties being classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, at 30.1%. It should be noted that, compared to the other Council Tax bands, there were particularly low counts of ‘Band H’ properties across England. In this case, 30.1% corresponds to 120 second homes out of a total of 390 ‘Band H’ properties.

By comparing between the Council Taxbase data for the previous year, it is possible to see how the value of the second homes stock has changed over time. The bar chart in Figure D-3 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, as at 2 October 2023 and 7 October 2024.

These dates refer to the Council Taxbase snapshots, and will henceforth be referred to in the chart commentary as just ‘2023’ and ‘2024’ for simplicity. Data for other rural-urban classifications can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Between 2023 and 2024, the proportion of ‘Band A’ dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities increased by 0.2 percentage points; this was the greatest proportional increase of all Council Tax bands. In absolute terms, the number of second homes increased from 13,800 in 2023 to 15,100 in 2024.

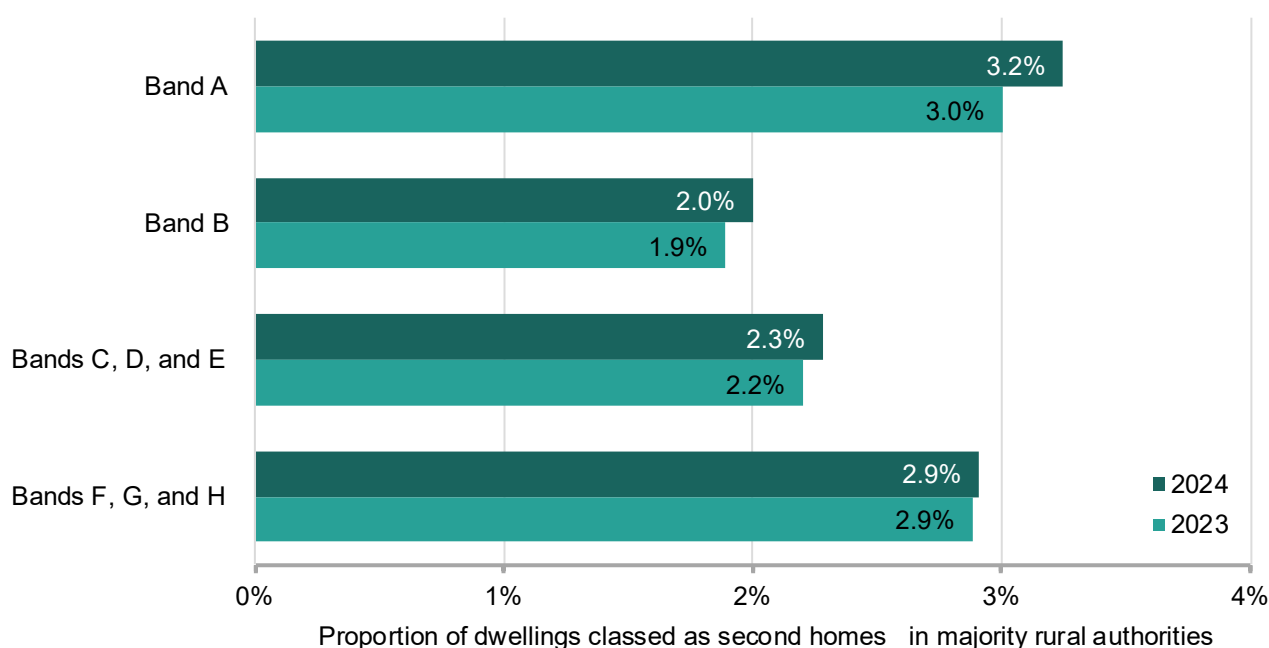
The proportion of ‘Band B’ dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities increased by just 0.1 percentage point between 2023 and 2024; in absolute terms, this was an increase from 10,700 to 11,400 dwellings.

The proportion of dwellings in ‘Bands C, D, and E’ classed as second homes in majority rural authorities similarly increased by just 0.1 percentage point between 2023 and 2024; this was an increase from 30,000 to 31,600 dwellings. Therefore, whilst this was not the greatest proportional increase, it was the greatest absolute increase of all Council Tax bands/groups.

Between 2023 and 2024, there was little change in the proportion of dwellings in 'Bands F, G, and H' classed as second homes in majority rural authorities. In absolute terms, the number of second homes increased from 8,800 to 9,000 within these Council Tax bands.

Figure D-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped Council Tax bands, England, 2 October 2023 and 7 October 2024

The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend. '2023' refers to 2 October 2023, whilst '2024' refers to 7 October 2024. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Empty homes

Empty homes are domestic dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. Within this publication, the [Council Taxbase](#) has been used to estimate the number of empty homes. Dwellings which are classified as empty homes can receive a council tax discount of between 0% and 100%. If the property has been empty for at least one year, an 'empty home premium' may be charged; if it has been empty for at least 10 years, the property owner may be charged up to 4 times their normal Council Tax bill. Empty homes premiums and discounts are at the discretion of each local authority. For more information, see the guidance on [how Council Tax works](#).

Within this section, empty homes are typically presented as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings. Where data are given by Council Tax band, the number of chargeable dwellings have been adjusted subject to disability reductions; some people have their Council Tax bill reduced to the next lowest band where they live in a larger property than needed were they not disabled. For example, a person living in a 'Band B' property may instead pay the 'Band A' rate, and therefore the property would appear as a 'Band A' for the purposes of this publication. For more information regarding the Disabled Band Reduction Scheme, see [discounts for disabled people](#).

Empty homes in 2024

As shown in Table D-5, on 7 October 2024 there were 502,300 properties classed as empty in England, with around 11% being in majority rural authorities (53,800 dwellings). 2.0% of all dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as empty for Council Tax purposes in 2024.

In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, 117,000 dwellings were classed as empty in 2024; this was more than double the number of empty homes in majority rural authorities, but represented a similar proportion of all chargeable dwellings.

In urban authorities outside of London, there were 260,900 empty dwellings in 2024, representing more than half of all empty homes in England; this was the largest proportional share of all rural-urban classifications of local authorities. However, compared to all chargeable dwellings in urban authorities outside of London, empty homes represented just 2.1% - a similar proportion as in majority rural authorities.

Table D-5: Number of empty homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. The number of empty homes has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Number of empty homes	Number of empty homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Majority rural	53,800	2.0%
Intermediate	117,000	1.9%
Urban (excluding London)	260,900	2.1%
London	70,500	1.9%
England	502,300	2.0%

Whilst Table D-5 shows the proportion of dwellings that are empty for rural-urban categories, there will be variation in the rate of empty homes for local authorities within these classifications. Table D-6 specifies the local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are empty, by rural-urban classification, as of 7 October 2024.

Table D-6: Local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as empty homes within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Local authority	Number of empty homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Majority rural	Isles of Scilly	3.4%
Intermediate rural	Bolsover	3.7%
Intermediate urban	Fylde	2.9%
Urban (excluding London)	Liverpool	3.7%
London	Kingston upon Thames	4.2%
England	Kingston upon Thames	4.2%

As of 7 October 2024, the 'Isles of Scilly' had the highest proportion of empty dwellings of all majority rural authorities, at 3.4%. However, there were just 1,200 chargeable dwellings within this authority, of which fewer than 100 were empty. Therefore, the particularly low number of dwellings drives the high proportion of empty homes. The empty homes rate in the 'Isles of Scilly' was 1.5 percentage points higher than the average of majority rural authorities overall (2.0%). 'Mid Devon' had the second highest rate of empty homes of all majority rural authorities, at 2.8%.

Of all intermediate rural authorities, 'Bolsover' – in the East Midlands region of England – had the highest proportion of empty dwellings, at 3.7%; this was slightly higher than in the 'Isles of Scilly', and was the highest of all authorities outside of London. Of all intermediate urban authorities, 'Fylde' – in the North West of England – had the highest proportion of empty dwellings, at 2.9%; this was lower than in the 'Isles of Scilly'.

Of all urban authorities outside of London, 'Liverpool' – in the North West of England – had the highest proportion of empty dwellings, at 3.7%; this was higher than in the 'Isles of Scilly', and similar to 'Bolsover' as being one of the authorities with the highest empty homes rates outside of London. The proportion of empty dwellings in 'Liverpool' was 1.5 percentage points higher than the average of all urban authorities outside of London (2.1%).

In London, 'Kingston upon Thames' had the highest proportion of empty dwellings, at 4.2%; this was 0.8 percentage points higher than in the 'Isles of Scilly'. As of 7 October 2024, 'Kingston upon Thames' had proportionally more empty dwellings than any other local authority in England.

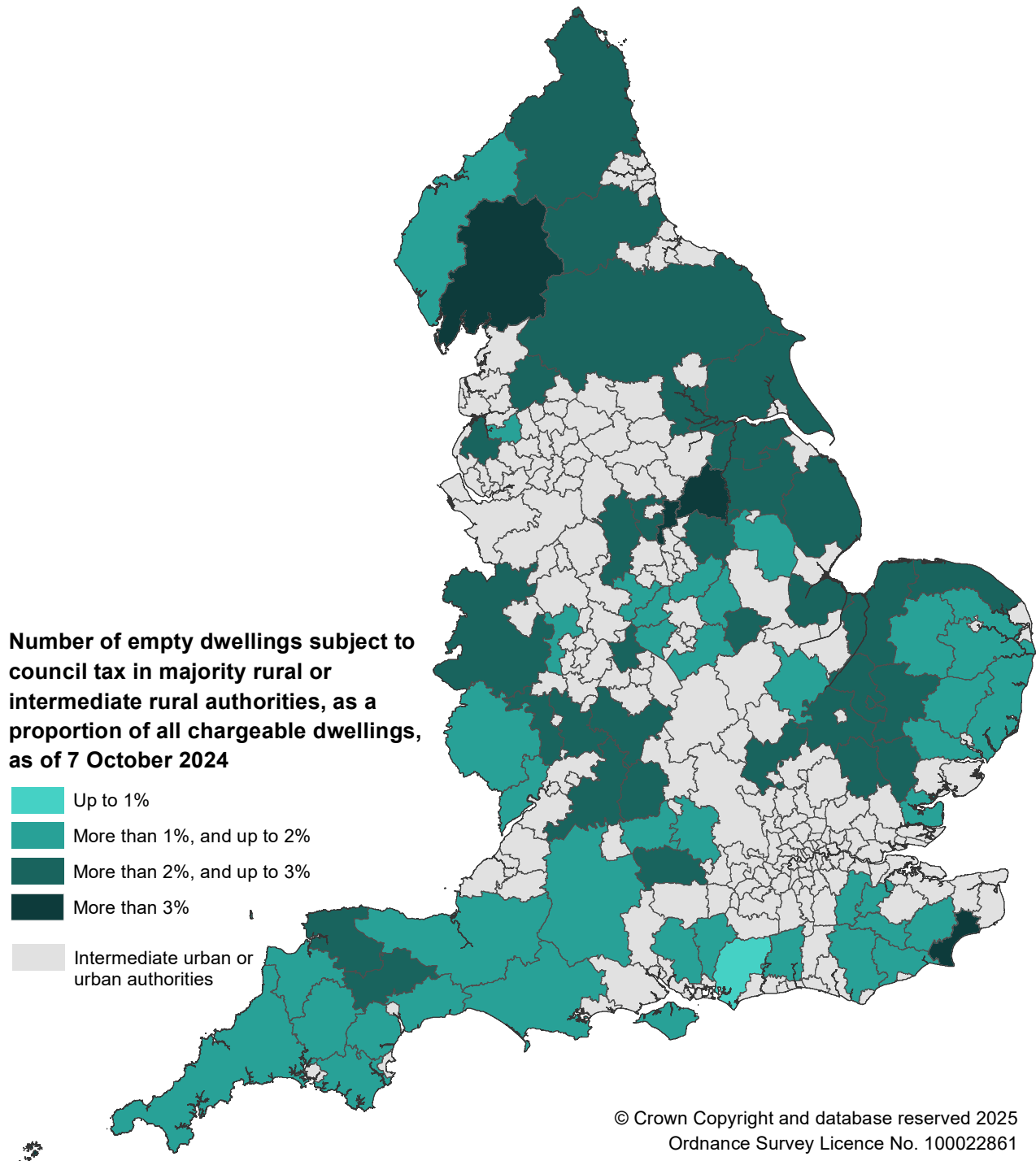
Whilst Table D-6 highlights the authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings classed as empty, the map in Figure D-4 shows the empty homes rate of all majority rural or intermediate rural authorities. Intermediate urban and urban authorities, as well as those in London, are not included on the map; their proportions can instead be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

As of 7 October 2024, there were 79 majority rural or intermediate rural authorities in England:

- There was just 1 of these authorities where up to 1% of chargeable dwellings were classed as empty for Council Tax purposes ('Chichester'; 0.7%).
- In 41 of these authorities – equivalent to 52% - between 1% and 2% of dwellings were empty.
- In 32 of these authorities – equivalent to 41% - between 2% and 3% of dwellings were empty.
- In 5 of these authorities – equivalent to 6% - more than 3% of dwellings were empty.

Figure D-4: Map showing the proportion of dwellings classed as empty homes in majority rural or intermediate rural local authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

The darker the colour of an authority, the greater the percentage of dwellings classed as empty homes. Light grey areas on the map represent intermediate urban or urban authorities.



Empty homes by Council Tax Band

Comparing between Council Tax bands gives us an indication of the value of dwellings classed as empty. For the purposes of this analysis the eight council tax bands have been grouped: 'Band A' (lowest), 'Band B', 'Bands C, D, and E', and 'Bands F, G, and H' (highest). Generally, the higher the Council Tax band, the fewer the number of dwellings. For example, as of 7 October 2024, 23% of all chargeable dwellings in England were in Band A. In comparison, just 1% were in Band H. Therefore, combining bands allows for fairer comparisons between the higher and lower bands. For figures relating to the Council Tax band groupings and property values, see Table D-3.

The bar chart in Figure D-5 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty, by grouped Council Tax bands, as of 7 October 2024. The chart portrays the differences between majority rural and urban authorities outside of London; proportions of empty dwellings by Council Tax band in intermediate authorities or in London can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Figure D-5: Bar chart showing the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural and urban authorities outside of London, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped Council Tax bands, England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend. 'Urban' excludes London. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

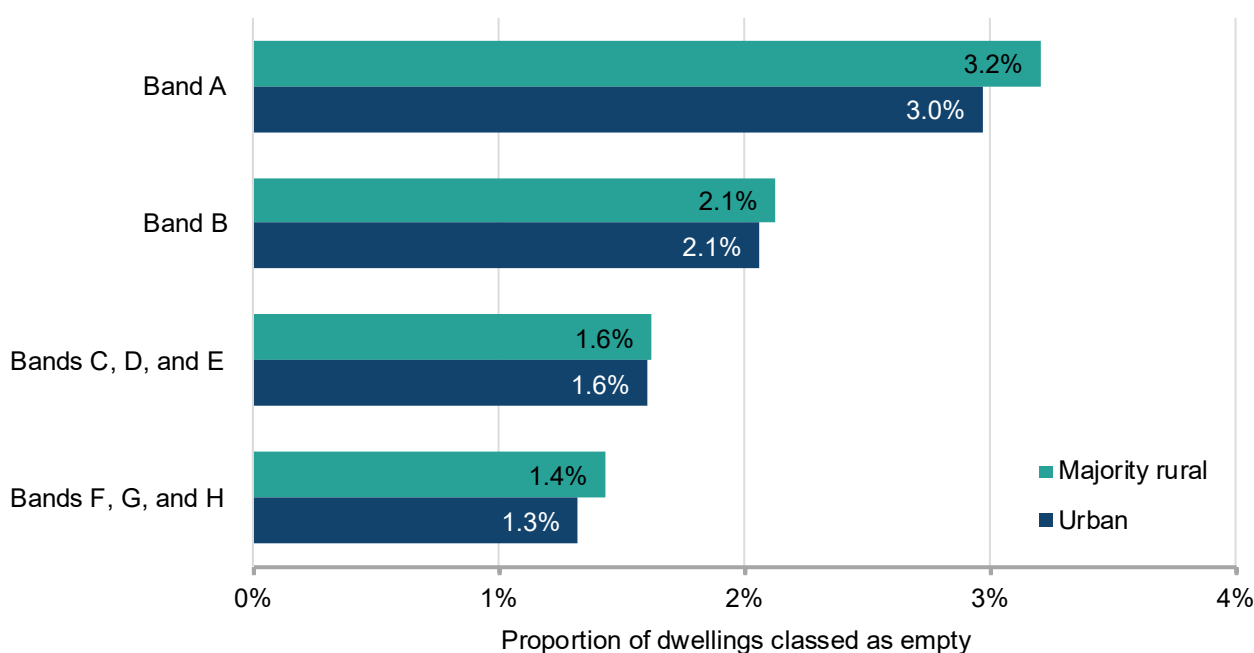


Figure D-5 can be described as follows:

- As of 7 October 2024, there were proportionally more empty dwellings in 'Band A' than in any other band or groups of bands in majority rural authorities, at 3.2%. This is equivalent to 14,900 out of a total 463,800 chargeable dwellings in 'Band A' being classed as empty for Council Tax purposes.
- The proportion of empty 'Band B' dwellings in majority rural authorities was 1.1 percentage points lower than in 'Band A', at 2.1%.
- When combining 'Bands C, D, and E', 1.6% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were empty. When combining 'Bands F, G, and H', 1.4% of dwellings in majority rural authorities

were empty. The proportions of empty dwellings in either of these groups were half the rate of empty 'Band A' homes.

- In urban authorities outside of London, the rate of empty dwellings was lower than in majority rural authorities for every Council Tax band or groups of bands. However, the difference between majority rural authorities and urban authorities outside of London was often minimal; for example, the rate of empty dwellings for 'Band A' in majority rural authorities was just 0.2 percentage points more than for those in urban authorities outside of London. This was the biggest difference of all the bands or groups of bands. The proportions of empty 'Band B' dwellings, or empty properties in 'Bands C, D, and E', were similar between majority rural authorities and those in urban authorities outside of London.

Whilst Figure D-5 shows the proportion of dwellings that are empty by Council Tax band for overall rural-urban categories, there will be variation in the empty homes rate for local authorities within these classifications and bands. Table D-7 specifies the majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are empty, by Council Tax band, as of 7 October 2024.

Table D-7: Local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as empty within majority rural authorities, by Council Tax band, in England, 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Council Tax band	Local authority	Number of empty homes, as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings
Band A	South Cambridgeshire	8.6%
Band B	Uttlesford	4.5%
Band C	Derbyshire Dales	2.9%
Band D	Isles of Scilly	3.7%
Band E	Isles of Scilly	6.1%
Band F	Cotswold	3.3%
Band G	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	3.4%
Band H	West Lindsey	14.3%

Table D-7 can be described as follows:

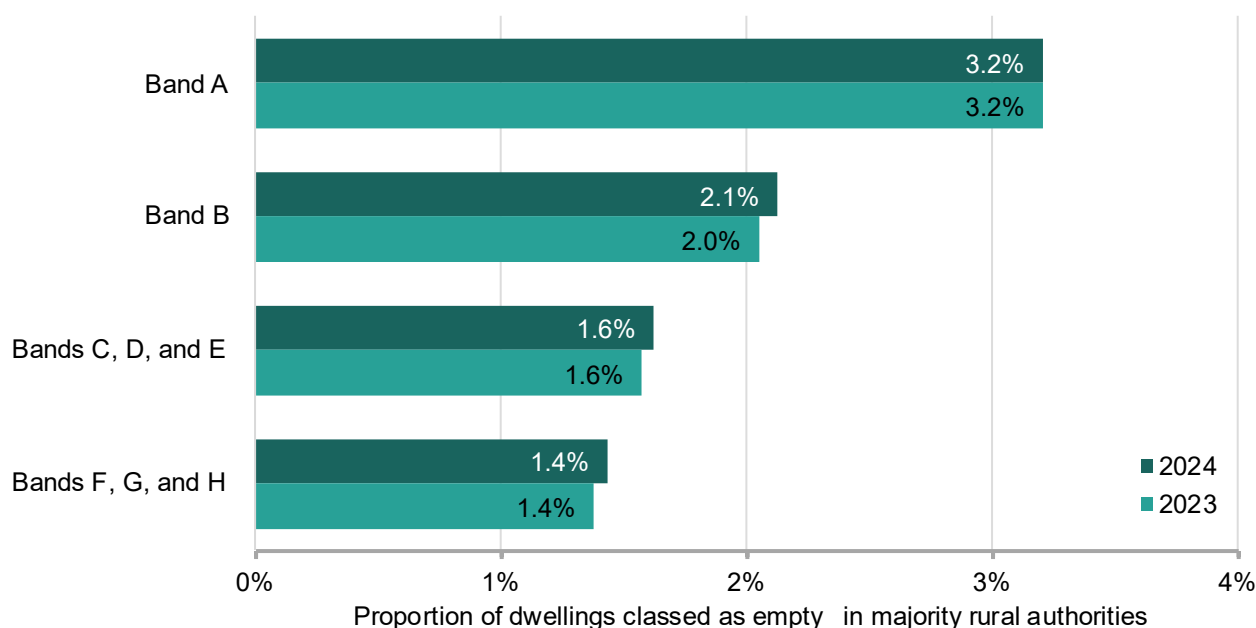
- The majority rural authorities with the highest proportion of either 'Band A', 'Band B', or 'Band G' properties being empty were located in the East of England; 'South Cambridgeshire' had the highest proportion of empty 'Band A' properties (8.6%), whilst 'Uttlesford' had the highest proportion of empty 'Band B' properties (4.5%). 'King's Lynn and West Norfolk' had the highest proportion of empty 'Band G' properties, at 3.4%.
- The majority rural authorities with the highest proportion of either 'Band C' or 'Band H' properties being empty were located in the East Midlands region of England; 'Derbyshire Dales' had the highest proportion of empty 'Band C' properties (2.9%), whilst 'West Lindsey' had the highest proportion of empty 'Band H' properties (14.3%). It should be noted that, compared to the other Council Tax bands, there were particularly low counts of 'Band H' properties across England. In this case, 14.3% corresponds to 8 empty dwellings out of a total of 56 'Band H' properties in 'West Lindsey'.

- The 'Isles of Scilly' had the highest proportions of either 'Band D' or 'Band E' properties being classed as empty for Council Tax purposes, at 3.7% and 6.1% respectively. However, it should be noted that these proportions correspond to low counts of empty homes; overall, there were just 40 empty homes in this authority.
- The 'Cotswold' authority – in the South West region of England – had the highest proportion of empty 'Band F' properties of all majority rural authorities, at 3.3%.

By comparing between the Council Taxbase data for the previous year, it is possible to see how the value of the empty dwelling stock has changed over time. The bar chart in Figure D-6 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities, as at 2 October 2023 and 7 October 2024. These dates refer to the Council Taxbase snapshots, and will henceforth be referred to in the chart commentary as just '2023' and '2024' for simplicity. Data for other rural-urban classifications can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Figure D-6: Bar chart showing the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped Council Tax bands, England, 2 October 2023 and 7 October 2024 (Note D-4)

The bars are presented in the same order and orientation as the legend. '2023' refers to 2 October 2023, whilst '2024' refers to 7 October 2024. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.



Between 2023 and 2024, the proportion of empty 'Band A' dwellings in majority rural authorities did not change; in both years, it was 3.2%. In absolute terms, the number of empty dwellings in majority rural authorities increased from 14,700 in 2023 to 14,900 in 2024.

The proportion of empty 'Band B' dwellings in majority rural authorities increased by 0.1 percentage point between 2023 and 2024; in absolute terms, this was an increase from 11,600 to 12,100 dwellings.

The proportion of dwellings in 'Bands C, D, and E' classed as empty in majority rural authorities did not change between 2023 and 2024, remaining at 1.6%. In absolute terms, the number of empty

dwelling increased from 21,400 to 22,400 dwellings. Therefore, whilst there was no proportional change, this was the greatest absolute increase of all Council Tax bands/groups.

Between 2023 and 2024, there was little change in the proportion of empty dwellings in 'Bands F, G, and H' in majority rural authorities. In absolute terms, the number of empty dwellings increased from 4,200 to 4,400 dwellings.

Second and empty homes explanatory notes

- **Note D-1**

The data source is the [Local Authority Council Taxbase England 2024](#) 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 D-2**

Tables showing data given within this section can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note D-3**

Definitions of rural terms can be found at: [Rural Urban Classification - GOV.UK](#)

- **Note D-4**

Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2024, authorities were able to charge an Empty Homes Premium on properties that had been empty for two or more years.

From 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, the premium was 100%, having been increased from a 50% premium.

From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, the premium could be up to 100% for dwellings that had been empty for between 2 to 5 years and up to 200% for dwellings that had been empty for more than 5 years.

From 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024, the premium could be up to 100% for dwellings that had been empty for between 2 to 5 years, up to 200% for dwellings that had been empty for between 5 to 10 years, and up to 300% for dwellings that have been empty for 10 years or more.

Since 1 April 2024, authorities have additionally been able to charge a premium of up to 100% for dwellings that have been empty for between 1 and 2 years.

In 2024, 292 out of 296 authorities reported they were charging the premium on some of their empty dwellings.

E. Homelessness

In recent years, there have been proportionally fewer people assessed as homeless in majority rural authorities compared to urban authorities.

Homelessness - key findings

The homeless rate in rural areas is around half the rate in London

- In 2023/24, there were 4.9 statutorily homeless households per 1,000 usual households in majority rural areas; this compares to 10.2 homeless households per 1,000 usual households in London.

Homelessness has increased in Rural areas in recent years

- In 2018/19, there were 3.4 statutorily homeless households per 1,000 usual households in majority rural authorities. By 2023/24, this had increased by 44%, to 4.9 homeless households per 1,000 usual households.

Rough sleeping levels in rural areas are lower and more stable than in urban areas

- At the 2024 autumn rough sleeping snapshot, there were 5.3 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in majority rural authorities and 7.9 per 100,000 population in urban authorities outside of London.

Summary

In this publication, 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 the year ending March 2024, there were 4.9 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households in majority rural authorities. This was 3.1 households per 1,000 fewer than in urban authorities outside of London (8.0 homeless households per 1,000 usual households). In all rural-urban classifications of authorities in England, the rate of statutory homelessness was higher in the year ending March 2024 than it was in the year ending March 2019.

In the 2024 autumn snapshot of rough sleeping, there were 5.3 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in majority rural authorities. This compares to 7.9 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in urban authorities outside of London. When comparing these annual snapshots between 2010 and 2024, the highest rate of rough sleeping in majority rural authorities was in 2016, where there were 5.9 rough sleepers per 100,000 population. Rough sleeping tends to occur more frequently in the warmer summer months, and less in the colder winter months.

Background information

Homelessness is a complex issue that can take many forms. It is not always easy to monitor, resulting in multiple definitions and measurements.

Defining homelessness

The term ‘homelessness’ is often considered to apply only to people ‘sleeping rough’. However, within this publication, “homelessness” also includes the statutorily homeless, i.e., those households which meet specific criteria of priority need set out in legislation. This publication focusses on those who are already homeless on approaching the specified local authority, or are homeless at the end of a prevention duty, and require help (i.e., a “relief duty”) to secure settled accommodation.

Rough sleepers are defined 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 E-4).

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 E-2 for further information about the definitions of homelessness.

Data sources

Within this publication, there are three data sources that are used to highlight homelessness statistics, all of which come from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) [homelessness statistics collection](#).

For **statutory homelessness**, the latest data comes from [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2023-24 - GOV.UK](#); the collection also includes the same report for previous years since 2018/19, as well as quarterly information. For each year stated within this section, data are for statutory homelessness assessments and activities in England between 1st April and 31st March of the following year (i.e., the entire financial year).

For **rough sleeping**, this section includes information from the [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2024 - GOV.UK](#) (referred to as “the snapshot”). The snapshot includes annual single-night estimates of the number of people sleeping rough, taken between 2010 to 2024. This allows for a long-term comparison to be made without the effects of seasonality; rough sleeping tends to occur more frequently in the warmer summer months, and less in the colder winter months.

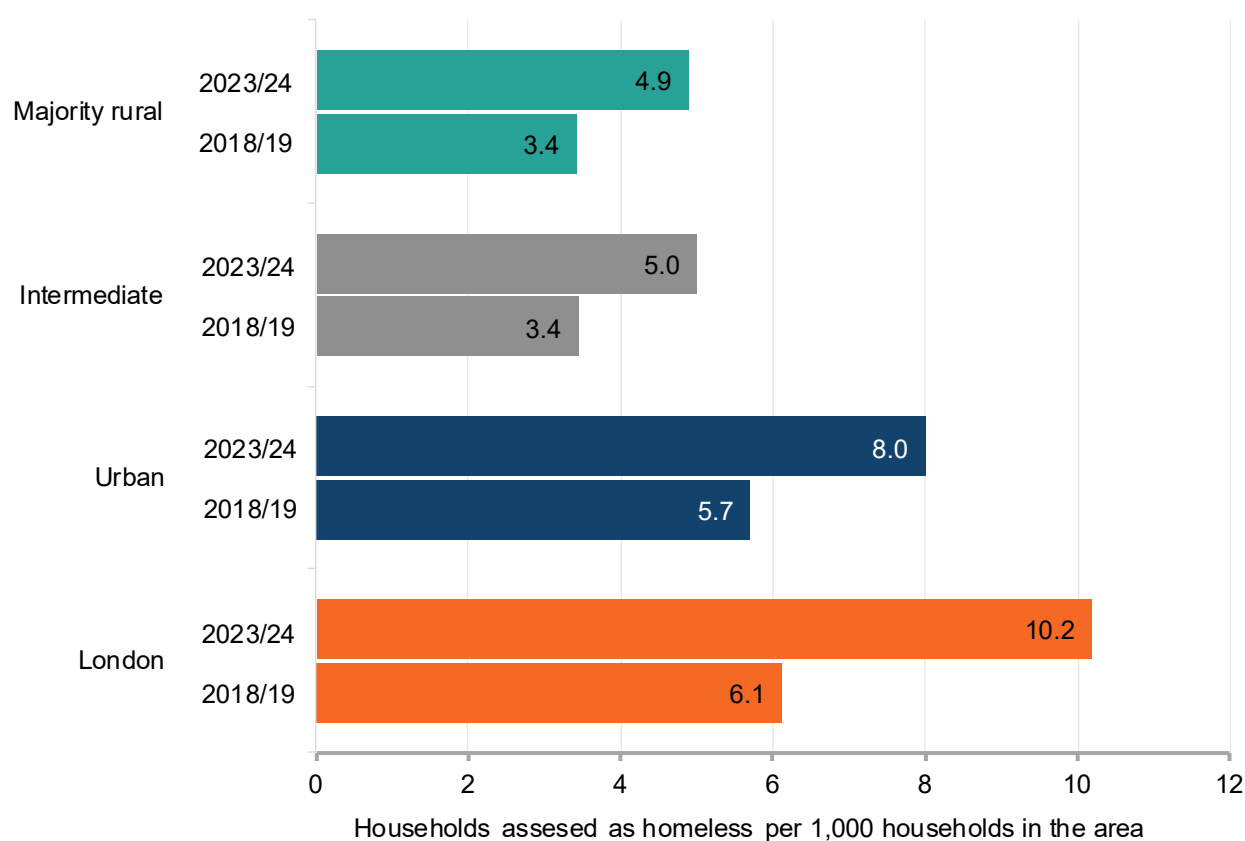
Statutory homelessness

Within this publication, the “homelessness rate” is given as the number of households assessed as homeless (and therefore owed a relief duty by the local authority) per 1,000 usual households; see Note E-2 for more information.

The bar chart in Figure E-1 shows the homelessness rate in England for year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, allowing for comparisons over time. Whilst homelessness data is published annually, there were a number of authorities that had not provided data across the series – particularly in year ending March 2021. This was likely an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the most recent data has been compared with just one other year to ensure estimates are maximally representative of all authorities within the specified rural-urban class (Note E-6).

Figure E-1: Bar chart showing the change in the number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 usual households, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024 (Note E-7)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. ‘Urban’ excludes London.



The bar chart in Figure E-1 can be described as follows:

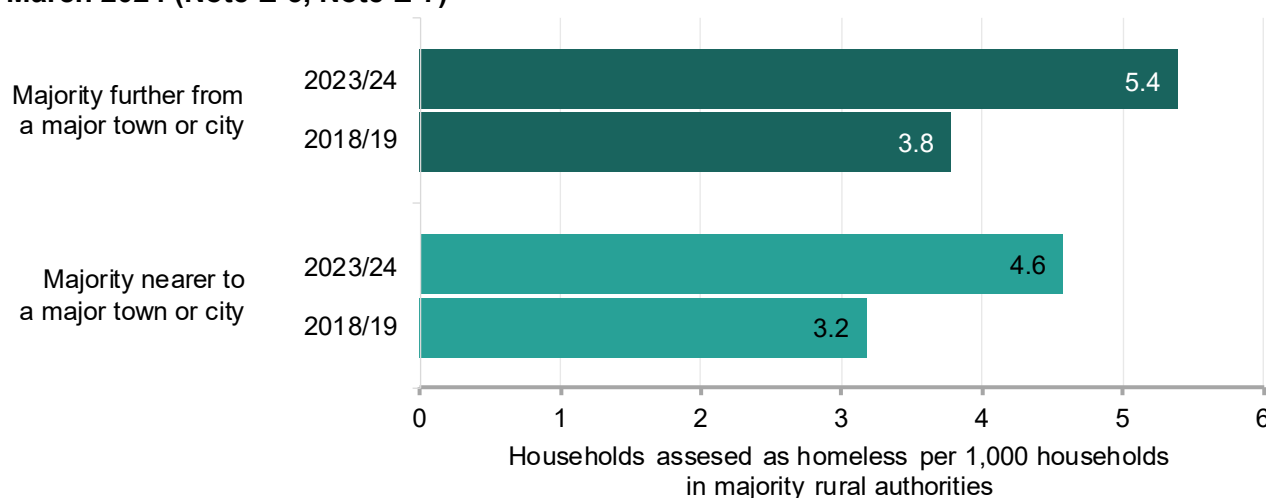
- In both year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate was lowest in majority rural authorities and highest in London. The rate in majority rural authorities has been similar to that of intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, but much lower than that in urban authorities outside of London.
- In year ending March 2024, there were 4.9 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households in majority rural authorities. This was similar to the homelessness rate in

intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, but 3.1 households per 1,000 fewer than in urban authorities outside of London. In London, the homelessness rate was more than double that of majority rural authorities, with 10.2 homeless households per 1,000 usual households.

- Between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate increased in all rural-urban classifications of authorities.
- In majority rural authorities, there were 3.4 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households in year ending March 2019. This means that between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate in majority rural authorities increased by 43%. In intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, the homelessness rate saw a similar increase (of 45%).
- In urban authorities outside of London, there were 5.7 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households in year ending March 2019. This means that between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate in urban authorities outside of London increased by 40% - at a lower rate than for majority rural authorities.
- In London, there were 6.1 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households in year ending March 2019. This means that between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate in London increased by 66%; this was the largest proportional increase of any rural-urban class.

Proximity to a major town or city for the majority of the local authority population appeared to have an effect on homelessness rates in majority rural authorities; this is shown in the bar chart in Figure E-2. Where the majority of the population lives nearer to a major town or city, this is defined as being within a 30-minute drive of a built-up area with at least 75,000 inhabitants. For more information regarding how the relative access measure is defined see the link in Note E-5.

Figure E-2: Bar chart showing the change in the number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 usual households in majority rural authorities, by proximity to a major town or city for the majority of the population, year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024 (Note E-5, Note E-7)



In both year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate was higher in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population lived further from a major town or city, than where the majority lived nearer.

In year ending March 2024, there were 5.4 households assessed as homeless per 1,000 usual households that lived in authorities where the majority of the population were further from a major town or city. This was 0.8 more households per 1,000 more than in authorities where the majority of the population were nearer to a major town or city.

Between year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate increased by 43% in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population were further from a major town or city. In authorities where the majority of the population were nearer to a major town or city, the homelessness rate increased at a similar rate (by 44%).

The bar charts in Figure E-1 and Figure E-2 show the trends by rural-urban classification overall, but there will be variation in the homelessness rate for local authorities within these classifications.

Table E-1 specifies the local authorities with the highest rate of homelessness (with the exception of those that did not provide data), as of year ending March 2024, by rural-urban classification.

In majority rural authorities, 'North Devon' – in the South West of England – had the highest homelessness rate in year ending March 2024; here, for every 1,000 usual households, 9.2 were assessed as homeless. The homelessness rate in 'North Devon' was nearly double that of all majority rural authorities overall (4.9 households per 1,000). Whilst 'North Devon' had the highest homelessness rate amongst majority rural authorities, this was still lower than the highest rates observed in other rural-urban categories.

'Manchester' – an urban authority in the North West region of England – had the highest homelessness rate in England in year ending March 2024; here, for every 1,000 usual households, 20.2 were assessed as homeless. This is more than double the rate of homelessness in 'North Devon', as well as more than double that of urban authorities overall (8.0 households per 1,000). The homelessness rate in 'Manchester' was nearly double that in London overall (10.2 households per 1,000); although, rates varied across London with the highest rate being in Newham (18.3 households per 1,000).

Table E-1: Local authorities with the highest number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 usual households within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, year ending March 2024 (Note E-6)

The homelessness rate has been rounded to the nearest 0.1 households.

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Local authority	Homeless households (per 000s)
Majority rural	North Devon	9.2
Intermediate rural	Durham	10.5
Intermediate urban	Bedford	13.2
Urban (excluding London)	Manchester	20.2
London	Newham	18.3
England	Manchester	20.2

Table E-2 specifies the local authorities with the lowest rate of homelessness (with the exception of those that did not provide data) in year ending March 2024, by rural-urban classification.

In majority rural authorities, ‘South Oxfordshire’ – in the South East region of England – had the lowest homelessness rate in year ending March 2024; here, for every 1,000 usual households, 1.2 were assessed as homeless. This means that the homelessness rate in ‘South Oxfordshire’ was around one quarter of the rate for majority rural authorities overall (4.9 households per 1,000).

‘East Hampshire’ – an intermediate rural authority also in the South East of England – had the lowest homelessness rate in England in year ending March 2024; here, for every 1,000 usual households, 0.9 were assessed as homeless.

Table E-2: Local authorities with the lowest number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 usual households within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, year ending March 2024 (Note E-6)

The homelessness rate has been rounded to the nearest 0.1 households.

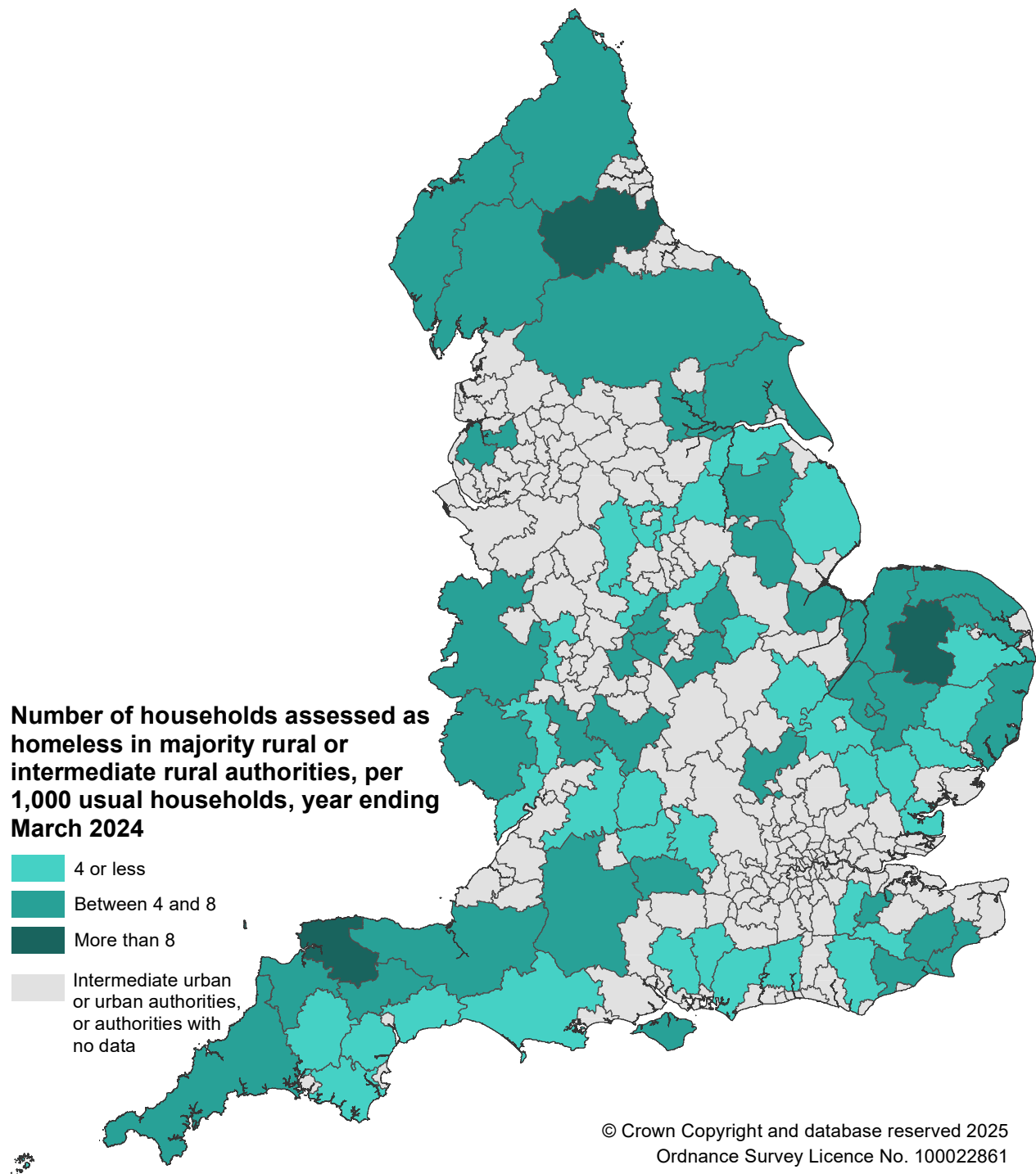
Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Local authority	Homeless households (per 000s)
Majority rural	South Oxfordshire	1.2
Intermediate rural	East Hampshire	0.9
Intermediate urban	Boston	1.9
Urban (excluding London)	Three Rivers	1.2
London	Kingston upon Thames	1.7
England	East Hampshire	0.9

Many of the majority rural or intermediate rural authorities with low rates of statutory homelessness were in the East or South East of England; this is shown in the map in Figure E-3. Intermediate urban and urban authorities (including London) are not shown on the map, but a full table of local authority-level data can be found in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Of the 77 majority rural and intermediate rural authorities, 37 – or just under half – had fewer than 4 homeless households per 1,000 usual households. There were 3 majority rural or intermediate rural authorities with at least double the homelessness rate, with at least 8 homeless households per 1,000 usual households: ‘Breckland’ (East of England), ‘North Devon’ (South West), and ‘Durham’ (North East). Therefore, whilst there was a regional pattern in terms of lower homelessness rates, there was no particular geographic pattern at the higher end of the scale.

There was just one authority – the ‘Isles of Scilly’ – where homelessness rates were uncertain due to the low homelessness count combined with the low resident population. There were two authorities – ‘Newark and Sherwood’ and ‘Ribble Valley’ – that gave no data in the reference year.

Figure E-3: Map showing the number of households accepted as being homeless per 1,000 usual households in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, year ending March 2024
 Grey areas on the map represent non-rural authorities (intermediate urban, urban) as well as those that gave no data.



Rough sleeping

Within this publication, the “rough sleeping rate” is given as the number of people sleeping rough (i.e. in open air or in places not designed for habitation) per 100,000 usual resident population.

Long-term trends based on a single-night annual snapshot

Every year, a [rough sleeping snapshot](#) is captured on a single date chosen by each local authority between 1st October and 30th November. The snapshot takes place in the autumn, rather than summer where numbers are likely to be higher due to warmer temperatures, or winter, where numbers may be lower as there are more temporary night shelters set up to ensure people do not sleep on the streets in very cold weather. To minimize double counting, local authorities coordinate their counts, often on the same night, and share information about individuals to ensure they are only counted once

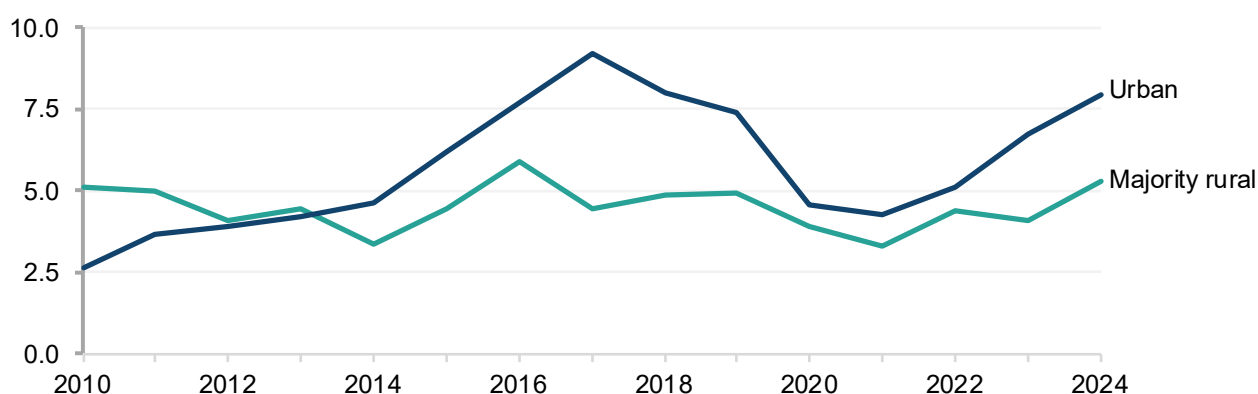
In 2024, there were 5.3 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in majority rural authorities. This compares to 7.9 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in urban authorities outside of London. In London, the rate of rough sleeping was considerably higher at 14.7 people per 100,000 population.

Comparing these annual snapshots allows for a time series to be created that is not impacted by seasonality. The line chart in Figure E-4 shows the estimated number of people sleeping rough, by local authority rural-urban classification, between 2010 and 2024. Intermediate (rural or urban) has been excluded to simplify the chart, as the rough sleeping rate in these authorities was generally similar to that in majority rural authorities. London has been excluded as the rough sleeping rate is considerably higher than other authority types. The rough sleeping rates in intermediate authorities and those in London can instead be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Figure E-4: Line chart showing the number of people sleeping rough at each autumn snapshot between 2010 and 2024, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England (Note E-7)

‘Urban’ excludes London.

Autumn snapshot of people sleeping rough per 100,000 people



At the beginning of the series (between 2010 and 2013), the rough sleeping rate was higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London, although the gap between these authority types closed rapidly. In 2013, the rough sleeping rate was similar in majority rural

authorities (with 4.5 rough sleepers per 100,000 people) compared to those in urban authorities outside of London (with 4.2 rough sleepers per 100,000 people).

Since 2014, the rough sleeping rate has been lower in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London. Whilst there has been a clear rise and fall in rates in urban authorities, with peaks in 2017 and 2024, there was less fluctuation in rough sleeping rates in majority rural authorities.

The highest rate of rough sleeping in majority rural authorities across the period was in 2016, where there were 5.9 rough sleepers per 100,000 population. In urban authorities outside of London, the peak was slightly later in 2017, where there were 9.2 rough sleepers per 100,000 population.

The lowest rate of rough sleeping in majority rural authorities was in 2021, where there were 3.3 rough sleepers per 100,000 population. This aligns with the [“everyone in” government initiative](#) introduced during 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.

Whilst the rough sleeping rate in urban authorities outside of London was also low in 2021 (with 4.3 rough sleepers per 100,000 population), the lowest point across the series was instead in 2010, where there were 2.7 rough sleepers per 100,000 population.

Homelessness explanatory notes

- **Note E-1**

Tables showing data presented in this section can be found in the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

- **Note E-2**

The relief duty is owed to households that are already homeless on approaching a local authority, and require help to secure settled accommodation. The duty lasts 56 days and can only be extended by a local authority if the household is not owed the main homelessness duty; for more information, see: [Statutory homelessness: Annual technical note - GOV.UK](#).

For the purposes of this publication, a usual household is defined as one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area. This includes sheltered accommodation units in an establishment where 50% or more have their own kitchens (irrespective of whether there are other communal facilities) and all people living in caravans on any type of site that is their usual residence; this will include anyone who has no other usual residence elsewhere in the UK: [Household projections for England - Office for National Statistics](#).

- **Note E-3**

Source: MHCLG: [Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

- **Note E-4**

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

- **Note E-5**

Definitions of rural terms can be found at: [Rural Urban Classification - GOV.UK](#)

- **Note E-6**

Within the annual homelessness statistics, there have been some local authorities with missing data. In year ending March 2019, there were 10 authorities that did not provide data: of these, 3 were in London, 5 were

urban but outside of London, and 2 were intermediate (rural or urban). Therefore, all majority rural authorities provided homelessness data in this year. As a result, homelessness estimates presented within this section are representative of their whole rural-urban class as follows: majority rural = 100%; intermediate (rural or urban) = 98%; urban (excluding London) = 96%; London = 91%. Using intermediate (rural or urban) authorities as an example, this means that the statutory homelessness rates presented this section are representative of 98% of all intermediate authorities.

In year ending March 2024, 18 authorities did not provide data: of these, 3 were in London, 8 were urban but outside of London, 6 were intermediate (rural or urban), and just 1 was majority rural. As a result, homelessness estimates presented within this section are representative of their whole rural-urban class as follows: majority rural = 98%; intermediate (rural or urban) = 93%; urban (excluding London) = 94%; London = 91%.

- **Note E-7**

Previous local authority estimates of homelessness are taken as of the local authorities that exist at the time. For this publication, local government reorganisation has been considered and all estimates have been adjusted in line with the local authorities that existed in 2024. This meant that data for some authorities has been combined, as the 326 authorities that existed in year ending March 2019 have become 296 as of year ending March 2024.

By bringing forward these local authorities to 2024 boundaries, it has been possible to retrospectively apply the 2021 Rural-Urban Classification. This avoids discontinuity and ensures that data between years are comparable. When local authorities have combined, they become larger and more populous, and therefore typically more urban.

F. 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.

Land use change for housing - key findings

Proportional more residential development in rural areas than in urban areas

- 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

Most rural residential development is on agricultural or other undeveloped land

- 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

Summary

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) produces Land Use Change Statistics (Note F-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.

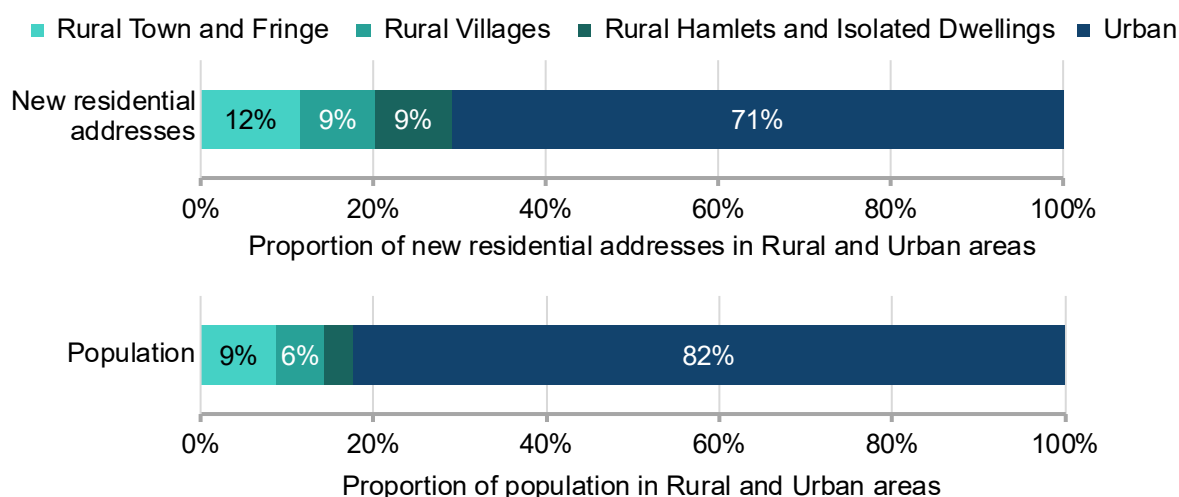
New residential addresses

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) produces Land Use Change Statistics (Note F-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 F-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 F-1: New residential addresses compared with population, by settlement type within the Rural Urban Classification, in England, 2021/22 (Note F-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 F-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 F-2 shows the proportion of new residential addresses by previously developed and previously non-developed land and whether the land had been vacant.

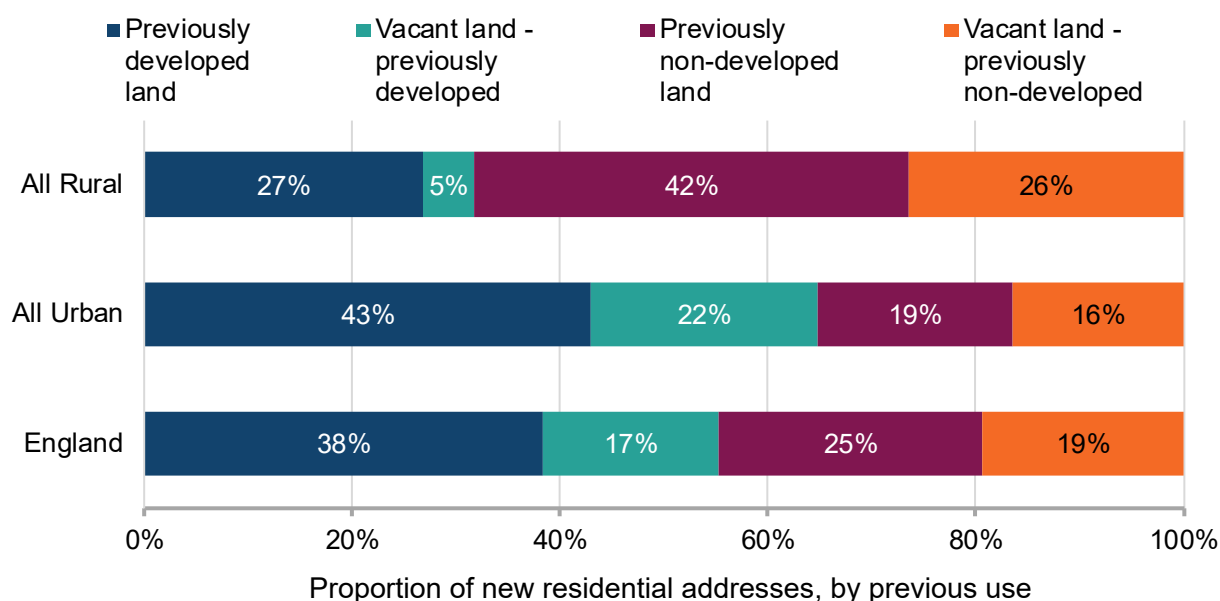
In England, 55% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (38% on land that was previously developed and 17% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 45% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (25% on land that was previously non-developed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

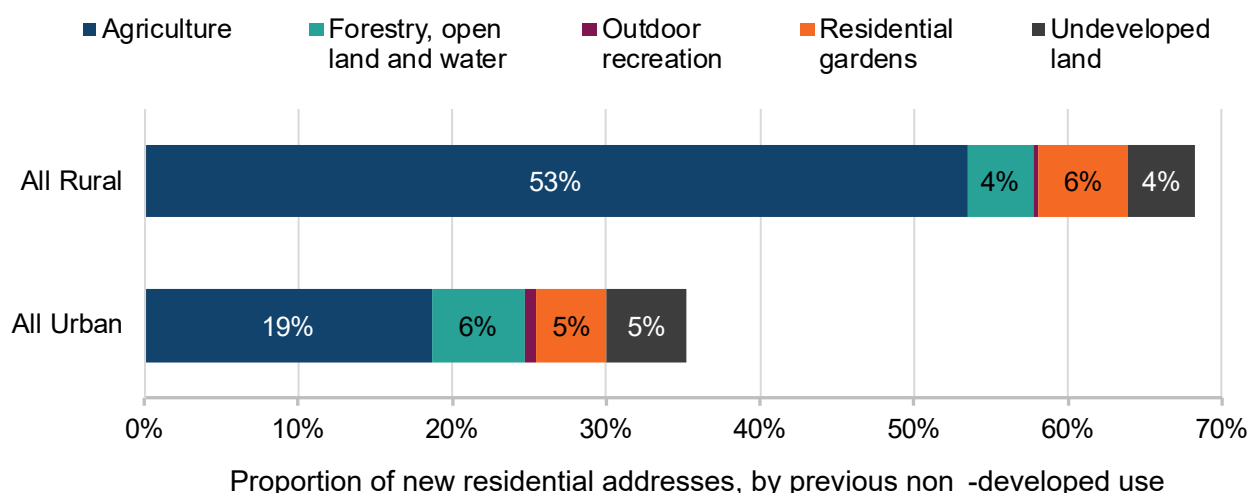
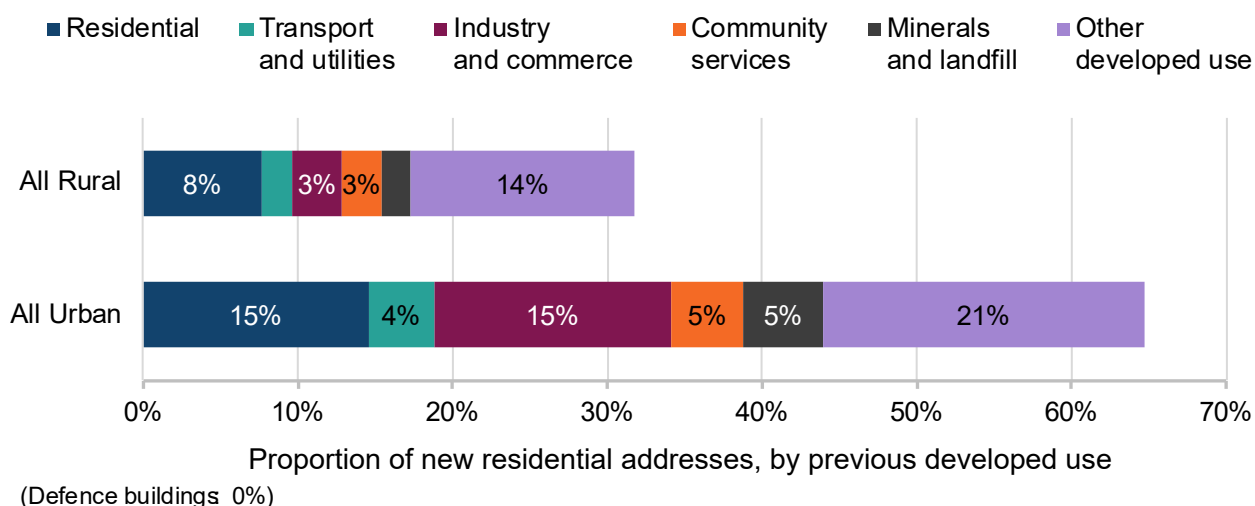


Previous land use

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 F-3 shows the proportions of new residential addresses by previous land use.

Figure F-3: Proportion of new residential addresses, by previous land use, by Rural-Urban Classification, in England, 2021/22 (Note F-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 F-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 F-3 – bottom stacked bar chart) were:

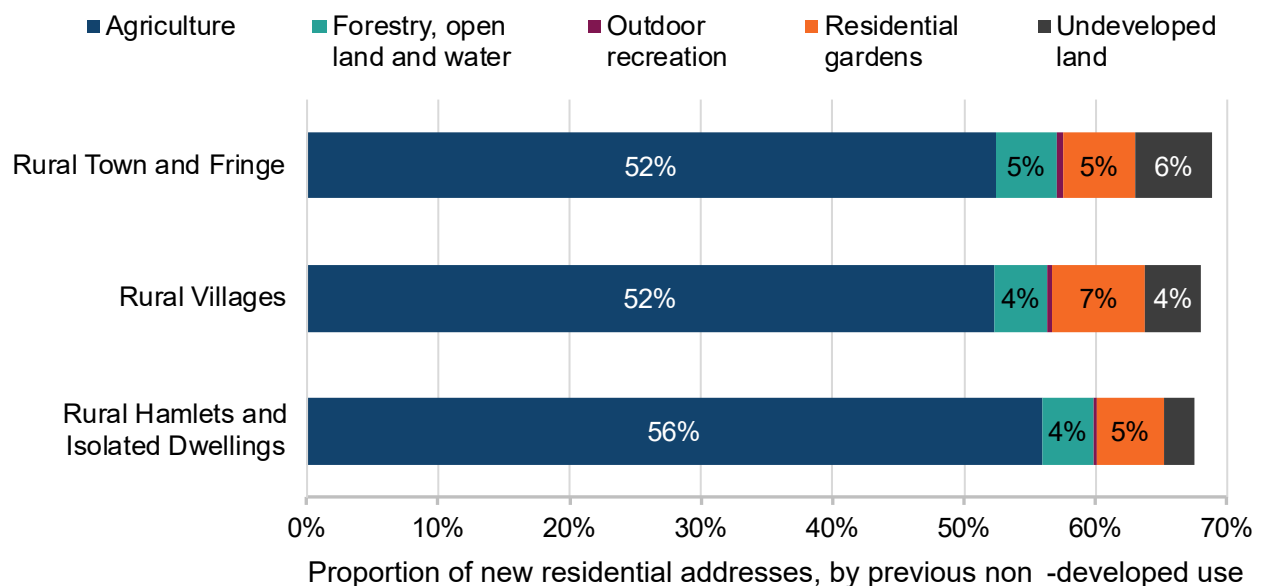
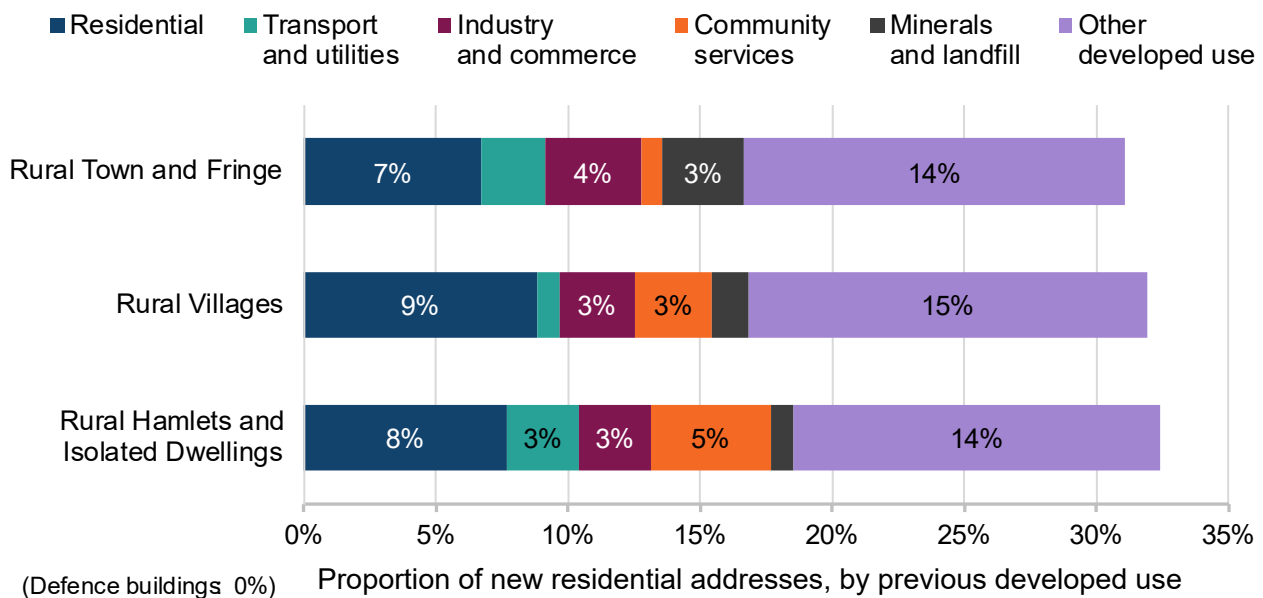
- **Agriculture:** 53% in Rural areas and 19% in Urban areas;

- **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 F-4.

Figure F-4: Proportion of new residential addresses, by previous land use, by settlement type in Rural Areas, in England, 2021/22 (Note F-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 F-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 F-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 F-3 and Figure F-4.

Land use change for housing - explanatory notes

• Note F-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-statistics) includes explanatory notes on previous land uses

• Note F-2

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

• Note F-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 F-4

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

G. Housing quality

There is a marginally higher proportion of homes in rural areas than in urban areas that fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard; the proportion is lowest in suburban residential areas.

Housing quality - key findings

A higher proportion of homes in rural areas are non-Decent than in urban areas

- In 2022, 20% of homes in rural areas and 16% of those in urban areas failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. However, the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard halved over the period 2008 to 2022.

The more rural the area the higher the proportion of non-Decent homes

- In 2008, 34% of homes in “rural residential” and 47% of homes in “village centres” failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. By 2022, these figures had fallen to 15% and 23% respectively.
- In the “most rural” areas, the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 38% in 2022, having fallen from over 60% in 2008.

Private renters in rural areas are the most likely to live in non-Decent homes

- Within rural areas the proportion of Owner-occupied and Social rent homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was similar (at 18%) and much lower than the 33% of Private rent homes failing to meet the Standard in 2022.
- In rural areas 33% of private rent homes are failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard compared to 21% in urban areas.

Rural homes are less likely to provide sufficient thermal comfort than urban homes

- In 2008, 16% of rural homes failed to provide sufficient thermal comfort, compared to 15% in urban areas and 11% in suburban areas.
- In 2019, 9% of rural homes failed to provide sufficient thermal comfort compared to 4% in suburban areas. This difference is likely to be because there are proportionally far fewer pre-1919 homes in suburban areas than in rural areas and older homes are likely to be less energy efficient and therefore harder to keep adequately warm.

Rural homes are slightly less prone to damp than urban homes

- In 2008, 8% rural homes had damp as did 13% of homes in urban areas; by 2022, 4% of homes in rural areas had damp compared to 6% of urban homes.
- In 2022 a smaller proportion of Social rent homes in rural areas suffer from damp than in urban areas (5% compared to 7%) however a greater proportion of Private rent homes in rural areas suffer from damp (12% compared to 9%).

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 2022, 20% of homes in rural areas failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard, but this proportion has fallen from over 40% in 2008. Between 2015 and 2022 the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 2 to 3 percentage points higher than in urban areas, but in 2022 the gap widened to 4 percentage points higher than in urban areas. In 2022 16% 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. Within rural areas the proportion of Owner-occupied and Social rent homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was similar (at 18%) and much lower than the 33% of Private rent homes failing to meet the Standard in 2022. Rental homes were more likely to fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard in rural areas than in urban areas.

The Decent Homes Standard focuses on homes meeting 4 criteria, two of which are meeting the current statutory minimum standard for housing and providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort. 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 2022 a higher proportion of homes in rural areas than homes in urban areas were not decent because they contain at least one Category 1 hazard. In 2022 14% of homes in rural areas contained at least one Category 1 hazard compared to 9% of homes in urban areas. In 2019 9% of homes in rural areas failed to provide sufficient thermal comfort 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 between these two levels. In 2022 just over 4% of homes in rural areas had at least one form of damp as did just under 6% of homes in urban areas. In 2008 8% of homes in rural areas had damp compared to 13% in urban areas. Social rent properties are less likely to suffer from damp in rural areas than urban areas; but for private rental properties they are slightly more likely to suffer from damp in rural areas than in urban areas.

In 2022 93% of occupied homes in rural areas had a smoke alarm, an increase of 4 percentage points more than in 2011, but the more rural the area the lower the proportion of homes with a smoke alarm.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EHS surveyors could not conduct a full internal inspection of properties over the period 2020 to 2022. So, some EHS variables are only available up to 2019; any time-series charts with 2019 as the last data point have not been updated in this edition.

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 G-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 G-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 any 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 G-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 G-4.

The charts within this Chapter follow 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”.

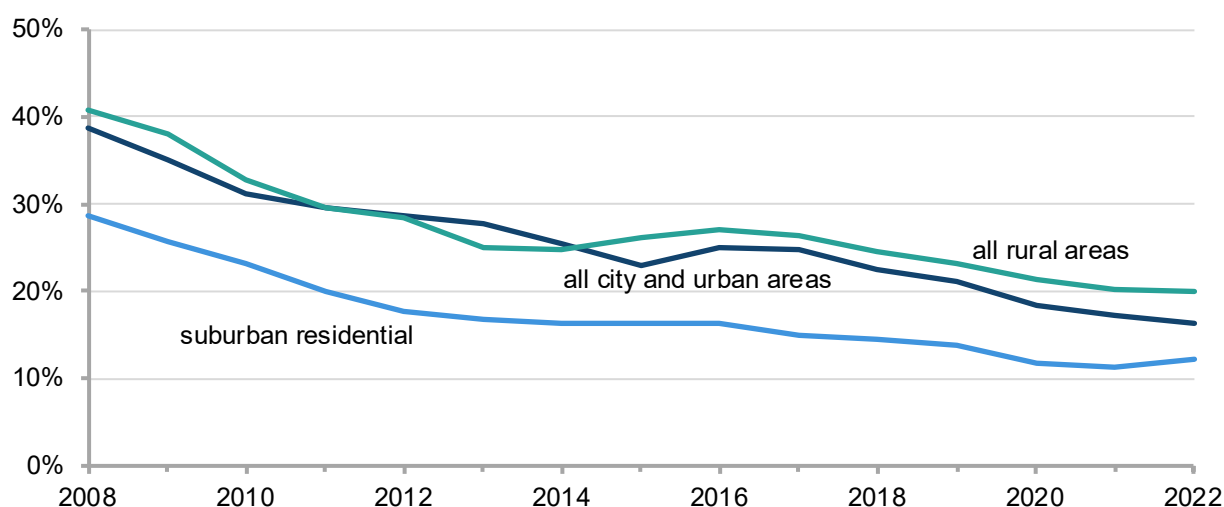
This EHS rural and urban classification system is strongly reliant on the perception of the surveyor conducting each dwelling survey. The Official Statistics Rural Urban classification has a precise definition linked to population (Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas for details on this definition) and 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) that includes both a questionnaire filled in by the household and a professional survey of the property. 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 G-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 2022. In 2022, 20% of homes in rural areas and 16% of those in urban areas failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Figure G-1: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2022 (Note G-1, Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-8)

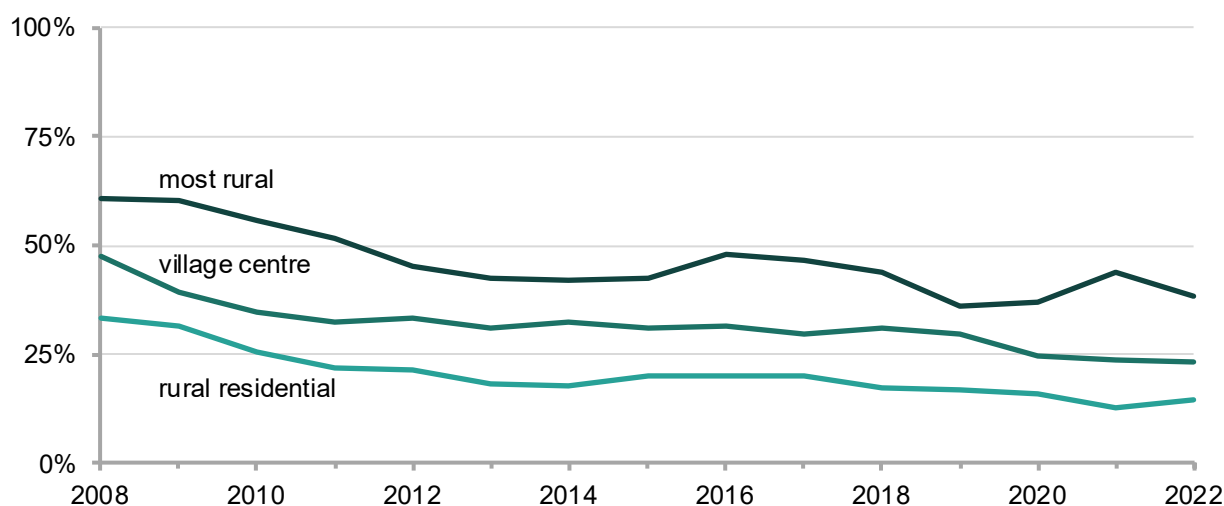


As Figure G-1 shows, this proportion has fallen from over 40% in 2008 and there have been year-on-year falls in the proportion of non-decent homes in rural areas every year since 2016. Between 2015 and 2022 the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 2 to 3 percentage points higher than in urban areas, but in 2022 the proportion of rural homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 4 percentage points higher than in urban areas.

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 suburban areas. This is likely to be due to suburban areas having a smaller proportion of pre-1919 homes than other areas. In 2022 12% of suburban homes failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard

Figure G-2 is a line chart showing that over the period 2008 to 2022, 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 2022, these figures had fallen to 15% and 23% respectively. The proportion of homes in “rural residential” areas that failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard in 2022 was marginally higher than in 2021, but still following the downward trajectory seen between 2017 and 2020. In the “most rural” areas, classified as simply “rural” in the EHS classification, the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was 38% in 2022, having fallen from over 60% in 2008.

Figure G-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 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-8)



A new addition to the EHS source data tables for 2022 was information on the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification area and tenure. This information is shown as a bar chart in Figure G-3. The bar chart shows that for all tenure types there was proportionally more homes in rural areas than in urban areas failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard in 2022. Suburban areas had the lowest proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard for all tenure types.

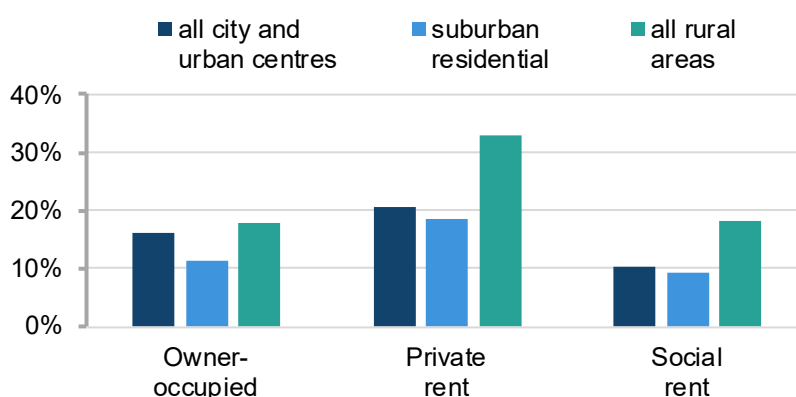
Within rural areas the proportion of Owner-occupied and Social rent homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was similar (at 18%) and much lower than the 1 in 3 Private rent homes failing to meet the Standard in 2022.

When comparing rural areas to urban areas in 2022 there was:

- a marginally greater proportion of Owner-occupied homes in rural areas failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard (18% compared to 16%);
- a greater proportion of Social rent homes in rural areas failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard (18% compared to 10%); and
- a much greater proportion of private rent homes in rural areas failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard (33% compared to 21%).

In the suburbs the proportion of rental homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was similar to urban areas, but for Owner-occupied homes it was 4 percentage points lower.

Figure G-3: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification area and tenure 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5)



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 over the period 2020 to 2022. Therefore, some data could not be collected in these years (Note G-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 needs to meet to be considered decent. Dwellings posing at least one Category 1 hazard (Note G-2) under the HHSRS will fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard (Note G-3). Whilst the EHS does not capture every hazard (Note G-7), it still allows us to determine

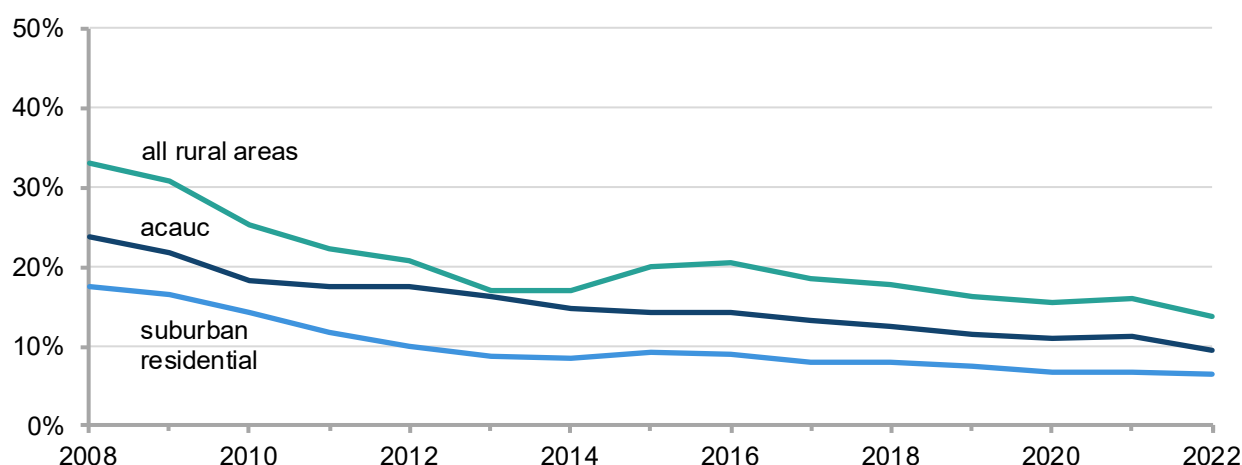
the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard because of the presence of at least one Category 1 hazard (Figure G-4).

Figure G-4 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 2022. For rural areas the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard fell from 33% in 2008 to 17% in 2013. Over the period 2013 to 2022, the reduction in the proportion of homes in rural areas with at least one category 1 hazard was minimal and increased back up to 20% in 2015 before falling to 16% in 2019 where it remained until 2021. In 2022 the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard in rural areas fell to 14%.

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 24% in 2008 to 11% in 2019 and then remained at 11% through to 2021. In 2022 the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard in urban areas fell to 9%. 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 2022.

Figure G-4: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the minimum standards set under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6, Note G-7, Note G-8)

The line labelled acauc is all city and urban centres.



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) 32% of the homes had at least one Category 1 hazard in 2022 (Supplementary Table HB1b, Note G-8). This corresponds to around 1 in 3 homes in the “most rural” areas and compares to at least half of the homes in the “most rural” areas having at least one Category 1 hazard over the period 2008 to 2010.

Homes in disrepair

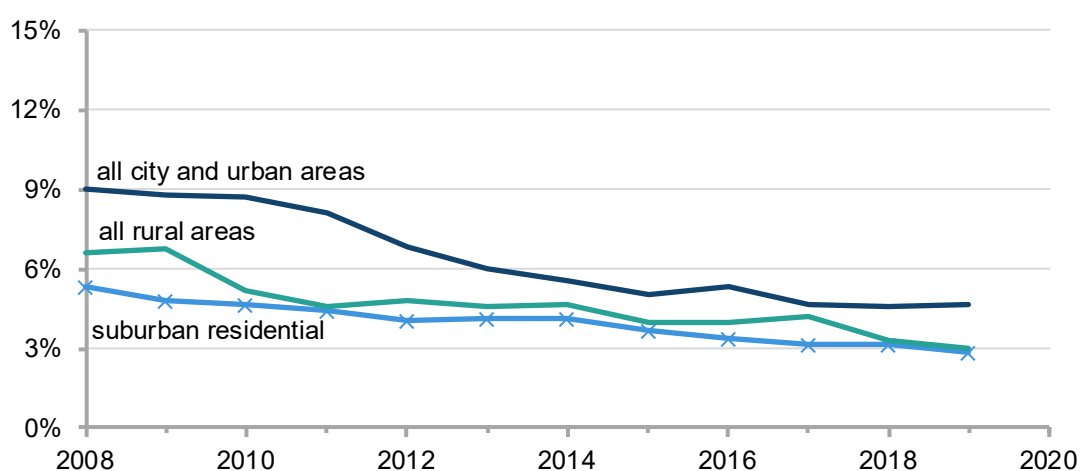
A further factor in determining whether homes are Decent is if they are in a reasonable state of repair. Figure G-5 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes that are not in a reasonable state of repair fell over the period 2008 to 2019. In all area types fewer than 1 in 10 homes were in a poor state of repair in 2008 and by 2019 this proportion had fallen to fewer than 1 in 20.

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 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 in rural and suburban areas was less than 0.7%, the exceptions were 2012 and 2017.

Figure G-5: 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 G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6, Note G-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.



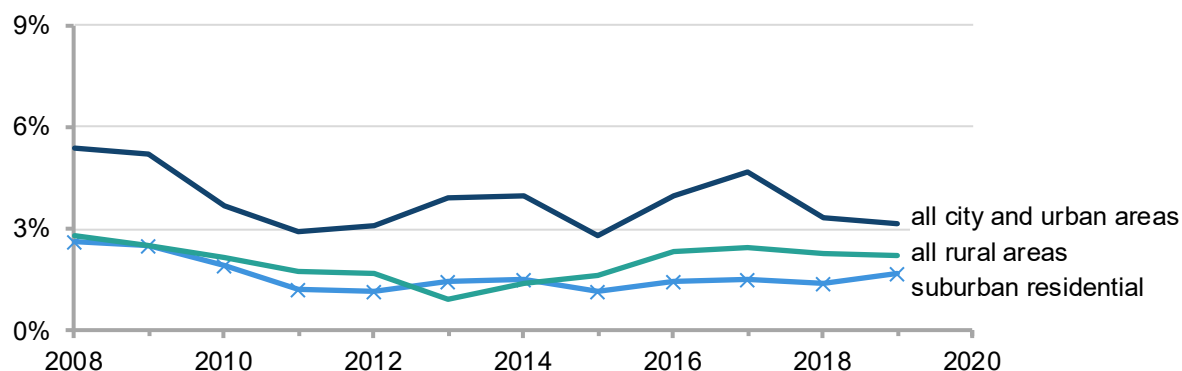
Homes without modern facilities

The third factor in the Decent Homes Standard is whether the homes have reasonably modern facilities. Figure G-6 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.

Figure G-6: 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 G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6, Note G-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.



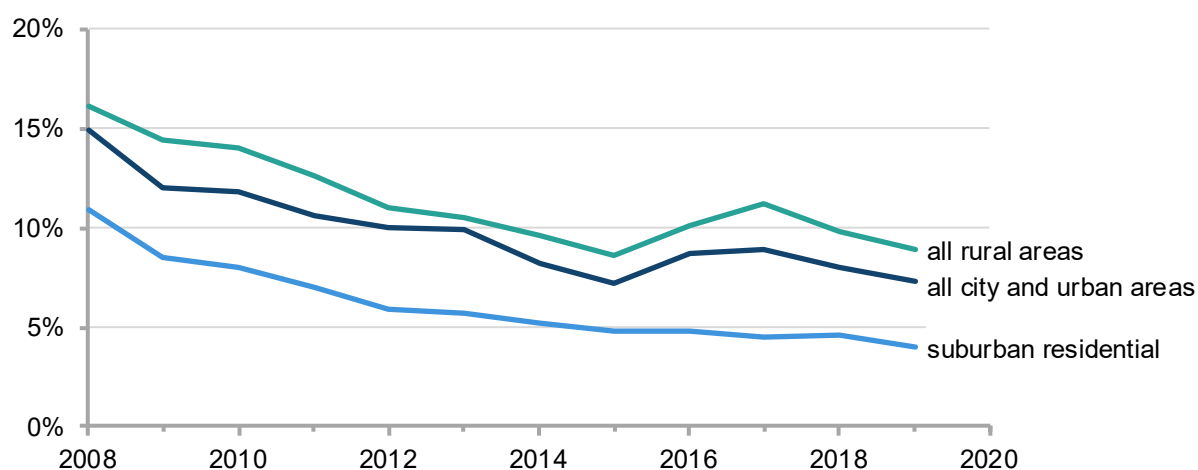
In rural areas, over the period 2008 to 2019, the proportion of homes without reasonably modern facilities has fluctuated between 1% and 3%. This is a similar proportion to in suburban areas. With the exception of the period 2016 to 2020 (when the difference was 1 percentage point) there was less than 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.

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 G-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 G-7 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.

Figure G-7: 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 G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6, Note G-8)

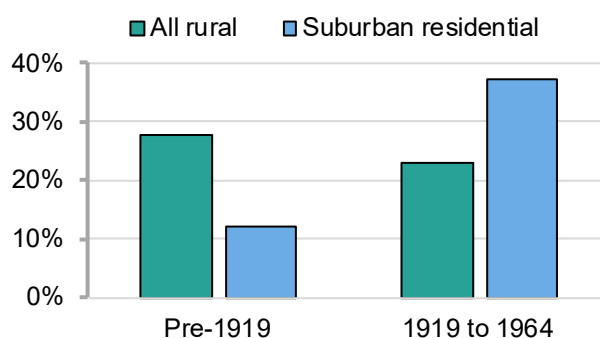


The trend for the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort (Figure G-7) has 3 components. The first is component is for the period 2008 to 2015. Over this period, the proportion of rural homes failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort fell year-on-year with the value dropping from 16% to 9%. So, the proportion almost 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.

In 2019 the proportion of urban homes failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort stood at 7%. As Figure G-7 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 G-8), with the balance being made up by homes constructed between 1919 and 1964. As explained in [Energy Statistics for Rural England](#) older homes are likely to be less energy efficient (Note G-9) and therefore harder to keep adequately warm.

Figure G-8: 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 G-4, Note G-5, Note G-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 G-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 G-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.

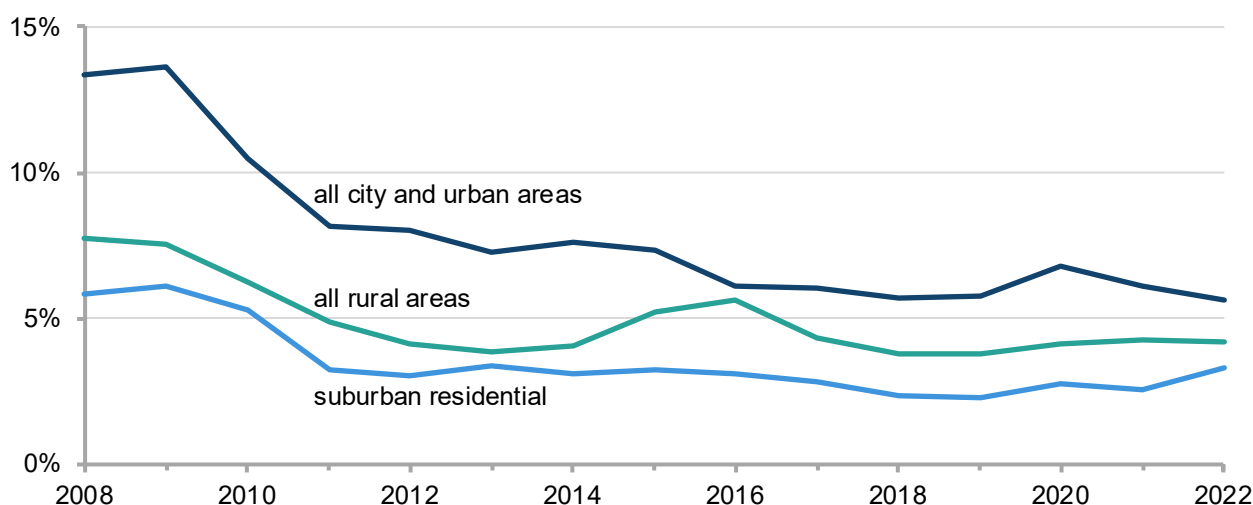
In the English Housing Survey, a home is considered to have a problem with damp if the surveyor records damp which is significant enough to be taken into consideration when making a HHSRS risk assessment, minor issues of damp are not recorded. A dwelling is assessed as having a damp problem where any of the following exist: penetrating damp, rising damp, or extensive patches of mould growth on walls and ceilings and/or mildew on soft furnishings.

Figure G-9 is a line chart showing (a) how the proportion of homes with damp (Note G-12) has reduced over the period 2008 to 2022 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 2022 with homes in rural areas slotting in between the urban and suburban levels but with a proportion that was usually much closer the suburban proportion.

In 2008, 8% of rural homes and 13% of urban homes had damp. Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of rural homes with damp decreased year-on-year to just under 4% in 2013. Since then, the proportion has fluctuated between 4% and 5% and was just over 4% in 2022.

The proportion of homes in urban areas with damp (Note G-12) fell sharply between 2009 and 2011. Since then, the reductions in the proportion of homes with damp have been more modest with the level fluctuating between 6% and 7% over the period 2013 to 2021. In 2022, just under 6% of homes in urban areas had damp. In suburban areas the proportion was 6% in 2008 and dropped to 3% in 2011; and then between 2011 and 2022 it fluctuated between 2% and 3%.

Figure G-9: Line chart showing the proportion of homes suffering from any type of damp by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6, Note G-8)



A new addition to the EHS source data tables for 2022 was information on the proportion of homes with damp by EHS classification area and tenure. This information is shown as a bar chart in Figure G-10. The bar chart shows that damp is most prevalent in Private rent homes and least prevalent in Owner-occupied homes for all the EHS area types. When comparing rural areas to urban areas in 2022 there was:

- the same proportion of Owner-occupied homes in rural and urban areas suffering from damp (3%);
- a smaller proportion of Social rent homes in rural areas suffering from damp (5% compared to 7%); and
- and greater proportion of Private rent homes in rural areas suffering from damp (12% compared to 9%).

Figure G-10: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes suffering from any type of damp by EHS classification area and tenure 2022

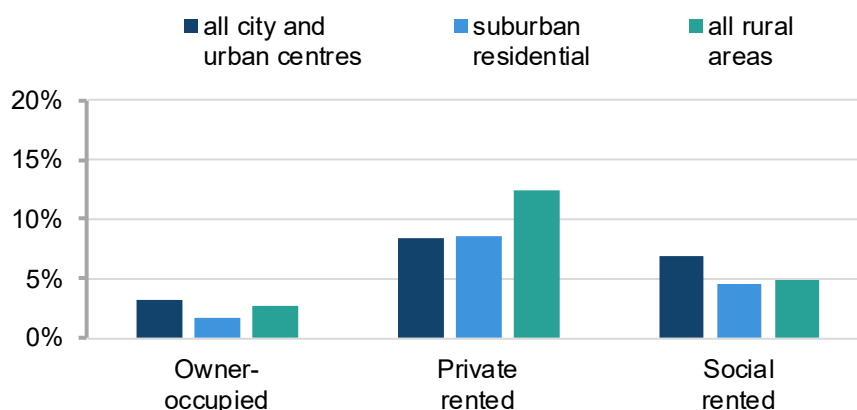
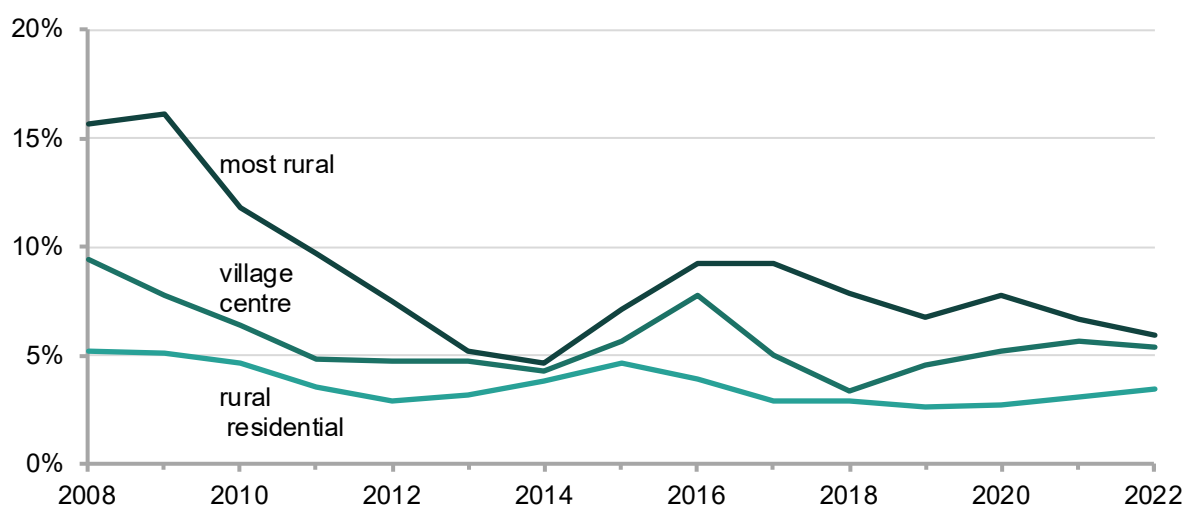


Figure G-11 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes with damp (Note G-12) changed within rural areas (according to the EHS classification) and it shows that the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes that have some form of damp (Note G-12). In the least rural areas, (known as rural residential in the EHS classification) the proportion of homes with damp fluctuated between 5% and 3% over the period 2008 to 2022 and it is a fairly stable proportion. In 2022 the proportion of homes that have some form of damp in rural residential areas was 3% as it had been each year since 2017.

The smaller sample sizes for the “village centre” and “most rural” categories lead to less continuity in timeseries. In the case of the “most rural” category there is a drop 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. In 2022 the proportion of homes in the “most rural” category was 6%, while for the “village centre” category it was 5%.

Figure G-11: Line chart showing the proportion homes suffering from any type of damp within rural areas on the EHS classification system, 2008 to 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-8).



When considering the difference types of damp (Note G-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 variation by rurality seen in Figure H 9 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.

Security and safety

The EHS collects information on the safety and security of properties and publishes them in [Table DA2302](#). This includes information on things like whether the properties have smoke alarms, burglar alarms, external lighting and secure windows and doors.

Figure G-12 is a bar chart that shows the proportion of occupied homes with a smoke alarm fitted (Note H-13) by EHS classification area for the latest data in 2022, and for 2011 to provide a long-term comparison. This bar chart shows that in all EHS area types more homes have a smoke alarm fitted in 2022 than had one in 2011. Back in 2011 more homes in rural areas had a smoke alarm fitted than in urban areas (89% versus 83%). In 2022, 93% of occupied homes in rural areas had a smoke alarm, an increase of 4 percentage points on the 2011 value. Over the period 2011 to 2022 there has been a greater growth in the proportion of homes in urban areas with a smoke alarm fitted than was the case for homes in rural areas. In 2022, 92% of occupied homes in urban areas had a smoke alarm fitted, an increase of 9 percentage points on the 2011 value. The values and changes recorded for suburban areas were very similar to those for rural areas.

Figure G-12: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes with a smoke alarm within by EHS classification area, 2011 and 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-13)

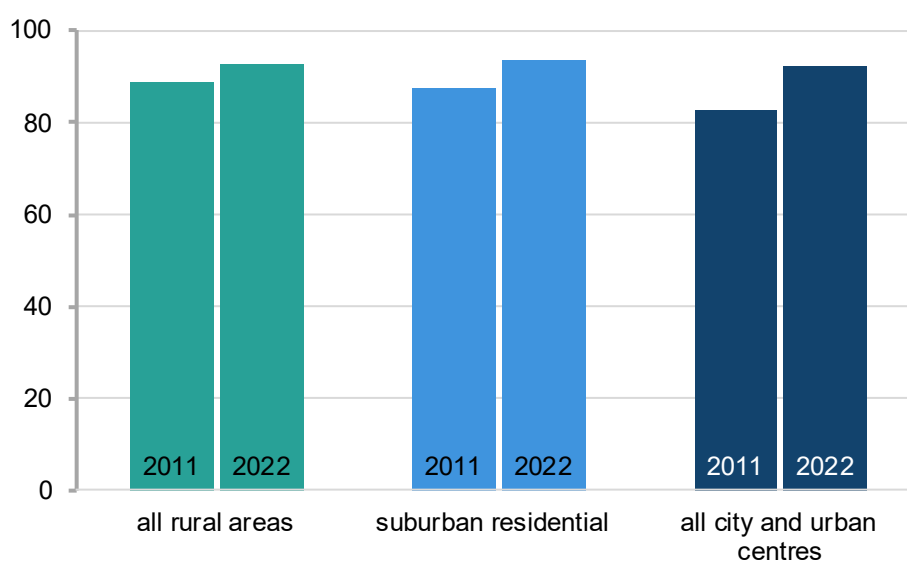


Figure G-13 is a bar chart that shows the proportion of occupied homes with a smoke alarm fitted (Note H-13) within rural areas on the EHS classification system in 2011 and 2022. This bar chart shows the more rural the area the lower the proportion of occupied homes that have a smoke

alarm fitted in both 2011 and 2022. In the “most rural” areas 86% of homes had a smoke alarm fitted in 2011 and by 2022 this proportion had increased by 2 percentage points to 88% of homes. By contrast 90% of homes in rural residential areas already had a smoke alarm fitted in 2011 and by 2022 this proportion had increased by 4 percentage points to 94%. So, homes in the “most rural” areas have proportionally fewer smoke alarms and the rate at which they are being fitted to homes is lower than in other areas.

The prevalence of a smoke-alarm is collected from the household survey and therefore was available for 2022; but the other safety and security measures are collected via the inspections done by EHS surveyors. These were paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic and so the latest available data for these variables was 2019. In 2019, 28% of rural homes had a burglar alarm compared to 18% of homes in urban areas (Table G-1). Rural homes were also much more likely to have external lighting (77%) than those in urban areas (63%) or the suburbs (70%), but they were also much less likely to have secure doors and windows (82%) than those in the suburbs (90%).

Figure G-13: A bar chart showing the increase in the proportion of homes with a smoke alarm within rural areas on the EHS classification system between 2011 and 2022 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-13)

The dashed horizontal line demonstrates that the proportion of homes with a smoke alarm in the “most rural” areas in 2022 was lower than the proportion of homes in rural residential areas with a smoke alarm in 2011.

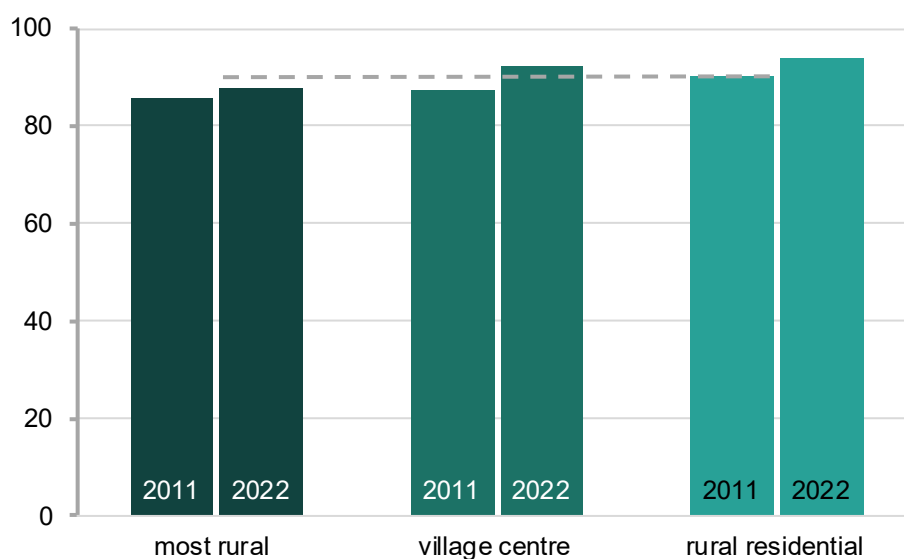


Table G-1: The proportion of homes with various safety and security features by EHS classification area in 2019 (Note G-4, Note G-5, Note G-6)

	Burglar alarm (%)	External lighting (%)	Secure doors and windows (%)
rural	28	77	82
suburban	29	70	90
urban	18	63	84

Housing quality explanatory notes

• Note G-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 G-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).

[Section 254](#) of the Housing Act 2004 explains the legal meaning of “house in multiple occupation” (HMO).

• Note G-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 of that guidance document. 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 G-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 G-5**

The English Housing Survey (EHS) does not define rurality according to the RUC, it uses a looser definition as explained in Note G-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 G-6**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible for EHS surveyors to conduct a full internal inspection of properties over the period 2020 to 2022. 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 returned from 2021 onwards, the 2021 combined survey dwelling sample is for occupied properties only. The combined 2022 dwelling dataset includes dwelling data collected through full physical surveys in 2022-23 and 'external plus' surveys in 2021-22, both of which include vacant dwellings.

The introduction to [English Housing Survey 2022 to 2023: housing quality and condition](#) provides more details on the data collection and modelling undertaken.

- **Note G-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 G-8**

Tables showing the data expressed in the time series charts in 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 G-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 G-10**

The information used in this chapter comes from the [English Housing Survey 2022 to 2023: housing quality and condition](#) published in July 2024, including its associated [data sets](#). Specifically we used Tables [DA2302](#), [DA3202](#), and [DA5102](#).

- **Note G-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 G-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.

- **Note G-13**

The prevalence of smoke alarms is derived from household survey data and therefore figures refer to occupied dwellings only; and is therefore effectively a self-reported prevalence.

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. Internal migration
- D. Local Authority population data
- E. Census 2021: Population

2. [Housing](#)

- A. Housing stock: age and type
- B. Housing stock: additions and affordable housing
- C. Housing market
- D. Second and empty homes
- E. Homelessness
- F. Land use change for housing
- G. 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
- B. Mobile coverage
- C. Travel behaviours
- D. Access to personal transport
- E. Access to services
- F. Home working

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

- A. Schools and their workforce
- B. Class sizes
- C. Secondary education attainment
- D. School inspections
- E. Free school meals - eligibility
- F. Alternative and specialist education provision
- G. Progression to higher education
- H. Apprenticeships and on-the-job training
- I. Workforce education level

7. [Rural Economic Bulletin](#)

- A. Employment
- B. Earnings
- C. Redundancies
- D. Unemployment-related benefits
- E. Output and productivity measured by Gross Value Added (GVA)
- F. Business demographics
- G. Businesses by industry
- H. Business survival and growth
- I. 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. Central heating
- E. Energy Consumption
- F. Estimated carbon dioxide (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.

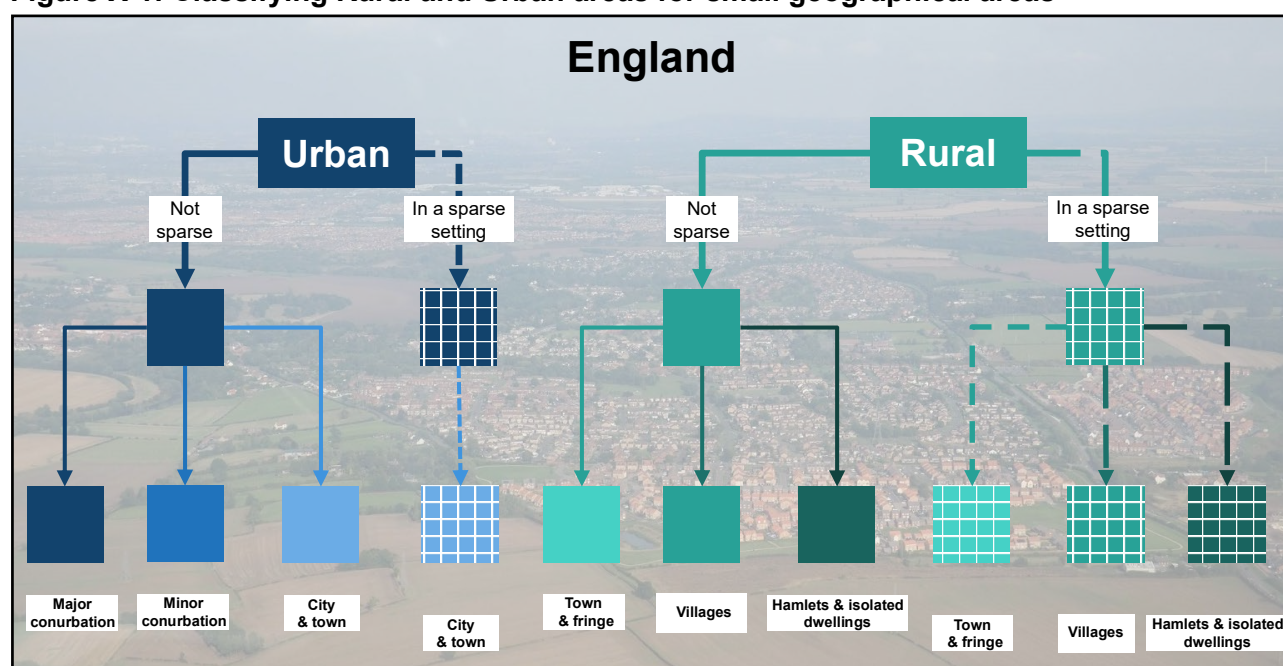
There is a further document including the individual Local Authority data tables, which have been separated for ease of use.

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

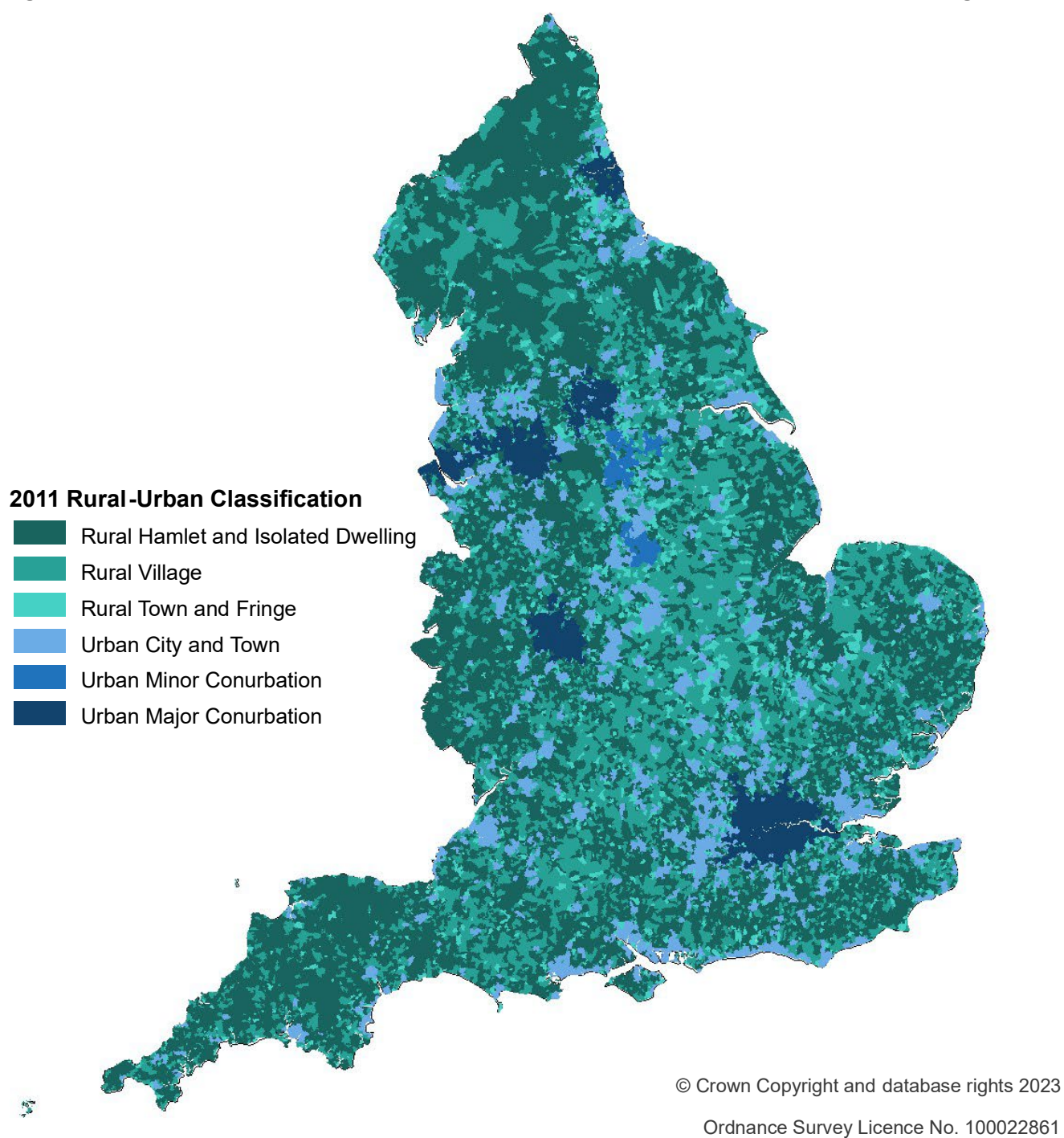
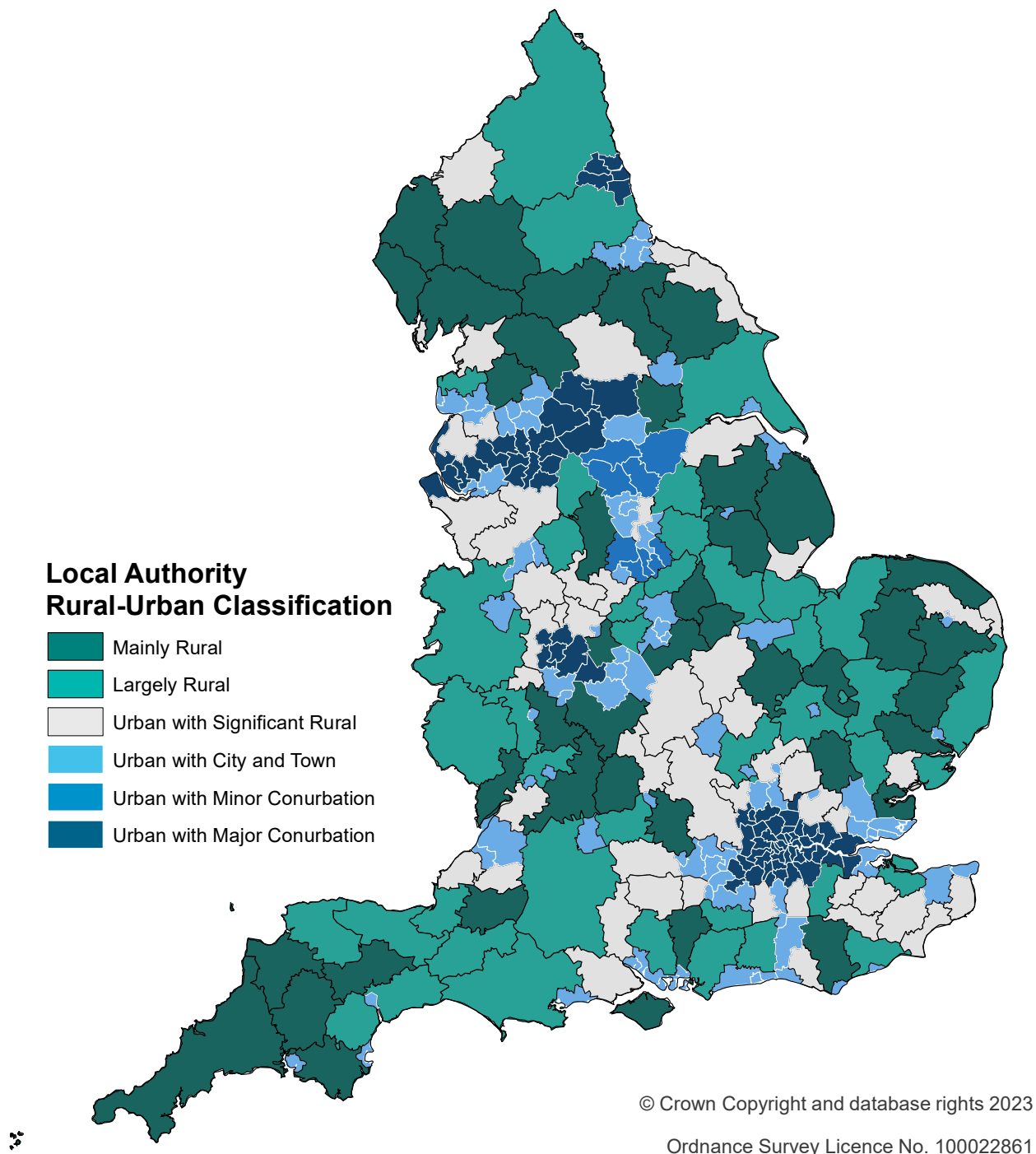
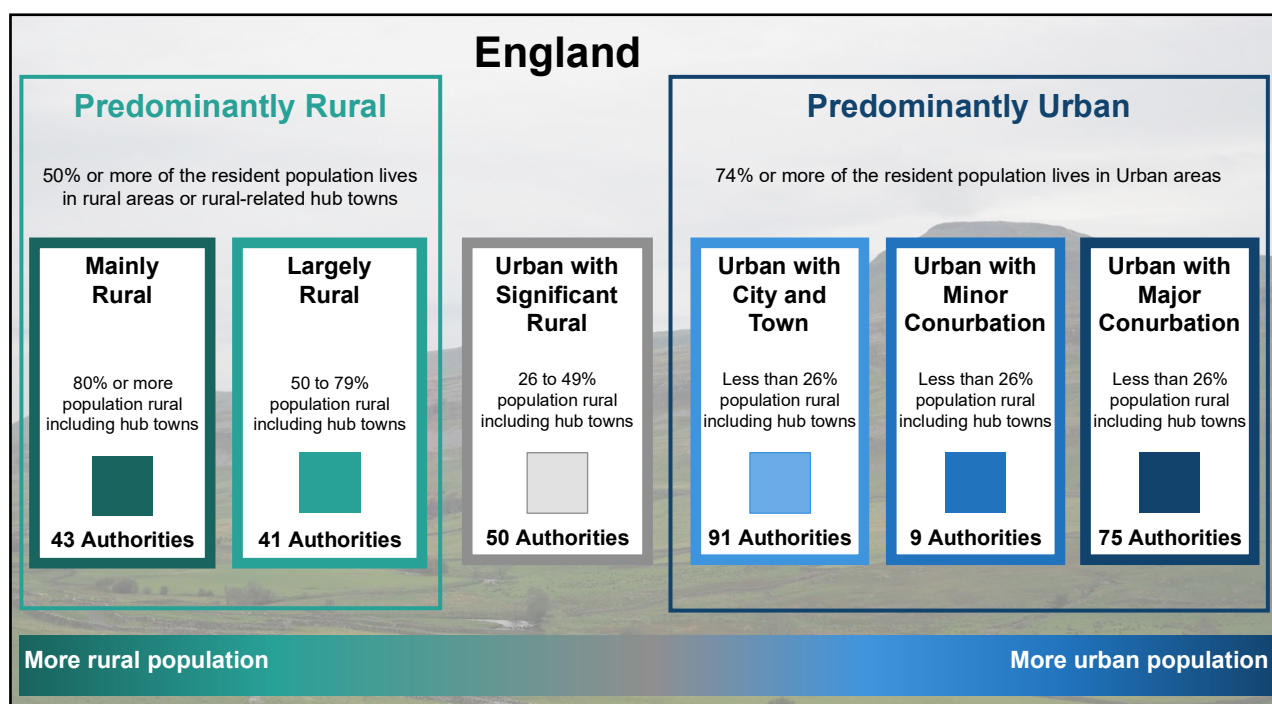


Figure X-3: Map of the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Local Authority Districts and Unitary Authorities in England



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

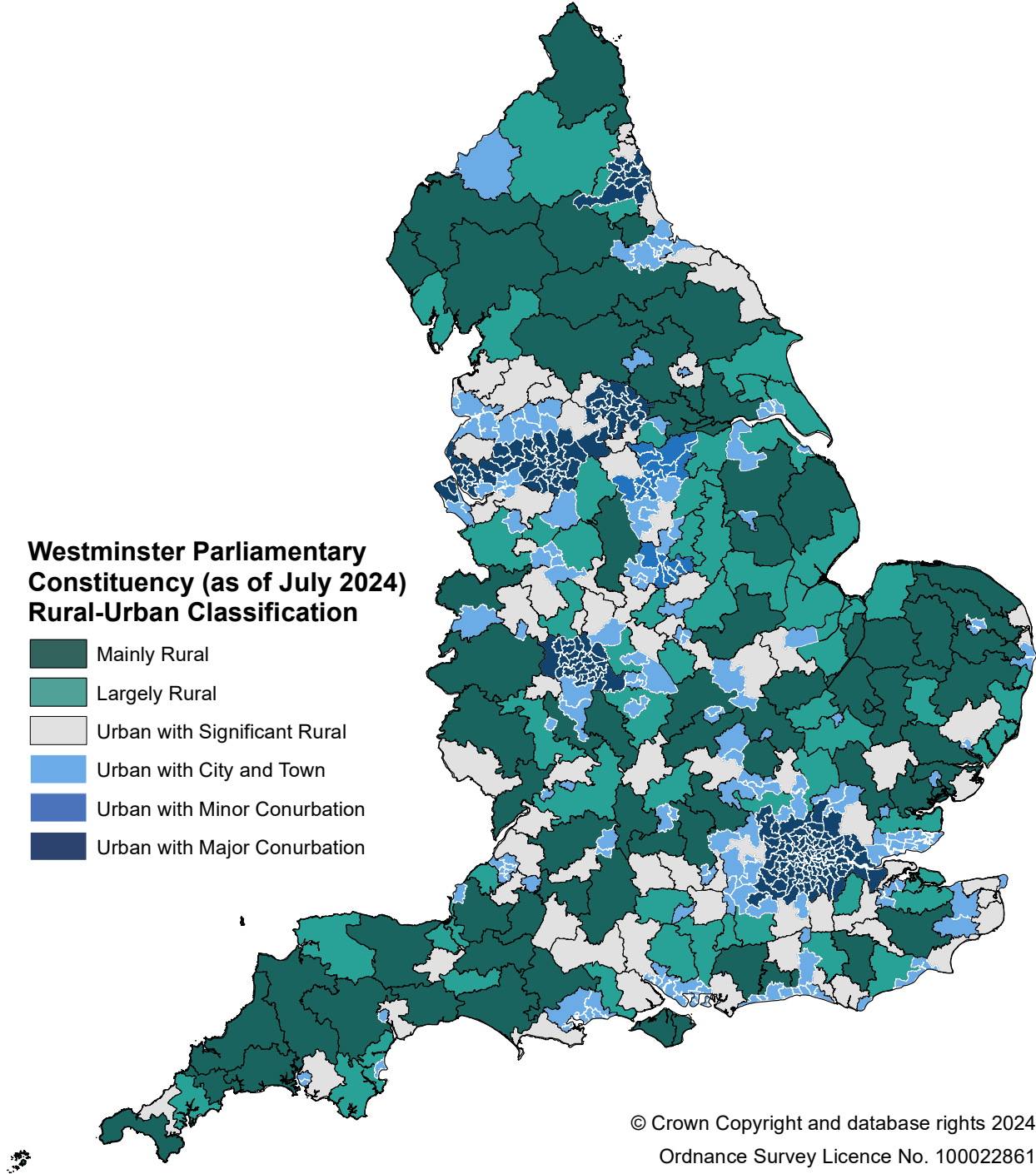
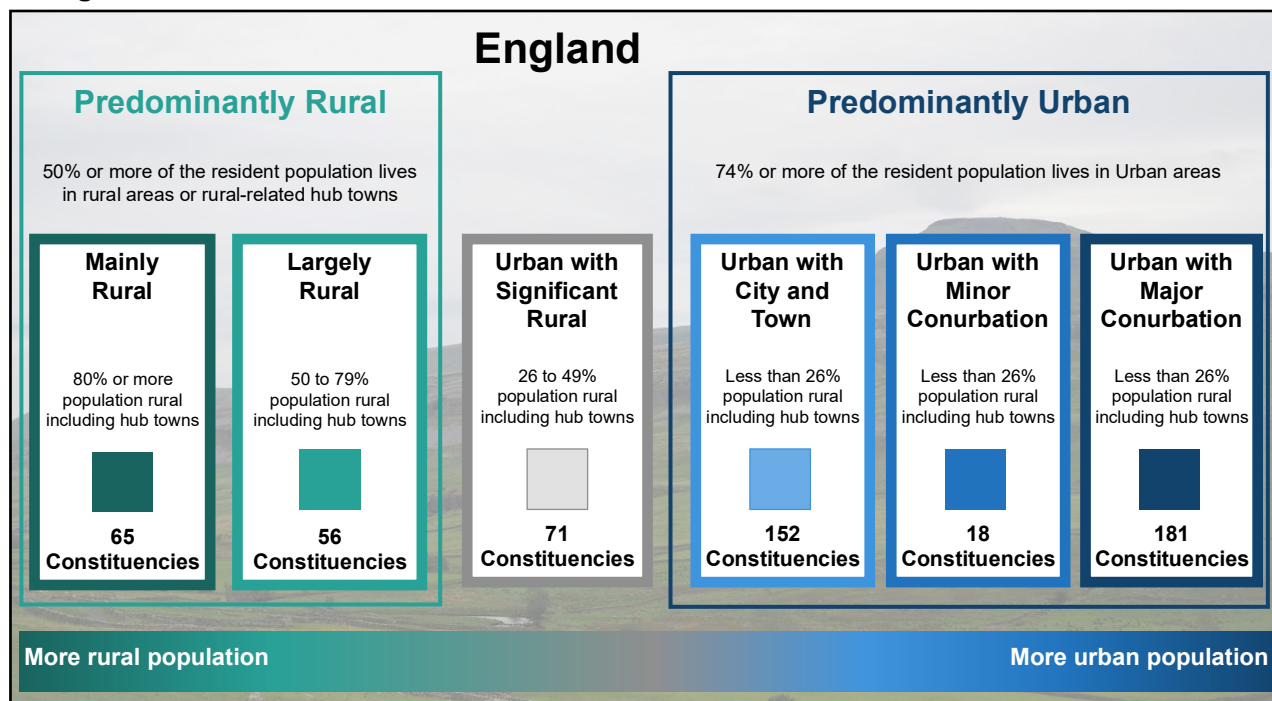


Figure X-6: 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies in England



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